

TENT PLACEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Cub Scout camping will take place in sites approved by the local council (council camps, local parks, campgrounds). However, there are still several considerations to keep in mind when choosing where to pitch your tent.

- **Location.** A campsite facing the south or southeast will get more sunlight and generally will be drier than one on the north side of a hill or in the shade of mountains or cliffs. Cold, damp air tends to settle, causing the bottoms of valleys to be more cool and moist than locations a little higher. On the other hand, hilltops and sharp ridges can be very windy and should be avoided in lightning-prone areas.
- **Protection.** Consider the direction of the wind and the direction from which a storm will approach. Is your campsite in the open or is it protected by a hill or a stand of trees? Is there a solitary tree nearby that may attract lightning? Don't camp under dead trees or trees with dead branches that may come down in a storm or light wind.
- **Insects and animals.** All creatures have their favorite habitats. The best way to avoid mosquitoes and biting flies is to camp away from marshes, bogs, and pools of stagnant water. Breezes discourage insects, so you might look for an elevated, open campsite. Don't forget to check around for beehives, hornet nests, and ant mounds; their inhabitants usually won't bother you as long as you leave them alone, but give them plenty of room. The same goes for most animals.
- **Ground cover.** Any vegetation covering a campsite will receive a lot of wear and tear. Tents will smother it, and walkers will bruise it with the soles of their shoes. Whenever you can, make your camp on naturally bare earth, sand, graveled soil, or ground covered with pine needles or leaves.
- **Drainage.** While a campsite should be relatively flat, it should slope enough to allow rainwater to run off. However, you don't want to be in the path of natural drainage. Check uphill from where you plan to set up your tent to make sure water won't run through the site. **Never camp in a stream bed!** Also, you want to avoid depressions in the ground, as even shallow ones can collect water in a storm.
- **Privacy.** One of the pleasures of camping is getting away from crowds and the fast pace of city life. Leave as much space to other tents as you can. That way you can enjoy peace and privacy while respecting the privacy of other campers.
- **Outdoor ethics.** Be gentle on Mother Nature. You can do a lot to protect and preserve the wilderness by leaving no trace of your visit, no marks along the trail, and a tidy campsite—cleaner than you found it. Don't harm plants, animals, or insects. Take nothing but pictures, leave nothing but footprints, and kill nothing but time. That philosophy fits as well in a county park as it does anywhere else.