

## CADETTE PRIMITIVE CAMPER BADGE

**Badge Purpose:** When you've earned this badge, you'll have planned and gone on a primitive camping trip with a group of Girl Scouts or family members.

**Activity Plan Length:** This plan should be completed at your own pace.

Activity	Materials Needed
Getting Started: Make a Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research locations, select a camping spot, reserve a site or a permit if necessary.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Computer with internet access
Interview a Pro, Like a Pro <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Put on your reporter hat and interview an expert.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Notebook <input type="checkbox"/> Pen
Make Your Own Dehydrated Food <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn how to DIY this backpacking staple.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fruits or vegetables of your choice <input type="checkbox"/> Lemon juice <input type="checkbox"/> Oven <input type="checkbox"/> Baking sheet <input type="checkbox"/> Parchment paper
Make a Primitive Shelter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn about 4 types of non-tent structures and then try your hand at making one!</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Various materials
Go camping! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take your primitive camping trip.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Camping gear suitable for trip <input type="checkbox"/> Trip itinerary
Wrapping Up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflect on your trip</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Journal <input type="checkbox"/> Pens/pencils

### Getting Started: Make a Plan

Badge Connection: Step 1 – Plan a survival camping trip and Step 2 – Gather your gear

Materials Needed: Computer with internet access

Primitive (or back-country) camping is defined as camping without electricity and running water. Often primitive camping means you have no camping neighbors (or they are a considerable distance away) and no cell service. Primitive camping usually requires a hike in.



Decide where and when you'd like to camp and if you'll camp with your troop, Girl Scout sisters, your family, or a credible outdoor group. Before you go, consider:

### **Permits**

See if permits are required for your planned camping area. Some areas will require you to reserve permits months in advance. Others will require a permit when you arrive.

### **Campsite Reservations**

Many primitive campsites are first-come-first-served (meaning you cannot make a reservation). Plan ahead to increase your chances of scoring a site. In some places, you are required to camp at a designated campsite and in others, you may camp at a place of your choosing.

For first come, first served campsites:

- Arrive early (you'll be much more likely to get a site at noon than at 5 PM).
- Avoid the most popular camping times, such as holiday weekends.
- Go mid-week. You'll have a much better chance on a Wednesday than on a Saturday. If you need to go on a weekend, get there on Friday instead of Saturday.
- Have a back up plan. Is there a nearby site you can go to if the first one is full?
- Call ahead. On the day of your trip, you may be able to call the park to see how many campers have claimed sites.

### **Waste and water**

Check if the area has a potable (drinkable) water source or if there is a water source near your campsite that you could purify. Decide what type of water purification you need, how much water you should pack in with you, etc.

Research rules for human waste in the area. Are vault toilets available? Does human waste need to be packed out? Do you need to bring a trowel to dig a cat hole? Rules vary greatly by location.

### **Fires**

Fires may not be allowed in certain weather conditions or ever in some areas (like many National Parks). Do not plan on relying solely on a fire for cooking and make sure you check the day of your trip for fire bans.

### **Budget**

How much will the trip cost? Include costs like gear rental, camping/permit fees, food, gas, and parking. Determine how you will pay for the trip.

## **Activity #1: Interview a pro, like a pro**

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Badge Connection: Step 1 – Plan a survival camping trip and Step 2 – Gather your gear

Materials Needed: Notebook; pen

Prep Needed:

- Prepare a gear list and trip itinerary.
  - Identify an expert who would know the location and type of trip you're doing well (park ranger, a guide, etc.).
1. Set up a meeting with your identified expert or invite them to a troop meeting. Make sure to bring a trusted adult along!
  2. Put on your journalist hat and prepare at least 5 interview questions to ask the expert. Use the following interview guidelines to help guide you:
    - Ask open-ended questions (questions that cannot be answered with yes, no, or one-word answer)
    - Create simple, straightforward questions. Only ask one question at a time.
    - Ask questions that are relevant to your trip.



- Order your questions in a way that makes sense. Start with the most surface-level or background information questions and progress to the more in-depth questions.
  - Ask questions about the expert's personal experiences
  - Use active listening skills while interviewing. Respond as appropriate, for example, "That's interesting" or "Could you say more about that?"
3. Bring your gear list and itinerary and ask if there is any gear you left out or any activities you should add to your itinerary.

## Activity #2: Make your own dehydrated food

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Badge Connection: Step 3 - Make a camp meal

Materials Needed: Fruits or vegetables of your choice (berries, bananas, peaches, apples, tomatoes, potatoes, or zucchini all work well); lemon juice; oven; baking sheet; parchment paper

Prep Needed:

- Dehydrating food is a great way to prepare for a backcountry trip. Dehydrated foods retain much of their nutritional value but become much lighter and more compact in the dehydration process, making them a backpacking staple. Some dehydrated foods (like potatoes) need to be rehydrated with purified water, and others (such as fruit) can be eaten in their dehydrated form.
  - **Note:** This activity requires many hours of bake time and several days of additional dry time.
1. Preheat the oven to 130 – 160 degrees F. Use lower temperatures for thinner slices and higher temperatures for thicker slices.
  2. Wash ripe fruit/vegetables thoroughly in cold water. Remove any pits or stones from fruit. Slice fruits evenly (about ¼ of an inch thick). If you would eat the peel on the raw fruit or vegetable, you can leave them on for dehydration.
  3. Soak the fruit/vegetables in a mixture of lemon juice and water (¼ cup lemon juice per quart of water) for 10 minutes.
  4. Blot the fruit/vegetables dry with a lint free towel/paper towels.
  5. Line baking sheets with parchment paper and arrange fruits in a single layer, not touching.
  6. Place the pans in the oven and leave the oven door slightly ajar. Rotate the pans every two hours.
  7. Cooking times vary from **4 – 8 hours**. Check on it every hour or so. Dried fruit should feel like leather, but still pliable, not crunchy or squishy.
  8. Place dried fruit/vegetables in glass or plastic containers left slightly open for 4-5 days so that any remaining moisture can evaporate.
  9. Seal the container after 4 – 5 days and enjoy your dehydrated fruits and vegetables! Experiment with rehydrating vegetables by adding them as you cook noodles. Or add dehydrated fruits to oatmeal or cereal!

