

## Camping

Whilst hitchhiking, you never know quite where you'll end up in the evening. **Camping** can be a good safety option, allowing you to sleep peacefully outside overnight. Here you can find info about several types of camping, as well as some tips for *outdoor survival*.



Erga and guaka camping in the South of Finland, next to the highway

## Shelter

Set up late, clear out early. Discrete camping on the road means different things for everyone. Accommodations can range from tents to tarps, bivouacs to hammocks depending on personal preference. The requirements for shelter vary for everyone, in every environment.

### Tents

Tents are the heaviest option for shelter, but are the most private and sealed

### Tarps

More lightweight than tents and probably the most versatile in its possibilities.

See also tarp

### Bivouac

Basically the bivouac sack is plastic bag, which is pulled over the sleeping bag. It keeps you warm and protects you from the rain. A bivouac sack is very light and set up in no time. Disadvantages are the high price and if you wake up in a rainfall, you are trapped.

See also Bivouac sack.

### Hammock

A small nylon travel hammock has many uses, though is more suited toward fair-weather travel. It allows you to sleep in many places, without needing a flat dried land.

If you need a bigger comfort, you can choose a hammock with a mosquito netting and a tarp: it will provide you a great comfort even if it's raining or if there are plenty of bugs. A nice hammock, but an expensive one, is the Hennessy hammock.

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Notice that a hammock is much cooler than a tent. I recommend hammocks only for the summer period in quite hot countries.

Also check things to carry



Zac sleeping under an umbrella

## Matches

Always useful to carry matches. Use your discretion when starting a fire. Consider forest fire threats and that. If you don't want any unwanted attention, choose a quiet location off the beaten track for your site. Preferably near trees for kindling. Remember that any local people could report smoke they see to relevant authorities.

## Water

While you may come across fresh, clear water many times on your travels, care must be taken to avoid becoming sick when drinking it. Microscopic bacteria is often found in fresh water stream and rivers, especially near civilization or agricultural areas (farms). Even slight contamination of a water source can leave you violently ill. Fortunately, there are multiple ways to treat suspected water:

*Boil the water for at least 10 minutes.* This is one of the most surefire ways to purify water, but tends to require lots of fuel and patience.

*Water filtering.* Personal water filters have become commonplace among hikers to ensure that their water is safe to drink. For the average traveler, however, they may be bulky and expensive.

*Chemical treatment.* From simple household bleach, iodine, chlorine, or similar chemicals to two-part time-sensitive compounds, chemical purification can offer a small, light-weight and inexpensive option to ensure water purity. Many chemicals can leave water with a slight aftertaste, which can be removed by adding a small amount of powdered drink mix or similar flavoring. When using chemical compounds, it is important to follow manufacturer guidelines, as many of these chemicals are poisonous if misused. A personal favorite of Stove is "aqua mira", either in a two part liquid or a small dissolvable pill. Liquid to treat 120 liters costs approx \$10.

## Toilet

"How to sh\*t in the woods" is both a comical look at some of the more awkward aspects of camping, as well as a

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useful resource for information. While using leaves or other local plant life can work, carrying a small amount of toilet paper may make for a happier experience. In general, dig a small pit, squat over it, do your business, toss in the paper when finished, and cover the hole back up. Try to make your pit at least 20cm deep (6 inches), as nobody wants to accidentally step in it. If no digging tool is handy or the soil is shallow, cover with leaves and put a big rock onto it - its an oldy but a goody! Oh, and a personal recommendation: don't make your bathroom near where you plan to sleep. This lesson is generally only learned once.

## **Agricultural Hijinx**

Best to try and avoid fields with livestock in them. Mostly because they could trample your tent or the farmer could be checking on them and inadvertently see you. Also farmers don't take kindly to crops being bent over by people walking through them, and they can potentially track you this way! A lot of agricultural land is unused. And a lot of farmers wouldnt care if somebody was camping a night in a field theyre not using for anything. Obviously some nasty farmers would engage, if only for the power trip "You're trespassing on my private property" etc. in which case you reason with them or just move out of sight and pitch again.