

Troop Manual



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Troop 1600

Boy Scouts of America

Jordan UCC, Allentown, PA

2011 Edition

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Where to find things

The Scout store on Postal Rd has official scout equipment. Prices tend to be higher. Official scout equipment is also available on-line at www.scoutstuff.org

Cabelas – Intersection of Rt 78 abd Rt 61 in Hamburg, PA. Online ordering available at www.cabelas.com

Dicks Sporting Goods – Good selection of equipment and have available discount coupons for Scouts (ask at the service desk)

Local Discount Stores – Walmart, K-Mart and Target have some equipment – selection of major items (like sleeping bags and back packs) is more limited at these outlets

Campmor – On-Line outlet offering a very large selection, good pricing, and convenient shipping – www.campmor.com

REI – Store in Plymouth Meeting, PA and online at www.rei.com

L.L. Bean – Store in Saucon Valley Promenade Shops and online at www.llbean.com

Backcountrygear.com – another on-line outlet similar to Campmor
<http://www.backcountrygear.com>

Eastern Mountain Sports – Store in Collegeville, PA and online at www.ems.com

Kelty – a great equipment brand – www.kelty.com

Paragon Sports – www.paragonsports.com

Other Notes:

Remember, you can use your scout account for equipment purchases. Bring your receipt to a scout meeting to have it approved.

If you have any questions at all about equipment or would like a recommendation, please talk to one of the adult leaders.

Approximate size estimates are as follows:

- Day Trips: up to 2,440 cu in.
- Overnight Trips: 2,750 cu in to 3,360 cu in.
- Week End Trips: 3,360 cu in to 3,970 cu in. - Overnight, 2 - 3 days, larger backpack allowing enough room for the basics, a tent, sleeping bag, stove, food and essential clothing.
- Longer Trips: 3,660 cu in to 4,880 cu in. - 4 - 7 days allowing for the additional food and clothing.
- Extended Longer Trips: 4,880 cu in to 5,800 cu in. - 7 days or more.

Miscellaneous

How do I load my backpack?

When you purchase a backpack it will come with instructions and guidelines for packing and distributing weight. Generally, external frame packs should have the weight packed higher and internal frame packs are packed with the weight closest to the center of the pack.

Is the backpack durable?

A good backpack will last for many years. Check for durable materials, good straight well finished stitching, bar tacking in high stress areas, doubled stitched seams and zippers, quality zippers, quality buckles, reinforced shoulder strap and webbing anchors or handles on travel packs. Ask about the reputation of the manufacturer you're considering.

What do I look for after selecting a backpack?

- After fitting is the harness system comfortable?
- Does it follow the contour of your body?
- Is the backpack of the correct length?
- Does the backpack feel comfortable on your back?
- Does it pinch, bind or restrict your freedom of movement?
- Can you look up without hitting the backpack with your head?
- Can you squat down without cutting off the circulation to your legs
- Are all the organizational features you need available? (Places to put the sleeping bag and foam mat, pockets for often used items, daisy chains or other facilities to lash things to the backpack, on a hike pack a extended loading facility, compression straps to secure the load, a covered harness, carry handles and shoulder strap for travel packs, internal compression system for panel loading backpacks etc.)
- Are the materials durable (fabric, zips, buckles and webbing)?

Welcome to Troop 1600

Welcome to Boy Scout Troop 1600. We hope you and your family enjoy being with us. We are a scout-run troop and part of the Boy Scouts of America. We are chartered and sponsored by Jordan United Church of Christ in Allentown, PA. This handbook is intended to give you information about our troop, and the Boy Scouts of America. Comments and questions are welcome and encouraged.

What are the Boy Scouts?

The Boy Scouts is a youth program founded in Great Britain by Lord Robert Baden-Powell. Baden-Powell was a military officer who gained fame in the Boer Wars of the early 1900s. He was appalled by the senseless waste of life caused by the soldier's lack of survival skills, and decided to prevent similar tragedies in the future. He also was looking for a way to make boys into better men.