## Activity #3: Make a primitive shelter

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Badge Connection: Step 4 - Learn a new primitive camping skill

Materials Needed: Various materials

Prep Needed:

- Research the structures listed below and select one shelter to make, in your yard, a park, etc.

Note: All branches, sticks, and vegetation that you use should be dead and down. Never remove bark, branches, or leaves from a living or standing plant. **Always leave no trace – collapse your quinzhee or disassemble and scatter your natural materials!**

### A-Frame Tarp Shelter

An A-Frame Tarp Shelter utilizes two trees to create a tent-like structure.



- Rope
- Tarp
- Stakes

1. Tie a piece of rope between two trees at the desired height of your shelter
2. Lay the tarp over the rope and stake down all four corners, utilizing more rope as tie downs if necessary
3. You may want to secure the rope to the tarp with a knot to prevent sliding

### Quinzhee

A quinzhee is a snow shelter made by piling and digging out snow.

- Snow
  - Shovel
  - 10 Sticks, approximately 12 inches long each
1. Stomp down an area the size of your desired quinzhee to make a hard, packed “floor.” If the snow is really deep you may want to shovel some snow away or use snowshoes to compress the snow more evenly.
  2. Using the shovel, make a large snow pile on top of the packed area. The larger the snow pile, the larger your quinzhee. It should be taller than four feet or so if you want to be able to sit comfortably in the quinzhee when you’re done. This will take some time.
  3. Wait at least 1.5 hours for the quinzhee to “settle.” If the snow is powdery and fine (not sticky) wait 2-3 hours. This process allows the snow to go through a sintering process (the process of compacting material by heat or pressure without melting it).
  4. After you wait, punch 10 sticks through the snow in various locations. You’ll want the sticks to be in the quinzhee about 10 inches and to stick out of the top of the quinzhee a couple of inches. The sticks will ensure that you don’t dig too far and poke a hole in your quinzhee.
  5. Start the hollowing process by digging an entry tunnel with a shovel.
  6. Continue to hollow out the inside of the quinzhee – you might use tools like pots, snowshoes, and your own hands and feet to scoop snow. It’s helpful to take turns with this tiring job.
  7. When you start to see light shining through the snow, dig more carefully and keep an eye out for your guide sticks.
  8. When your quinzhee is hollowed, carefully poke 2 or 3 first sized holes in the ceiling/sides of your quinzhee to let fresh air in and carbon dioxide out. **Do not skip this step.**
  9. Personalize your quinzhee by creating snow shelves or by constructing a wind block outside of the door by creating a snow wall a foot or two away.

### Wedge Tarp Shelter

A wedge tarp is a low shelter that protects from strong winds

- Tarp
  - Rope
  - Stakes
1. Stake down two adjacent corners of the tarp into the ground (this should be the side facing the wind).
  2. Using the rope, attach the center of the opposite side of the tarp to a tree or a trekking pole stuck into the ground (this is the tallest part of your structure).
  3. Stake down the rope if needed, then, stake down the remaining two corners into the ground.
  4. Add additional stakes and rocks to keep the tarp edges near the ground.

### Wickiup (Wigwam)

A Wickiup is a semi-permanent dome or triangle shaped natural dwelling that was commonly made by western and southwestern Native American tribes.

- Many long, sturdy sticks



- Leaves, moss, grasses, pine needles, etc.
1. Collect several dozen long, sturdy sticks.
  2. Select a few branches with forks at the top and lock them together to create a tripod that stands on its own (this may take a few tries).
  3. Lay the other branches on this structure to fill in the gaps, leaving an opening for a door.
  4. Add a layer of vegetation such as leaves, moss, or grass to cover the structure and insulate it.

### Lean-to

A Lean-to is a structure in which the rafters lean against a base at an angle.

- One large, sturdy stick
  - Many additional long sticks
  - Leaves, moss, grasses, pine needles, etc.
  - Rope
1. Find two sturdy trees that are slightly closer together than the length of the large, sturdy stick, or an existing relatively flat, horizontal branch or log that is tall enough to sit under.
  2. Using rope, tie the large stick in between the two trees, parallel with the ground. This will be the “backbone” of the structure, so make sure it is very secure. The height of this stick will be the tallest part of the lean-to.
  3. Lean the rest of the sticks up against the “backbone,” creating about a 45-degree angle with the ground.
  4. Cover the sticks with leaves, moss, grasses, pine needles, etc. Layer small sticks on top to prevent lighter materials from blowing away.
  5. If you’d like, you can add sides to the lean to by leaning shorter sticks against the farthest sticks on each side.

## Activity #4: Go Camping!

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Badge Connection: 5 – Go camping!

Materials Needed: Camping gear suitable for your trip; trip itinerary

1. Take your camping trip!

## Wrapping Up: Reflect on your trip

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Materials Needed: Journal; pens/ pencils

1. Toward the end of your trip, or when you return, reflect on your experience in a journal entry, include what you did but also how you felt and responded to the trip!

## More to Explore

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- Field Trip Ideas:
  - Visit an outdoor outfitter.
  - Camp at a new-to-you state or local park.
- Speaker Ideas:
  - Invite an outdoor expert to your troop meeting to talk about primitive camping.
  - Invite an experienced camper to your troop meeting to demonstrate how to build various primitive shelters.

