

ERECTING A CAMP

Siting a camp

An ideal campsite is very difficult to find and we often have to make the best of what is available. The ideal campsite:

- needs to have two exits for evacuation in an emergency.
- should be reasonably clean –no rushes, rocks, undergrowth etc.
- has sufficient trees for shade, but enough open space so that tents are not erected under them (risk of falling branches).
- has a sufficient supply of wood for gathering. Gum is our best burning wood. (Not applicable if using gas only).
- has sufficient water, ideally a creek or river, otherwise from a mains water supply.
- is on gently sloping ground (grassy) so that any rainwater will not lie about.
- must be away from the direct eye of the public.
- has no ant/wasp nests or beehives. After all, they were the first residents.

Planning the campsite

There are a few basic principles to observe when planning a campsite.

Cook House Area

The cookhouse area **MUST** be located upriver or upwind from the lats/toilets and bathing area.

Store Tent

The store tent needs trees for shade, if not all day, then at least when the afternoon sun is on the tent. You also need trees for hanging the net bags of fruit and vegetables. This ensures a constant supply of fresh air to keep them edible.

There needs to be an open space near the store tent to place the stove. Ensure that a three-metre clearance all around and above the stove is observed, for fire precautions (remember four buckets to each fire).

Sleep Tents

There needs to be sufficient room for sleep tents without crowding.

Shelter and Meals Area

- Allow room for an auto-tent for wet or hot weather shelter.
- Provide an area where there is room to sit for meals.

Flag Pole

The flagpole is usually near the entrance to a campsite or at a focal point, but not in the middle of the cleared area as this may restrict activities and can be dangerous at night. There needs to be sufficient room near the flagpole for colour formations to be assembled.

Before you start

On arrival at the campsite, you will need to do several things at once, and this is where the Patrol system goes into action.

- Bedding and personal gear must be temporarily, safely stored until the appropriate accommodation has been erected.
- Foods such as milk, cream, butter and cheese **MUST** be cooled immediately if they are to remain edible.

Plan of action

1. Store the bedding and gear

Select a suitable sheltered spot under some trees for the bedding and personal gear to be stored, cover it with ground sheets or shelter flies in case of rain.

2. Cook Patrol

The Cook Patrol splits into three groups

- a. 1/3 to erect the store tent.
- b. 1/3 to put the stove in place (or set a trench fire) light the fire or set up a gas stove. Always have a billy/boiler of water on for that much needed cuppa.
- c. 1/3 to quickly store perishables in an appropriate location and manner.

If the Patrol is small, work together.

- First, store perishables, then other food in the shade.
- Then erect the store tent.
- While part of the patrol store the food in the tent, the rest could do the fire.
- Remember, fruit and vegetables are best stored in netting bags hanging in the trees, more air and less clutter in the tent, too.

3. Wood and Water Patrol

- After storing personal gear, quickly provide a woodpile with all grades of punk and wood for the cooks to light the fire when they are ready to do so.
- Before the fire is lit, take fire precautions by placing sacks and four fire buckets filled with water in place. If using a gas stove, fire buckets are still necessary.
- Erect wash-screenings if there are no permanent facilities.
- Construct another woodpile for the wash area.
- Have buckets or four-gallon bins of water ready for the copper or for heating over a trench fire. (Where ablution blocks are available, this does not apply).

4. Camp Patrol

- If lats are required, dig the trench and erect screening, provide toilet paper, hand-towels, soap, basin and buckets of water.
- If there is a septic system, check that the toilets are clean and toilet paper, hand towels and soap are available.
- Erect tea-towel line, dilly bag line, mug tree line, and garbage bags, also set up the grease tin.
- Move on then to the flagpole, erect and raise the flag to the top of pole ready for Colours. Inform the L.I.C. that the flagpole and flag are ready for Colours.
- Collect lanterns, fill them with kerosene, then store them under trees, or hanging on a tree limb until required. Store the kerosene near the lanterns, **NEVER** in the store tent.
- If/when needed, erect an auto tent for shelter. If shelter flies are needed for fire protection, or any other reason such as wood piles etc., this Patrol would do it.
- Now the "working part" of camp is done, thought can be given to sleeping tents - erect and store gear on gadgets. Work from here as per Patrol duty sheets.