In 1907, Baden-Powell invited a group of boys to the first Boy Scout camp on Brownsea Island. He soon wrote Scouting for Boys, a book intended to pass on his ideas. It became an instant bestseller, and boys joined by the thousands.

In 1909, William Boyce, an American visitor, was lost in the London fog. A young boy helped him to find his destination. When Boyce offered the boy a tip, the boy said, "No thank you, sir. I am a scout. I won't take anything for helping."

Intrigued, Boyce asked the boy what a scout was. The boy told him about himself and his brother scouts, and took Boyce to the British scouting office. There, Boyce met Baden-Powell, and decided to bring scouting to the United States.

On February 8, 1910, Boyce and others founded the Boy Scouts of America. Since then, millions of boys have enjoyed and benefited from scouting.

Despite its founding by a military officer, Boy scouts is not a military organization. It is a youth program with the objectives of developing character, citizenship and fitness.

If you were in Cub Scouting, you will notice a major difference between that and Boy Scouting. In Cub Scouts, adults planned and ran the program. In Boy Scouts, the scouts themselves plan and organize the troop. The role of the adult leaders is to assist them in doing so.

Troop Organization

The Boy Scouts of America does not operate units directly. Instead, it grants charters to organizations authorizing them to organize scout troops as part of their youth service program.

Our chartered organization is Jordan UCC. The Church Council is responsible for the troop. They appoint a Chartered Organization Representative (COR) to act as a liaison between the troop and the Church. The troop committee acts for the Church Council in making policies and providing support for the troop.

Major positions on the committee are the Committee Chair (CC), the Advancement Chair, the Secretary/Treasurer, and the Program Chair. These people are responsible for major areas of the troop operation.

The Committee selects a Scoutmaster (SM) and one or more Assistant Scoutmasters (ASM) to oversee the Troop and to advise the Troop leaders.

The troop is run by the Senior Patrol Leader (SPL), who is elected by the entire troop membership. He appoints a staff to help him in his job, consisting of an Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (ASPL), a Scribe, a Guide, Instructors, a Quartermaster and a Librarian. Other positions are appointed as needed.

The scouts are divided into patrols of 6-12 members. Each patrol elects a Patrol Leader (PL) to run the patrol. He appoints an Assistant Patrol Leader (APL), and other positions as he sees fit. First year scouts are assigned to a patrol and also work together for the first year as part of a special new scout patrol.

The Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC) consists of the Senior Patrol Leader, the Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, the Scribe, the Guide and the Patrol Leaders. They meet annually to plan the yearly calendar, and monthly to make detailed plans for the following month's meetings.

Troop Meetings

Troop meetings are held from 7:00-8:30 p.m. each Monday night at Jordan UCC. Our normal meeting place is the Church Social Hall. During the summer months (Memorial Day through Labor Day) we meet at Camp Jordan on the Church grounds weather permitting. Scouts are encouraged to attend all meetings, and to arrive before the starting time. Each scout should bring his Boy Scout Handbook, a notebook and pen/pencil to every meeting.

Uniform

The minimum acceptable uniform for meetings is the troop neckerchief, with an official scout shirt, which must be clean, buttoned and tucked in. The shirt must have the following patches, in the locations specified in the Boy Scout Handbook:

- Left Sleeve – Minsi Trails Council Strip, the number 1600, current position patch (if applicable)
- Right Sleeve - American flag, patrol emblem, one Quality Unit emblem (if applicable)
- Left Pocket - Rank badge
- Above left pocket - World Scouting Emblem

Additional patches may be worn on the uniform if the scout has earned them: Arrow of Light, Recruiter strip, Trained strip, Religious Award knot with devices, Order of the Arrow Lodge flap, and temporary patch. If worn, these must be in the correct location.

Additional uniform items are encouraged, and are appropriate for any meeting: pants, belt, socks, and appropriate shoes.

