

Summer Camping Tips

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Now that summer is here in full force, camping trips are arguably one of the best weekend or day trip activities for enjoying sunshine, longer days, warmer weather, and, of course, the open road.

Camping is particularly fun because it's so easy to load up your car or truck and go anywhere you like. We have such easy access to the beach, the mountains, or state and national parks here in Maryland or in a nearby state. The key to enjoying your summertime change of scenery is, of course, to always be prepared.

When packing for your open road endeavor, remember to consider the following **four S's**:

Sun: The sun is our friend but can also be our enemy. It's best to take steps to protect yourself from the sun before it becomes a problem. Sunscreen is state of the art these days, with spray or lotion varieties, not to mention sunscreen for sports or to use specifically on your face. Some sunscreens even come with bug repellent built in. Make sure to wear a wide brimmed hat or a baseball cap, and don't forget the sunscreen on your face, front and back of neck, ears, and top of chest.

Sustenance: Eating and drinking is an enjoyable part of the camping experience, and also one of the more critical things to do. Heat exhaustion is a real and serious condition, and dehydration is no joke. Buy a water bottle you like and keep it at hand at all times. Try adding a few slices of lemon or cucumber for a little extra refreshment. Remember to get a fair amount of salt in your diet as well. Your body loses salt along with your sweat, which can throw off your electrolyte balance. What better excuse to eat potato chips, right?

Safety: Consider packing a small first aid kit to keep in your car at all times. Essential items include an assortment of bandages, including pressure bandages, 4x4s, and gauze. Don't forget antibiotic ointment, and we also recommend latex gloves, saline solution, anti-itch spray, and bee sting neutralizer. Also, a key item: any prescription medications you might need.

Sportswear: There's an old saying that there is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing. We couldn't agree more! Dressing for the weather is a key element to enjoying your time out of doors. Consider lightweight, breathable fabrics in light colors. Synthetics known as "tech" fabrics breathe well and wick sweat right off your body, helping to keep you cool. Socks are your best friend, and remember that wool is not just for winter. Wool is a natural, breathable fiber that makes for terrific socks even in the summer.

Sports: There are endless possibilities for how you can spend your time on a camping trip, from relaxing to enjoying some athletic activities. Grilling is one of our favorites, but you could incorporate hiking, swimming, or even sunbathing into your itinerary. The possibilities are plentiful.

Above all, remember that nobody likes food poisoning, so keep your perishables in a cooler with ice packs. Only carry in what you carry out. Bring trash bags and be sure to use them. Also, consider stopping by Jones to pick up any last-minute car accessories that might make your road trip to the camping ground or other outdoor area that much more fun. We would love to help send you on your way to summer fun!



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