Sleeping Bags

Wood Badge 84
Sleeping Bags

Agenda

• Overview

• What does Philmont say about sleeping bags

• Lightweight considerations

• Sleeping bag vs. sleeping system

• If you often wake up shivering, here are some ways to stay warm all night

• Questions and Answers
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Overview

- One third of your trek time will be spent in your sleeping bag
- During the day the temperatures will be very hot (80 degrees +) and at night the temperature can drop below 25 degrees.
- Weight and size is always a consideration and it is especially true with lightweight backpacking (35 pounds or less for a Philmont trek)
- Look at a whole system for sleeping
  - Tent
  - Sleeping bag
  - Sleep clothes
  - Sleep pad
- Do some research—
  - http://www.backpacker.com/
- Keep the “Big Three Weight Guidelines” in mind
- Make your decisions
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*Philmont Approach*

- Philmont Guidebook to Adventure Says:

  "Your sleeping bag should be warm (suitable down to 25 degrees), but not bulky or heavy. If your sleeping bag may not be warm enough, long underwear and a stocking cap will increase your comfort on cold nights. When your sleeping bag is packed it should be no more than 20 inches long and 10 inches in diameter and should weigh 5 pound or less. Use a waterproof sack to store your sleeping bag and line the sack with a heavy-duty (4 to 6 mil) plastic bag safely secured to keep your sleeping bag dry even in wet weather."

- **This is only partially true for light weight backpacking**
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**Lightweight Considerations**

- Mummy bags provide the best warmth
- A sleeping pad is required for comfort, warmth, and to prevent the ground from drawing heat from your body
- Sleeping clothes should be lightweight (only for sleeping)
- On very cold nights long underwear, socks, hats, and gloves can be used for extra warmth
- Know how you sleep
  - Hot – I am usually warm at night and don’t need extra blankets
  - Cold – I am always cold and putting extra blankets on my bed
- A 30 ° or a 40 ° sleeping bag can be sufficient at Philmont if you know yourself and your gear
- The temperature guidelines on sleeping bags are only estimates – The loft of the filling is the key
- Keep your bag dry but limit the weight of the protection
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Down vs. Synthetic

Down
- Is warmer than synthetic
- Is thermostatic, meaning it keeps you warm in the cold and cool in the warmth
- Retains shape and loft over the long haul
- Wicks moisture away and allows it to evaporate;
- Traps warm air in and keeps cold air out
- Varies in quality, weight, and cost
- Is highly compressible and lightweight

Synthetic
- It's more water-resistant and dries relatively quickly.
- It's generally less expensive than down.
- It's usually machine washable/dryable.
- Variety gives you freedom of choice. Polarguard®, for example, is made in 4 different variations (from the original Classic up to the latest and greatest Delta), all of which claim to perform better than down, insulate when wet, and have a high warmth to weight ratio.
- It's hypo-allergenic. It's less likely to give you a reaction, unless you're allergic to polyester and nylon.
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*Down vs. Synthetic*

- Scoutmasters Recommendation

  "You will need a warm comfortable sleeping bag for Philmont. Select a synthetic bag of the best quality you can afford. A mummy bag is highly recommended and it is suggested that you balance weight (less than 3 pounds) with a warmth factor of 35 degrees or less."

- An extremely light weight down mummy bag may be desirable in some cases but that would be the exception rather than the rule
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Sleeping Bag vs. Sleeping System

- Even in June it can get very cold at night in the mountains
  - When the sun goes down you will usually be heading to your tent
  - Warmth comes from your “sleeping system”

- A sleeping system includes—
  - **Backpacking tents** provide heat retention, wind blocking, and rain protection
  - **Sleeping pad** provides block from ground leeching of personal body warmth
  - **Mummy sleeping bag** provides encapsulated method of retaining personal body warmth
  - **Sleep clothes** are (relatively) clean and dry – only used for sleeping

- Extra warmth comes from—
  - hat
  - Long underwear
  - Sleep socks
  - Gloves
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Sleeping Pad Recommendation

• A great sleeping pad that can be recommended
• 15 oz for the Full Size and $34.95 retail

• Therma Rest Z-Lite
  - Compact: Accordion-style design lies flat and packs small.
  - Ultralight: Light enough to carry on virtually any adventure.
  - Warm: Egg-carton pattern enhances warmth and softness.

• The ¾ length is **NOT** recommended
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If you often wake up shivering, here are some ways to stay warm all night

• Keep the energy flowing. As soon as you get into camp, change out of those sweaty clothes, and have something to eat and drink. It's easier to maintain your body temperature as you set up camp than to jack it up just before bedtime.
• Eat a hearty dinner and late-night snack. You need fuel to keep your furnace burning all night.
• Hydrate. Without water, your body can't convert food into useable energy.
• Make sure your bag fits. A too-big bag means you'll spend extra calories heating empty space. If the sleeping bag is too tight, you crush the insulation. Wear your backcountry pajamas when you're trying on bags, by the way.
• When Ma Nature calls, answer. Heating the fluid inside you bladder saps body heat.
• Wear a hat. Most of your heat escapes from your head.
• Don't pile on too many clothes. The more you wear to bed, the more likely you are to compress the bag's insulation and render it less effective. If you have to wear more than one or two layers, your bag isn't suited to the conditions.
# Sleeping Bags - Don’t forget the guidelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pack weight guidelines</th>
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<td>10 lbs.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Big Three</th>
<th>Water</th>
<th>Clothing</th>
<th>Personal</th>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Crew Gear</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Backpack 3 – 6 lbs.</td>
<td>Allow for 4 quarts</td>
<td>Extra Clothing 1 - Shirt 1 – Shorts (or long Pants) 2 – Socks (and liners)</td>
<td>• sleeping pad • flashlight • sleep clothes • survival kit • first aid kit • rain gear • eating gear • camp shoes • Bible/prayer book • Wash kit • Towel</td>
<td>Allow for 5 Meals (make sure To allow Sufficient Space)</td>
<td>Things Like • dining fly • stoves • cooking pot • TP • shovel • hand sanitizer • first aid kit • maps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tent (half) 2 – 4 lbs.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cold Clothes 1-Vest (or fleece shirt) 1- Long Underwear 1 – Pair gloves 1 – Stocking hat</td>
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Sleeping Bags

**Final Thoughts**

- Mummy bags are great!

- A good sleeping pad is a must

- Unless you have a reason to buy down go with a synthetic sleeping bag

- Don’t trust the bag rating alone (a conservatively rated 30 ° bag may be warmer and more comfortable than a 20 ° aggressively rated bag)

- Do your research, ask questions, try the bag on for size and fit, and select a quality sleeping bag
Sleeping Bags