



THE GREAT OUTDOORS! ➡

# Camping

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## KEY ICONS TO LOOK FOR



**Words to Understand:** These words with their easy-to-understand definitions will increase the reader's understanding of the text, while building vocabulary skills.



**Sidebars:** This boxed material within the main text allows readers to build knowledge, gain insights, explore possibilities, and broaden their perspectives by weaving together additional information to provide realistic and holistic perspectives.



**Research Projects:** Readers are pointed toward areas of further inquiry connected to each chapter. Suggestions are provided for projects that encourage deeper research and analysis.



**Text-Dependent Questions:** These questions send the reader back to the text for more careful attention to the evidence presented here.



**Series Glossary of Key Terms:** This back-of-the-book glossary contains terminology used throughout this series. Words found here increase the reader's ability to read and comprehend higher-level books and articles in this field.



**Educational Videos:** Readers can view videos by scanning our QR codes, providing them with additional educational content to supplement the text. Examples include news coverage, moments in history, speeches, iconic sports moments and much more!



# Camp Out!



group of three kids, maybe around 15 years old, sat in their front yard on a summer's afternoon and looked at all the stuff they'd spread out in front of them. Shoes and socks, short pants and long pants, a couple of shirts each, jackets, hats and gloves were in one pile. Another pile was of food: sandwiches, steel canteens of water, a couple of oranges and apples, and cookies. Next to that was a pile of other stuff they figured they'd need: flashlights, batteries, pillows, sleeping bags, a canvas tarp, a tent, a book of scary stories, and one backpack each to put it all in.

*Think that will be enough?* they wondered. They tried to cram it all into their packs. Most of it fit. Forget the pillows, they thought; we'll use



our packs for pillows. We don't need the tent, either. It won't rain. Now it all fit, and when early evening arrived, it was time to go on their camping trip. They quickly hugged their parents goodbye and hoisted their packs, and walked-off on their big camping adventure, which was to a park by a creek about a half-mile away.

They waved to the adults as they went around the corner, high-fived each other and let out a couple of loud hoots, and then arrived at the park about 20 minutes later, feeling excited and then kind of far away as evening settled in.

They laid out their tarp in a clearing near the creek and threw rocks in the water until it got near dark.

Hey, who gets to sleep in the middle? This tarp isn't very big. Think we have enough room on it for all three of our sleeping bags? It's getting kind of dark. I'm hungry. Where's my sandwich? Let's turn our flashlights on. Hey, cool, mine has a red light on it! It makes my sandwich look weird.

Let's get into our sleeping bags. So, I think I'll just lie here and...whoa! Did you see that shooting star? Man, I wonder if it's going to crash into the mountains or ocean.

The sky looks huge. What's that cloud? Do you think it will rain? That's not a cloud, that's just a million zillion stars. It's called the Milky Way. Why's it called that? Hmmm, I don't



know. How about you guys? I'll Google it tomorrow. Hey, you guys awake?

The next morning the boys woke up really early when the first light started to show in the eastern sky. Their sleeping bags and packs were wet from the dew, their shoulders were all dirty with leaves and sticks from where they'd rolled-off the tarp, their hair stood all off in crazy directions and they laughed when they saw each other in the morning light.

They lay in their bags and finished their sandwiches and cookies. When the sun was finally all the way up they decided

it was time to go home, so they put most of the stuff in their packs, carried the wet sleeping bags in their arms, and headed back up the street. Their first-ever camping adventure by themselves was over.

*Hey, that was cool! Where do we want to go camping next week? Where do we want to go when we grow up?*



Camping lets you visit amazing places with world-class views.

Turns out that over the years, those kids camped farther and farther, longer and longer away from their homes as they grew up. Turns out one of 'em was me!

I've camped in the mountains near my home, I've hiked for hundreds of miles in the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California, lived and camped in Africa and Australia, even rode my bike from Canada to Mexico along the Rocky Mountains Great Divide, and camped every night on the 2,300-mile (3,710-km) adventure.

Now I'd like to share some stories and ideas that will get you out there camping!





# Into the Great Outdoors!



Why do people go camping, anyway? People camp for many different reasons and in many different ways. But no matter how you camp, there's something that feels good about returning to a simpler way of life. Less stuff. Slower pace. And, when you think about it, camping is how we humans lived for thousands of years: cooking over a fire, sleeping under the stars or in a simple shelter, telling stories and legends into the night. Going into "The Great Outdoors" is really about *returning* to the Great Outdoors.



## WORDS TO UNDERSTAND

**astronomy** the study of stars and space

**self-sufficient** able to survive on one's own without outside help

The dictionary definition of camp is interesting:

***Camp:***

*a: a place usually away from urban areas where tents or simple buildings are erected for shelter or for temporary residence*

