



Troop 175

The Ten Essentials

The Ten Essentials are kept with you at all times. If you leave camp to climb a peak then these will be put in a day pack and taken with you. A small net ditty bag that you can see through works well to hold them all.

1. Compass and Map

- Adult leaders will have detailed maps of the hiking area in their possession at all times. Scouts are encouraged to consult these maps before and during the hike. Copies are available for all scouts
- A compass can be used to locate where you are on the trail and, of course, for emergency situations.
- Get a basic compass. It should be liquid filled, have a clear rectangular plastic baseplate so you can see through it, and have a rotating compass dial.
- The Silva Polaris® Type 7, Suunto A1000, and BSA Polaris work well. About \$10.

2. Flashlight (Spare bulb & batteries)

- D cell and C cell types are too heavy. Try either flashlights that hold 2 AA cells OR LED headlamps that use 2 or 3 AAA.
- A Mini Maglite AA flashlight is a good choice. It is small, lightweight, reliable, rugged, and has a built in spare bulb. About \$12 normally or Watch for sales in the Sunday papers. A Mini Maglite AA goes for about \$8 on sale. Consider getting the rubber mouth piece holder for the Mini Maglite. With it you can hold the flashlight in your mouth and have both hands free.
- An LED headlamp is another option. These range from \$20-\$30, but the batteries will last 15 to 20 hours. They are very lightweight and put the light exactly where you need it while leaving your hands free.

3. Spare Clothes and Sun Protection

- Layered clothing is a must. You can adapt your body temperature as conditions change.
- Raingear
- Sun glasses are absolutely, positively required over 9000'. The sun gets bright at altitude with less atmosphere to cut the light and UV. Rocks and snow compound the problem.
- A wide brimmed hat provides additional protection.

4. Matches in waterproof case or a disposable lighter and a candle

- The candle can be used to light a fire when dry tinder is not available. It provides enough heat to ignite damp tinder which can then get a fire going. The candle is not used to provide light and should never be used inside of a tent.
- Small votive or tea candles are ideal.

5. Pocket knife

- A simple pocket knife will do. Choose a high quality simple knife of reasonable cost. (They are also easily lost so there is no need to buy the best.)
- A multipurpose tool, such as a Leatherman is ideal.
- Knives with blades over 3" are not allowed. Sheath knives are also unacceptable and must be left at home.



Troop 175

The Ten Essentials

6. Personal first aid kit

- Make up a personal first aid kit with the following items. Note that the Troop may not dispense any medications so you must bring your own.
- Personal prescription medications (3 day supply) An adult leader must know the following about each medication:
 - How and when is it to be taken?
 - What are its reactions with other things (i.e. dairy products or elevation effects)?
 - What are the possible side effects or danger signs to watch for and what actions to take if necessary?
- 10 pain relievers (whatever you prefer; i.e. aspirin, Tylenol, etc.)
- 10 assorted adhesive bandages (Band-Aids, etc.)
- Moleskin (6 square inches)
- 3 sterile gauze compresses (3" X 3")
- Cotton adhesive tape (1" wide roll)

7. Trail snacks

- Nuts, dried fruits, raisins, dry cereal, jerky, etc. make good high energy trail snacks (gorp). A few hard candies are also good for a quick energy boost. Only bring what you can eat in a weekend. Start with a handful or two.
- Put your trail snacks in zip lock bags.
- Avoid chocolate as it melts. M&M's are the exception to this rule as they make a nice addition to your gorp.

8. Signaling Devices

- A rugged plastic whistle is essential
- A metal signaling mirror is also important.

9. Wide mouth plastic quart bottle

- A wide mouth water bottle is used mainly for drinking water but it also serves as a mixing container and measuring cup. It should have a wide mouth to facilitate filling from streams and adding ingredients like Kool-Aid and iodine for purification. A wide mouth also makes it easier to clean. Be sure to mark your water bottle and its lid with your name or initials as they all tend to look alike.
- The one quart size (32 oz.) is just right. Nalgene® wide mouth bottles work well. They are rugged and do not leak. They come in both hard plastic (smoke-gray Lexan) and soft plastic (white). The soft plastic is preferred as it is less likely to crack if dropped. A strap to hold the lid on is optional. About \$7 for either bottle .
- Canteens are not acceptable because they can not be cleaned. Bottled "spring water" bottles will crack if dropped.

10. Parachute cord and a Ground Cloth

- Fifty feet of parachute cord has a multitude of uses in the outdoors. Everything from fixing a broken strap, building a shelter, or as a clothesline for wet clothes.
- Ground Cloth can serve as a shelter or as a ground cloth.
- Reflective on one side and high visibility orange ones on the other are great.