*b: a settlement newly sprung up*

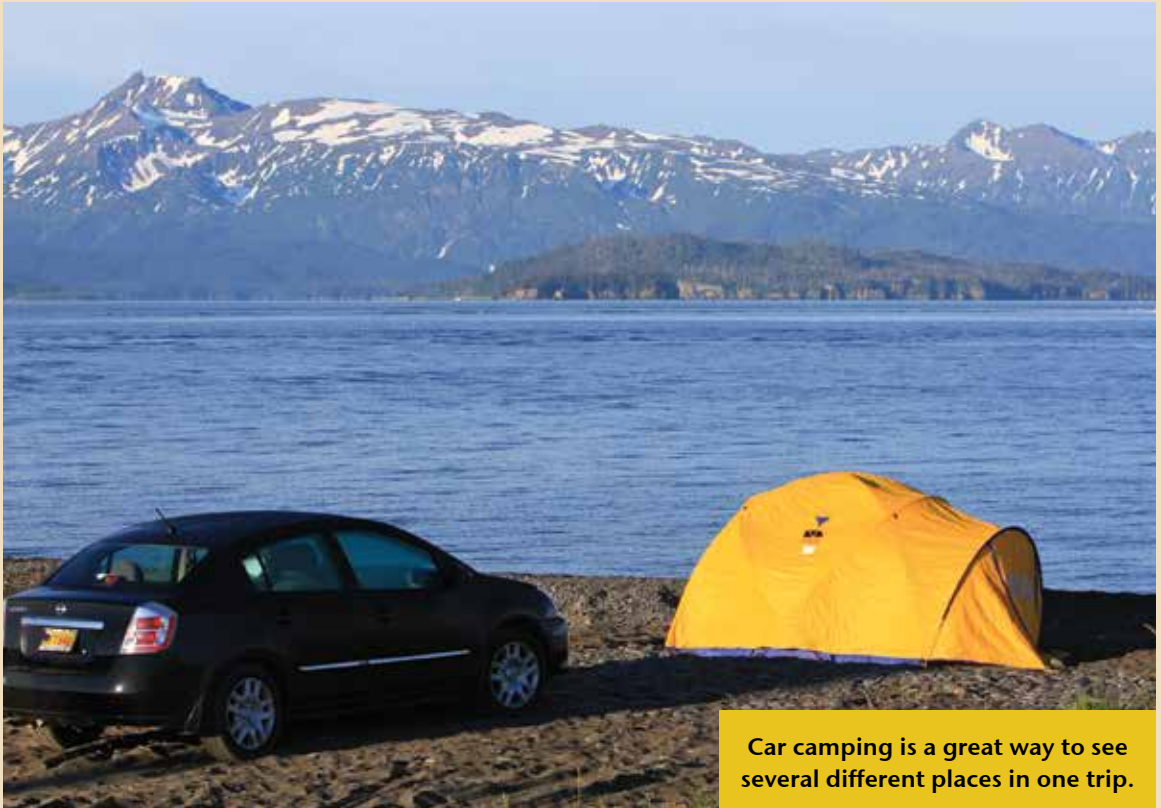
There's that word *simple* again.

Here are some reasons people have given as to why they camp:

- For the environment, so that families, especially children, can observe the world around them, especially the natural world. It's a way for kids and adults to truly feel a part of the world, really know it, and learn from the experience.
- For the adventure (and for the fun).
- To get closer. I have met young people who said the camping experience brought them together. They said they are even closer friends after the experience. They liked the simplicity of carrying on their backs only what they needed. They felt it was calming and centering to know they could survive, even thrive, on their own.
- To learn and practice basic outdoors skills, like fire-making, cooking, knot-tying, weather watching, even **astronomy** and navigation.
- To get to know yourself. Just about every camper agrees that camping under the stars makes us feel good!

What do you want to learn from the experience of camping? Do you want to have an adventure with your friends? To sleep outside and see the stars? To make a campfire? To cook your own food? To show that you can take care of yourself and be independent?

Some kids go to a summer camp and sleep in cabins, while some go on hikes and camp each night in different places. Others visit a campground and do hikes and different activities during the days and sleep in the same place each night. Adventurous people bike or paddle to a different campsite each night, while newer campers just camp in their backyards.



Car camping is a great way to see several different places in one trip.

Here are some basics about the different types of camping and places to camp. Later, we'll look at things you need for safe and comfortable camping no matter where you go.

## Different Ways to Camp

**T**he equipment you bring, how you set up your camp, and where you camp, depends on what type of camping you're doing. There are different kinds of camping, but let's just break them down into three types.

**Car Camping:** Basically, you park your car and camp nearby. During the day you might be hiking or fishing or riding bicycles, and in the evening you return to your camp. You might travel to a new campsite each day or stay at one campsite for a few days or a week, and before heading back home.





## FIND A CAMPSITE

Many national parks are great places to go car camping. They offer spaces for both your car and your tent, plus have many activities to enjoy. You also get to meet other families who are in the same campground.

Some national or state parks can get very busy, especially in the summer months. To make sure that your family has a spot at the park you want to visit, go to [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov). This National Park Service site tells you how to find and reserve the right spot for your camping family.



***Backpacking:*** Maybe you've arrived at your campsite by walking there on a trail, carrying what you need in your backpack. Backpackers usually stay in one campsite for a number of nights and then walk back out. Another type of hiking plan might be to camp in a different site each night. You arrive in the late afternoon or evening, set up your camp, and then pack it all up the next morning and move on down the trail to another site.

***Bicycle and Canoe/Kayak Camping:*** Packing your gear on a bike or a small boat is a bit different, but the equipment you need for a comfortable and safe night under the stars is pretty much the same as backpacking. The difference is that you carry it all on your bike or boat, plus you use that bike or boat to get from campsite to campsite.

With those last two types of camping, you're most likely going to be **self-sufficient**. That means you have to take care of yourself completely. You'll only have what you brought with you. There won't be any stores in the wilderness! When car camping, you can resupply regular-