3. Internal frame backpacks are:

- More expensive and consequently of better quality.
- Cool to wear, a well-designed and correctly fitted internal backpack provides good back ventilation.
- Designed to fit your body snugly and hold your load in close to your natural centre of gravity.
- More comfortable and better at distributing the weight evenly to the lower back and hips than external frame backpacks.
- More streamlined than externals, allowing for more freedom of movement and easier passage through tight spaces.
- Easier to balance than external frame packs.
- Require more experience to pack as these have fewer pockets and load distribution is critical to backpack performance.
- There is a definite trend towards internal backpacks this is due to the improved functionality and better performance of these backpacks.

Internal Frame backpacks when of good design and fitted correctly will out perform external frame backpacks for comfort and functionality. The main factor for purchasing an External frame backpack over an Internal Frame would be price as external frame backpacks are considerably less expensive. Although there is some doubt that internal frames provide adequate back ventilation, it is important to remember that good Internal Frame backpacks are in contact only on the lower lumbar area and on the upper shoulders.

Should an internal frame backpack be personally and professionally fitted?

All internal frame backpacks should be personally and professionally fitted, that includes having the staves contoured to your back regardless of brand, with the salesperson giving explicit instruction on the use of each adjustment. To contour these staves to your back correctly these staves must be removed from the backpack and not just simply bent in the backpack until the staves are "roughly" the correct shape. Be wary of salespeople stating that the frames will mould to your back in time, as this is absolutely not true. If faced with this statement, have the salesperson demonstrate removing and bending the staves this should demonstrate the inaccuracy of the statement "It will mould to your back in time". Be wary and prevent back damage due to an ill-fitting backpack.

Backpack Size

What backpack size do I require?

The maximum capacity of backpack you are able to purchase and fit correctly will depend on your body size or more specifically your Torso length. The maximum length of backpack available for your body size is determined by your torso length, which then determines the total backpack capacity. The really good thing about internal frame backpacks are the compression straps provided when you don't need all that extra space. Suggest the best guideline is the longest trip you would take while relying on the backpack to carry all your supplies. This would depend on type of equipment and individual requirements.

Sleeping Pads



Sleeping pads add comfort and insulation when sleeping outdoors. Many styles and options (and price ranges) are available. Try to remember convenience of packing when making a selection. The pad you chose should be able to be packed or strapped on to your pack (no large air mattresses – please)

Foot Lockers



Foot lockers are used when attending summer camp to store clothing and equipment. There are many models available. Many scouts in Troop 1600 have found the heavy plastic lockers sold at Walmart are an excellent cost effective choice.

Selecting a Backpack

What type of backpack is required? Internal Frame or External Frame? What is the difference between frameless and framed backpacks?

1. Frameless backpacks (sometimes called Day Packs) are:

- The least expensive and are lighter and less bulky
- Too small for anything but the shortest trips.
- Unable to handle large heavy loads comfortably.

2. External frame backpacks are:

- Easier to pack, extra exterior pockets make packing and organizing easier.
- Cooler with the external frame keeping the backpack body away from your back.
- Great load carriers on easy to moderate terrain and designed mainly for hiking on open trails.
- Places more weight on the hips than internal frame backpacks.
- Wider, heavier and bulkier than similarly sized internal frame packs.
- When fully packed, have a relatively high centre of gravity, making balancing difficult on rough trails, more difficult terrain.
- Offer a greater degree of adjustment for younger hikers that are still growing.

Full-dress items are encouraged at Courts of Honor and other ceremonial occasions: Merit Badge sash, medals. Uniform for activities will be specified for each activity. Travel to and from activities will always be in uniform, either the scout shirt, or troop T-shirt. During activities, Scout related T-shirts are desirable but other shirts are acceptable. Any designs or slogans on the shirts must be in good taste. Drug and alcohol-related messages are inappropriate.

Advancement

First Class and Below

Scouts advance by satisfying all requirements for a rank. Requirements for Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class may be signed off by the SPL, ASPL or PL, as long as the person signing is at least First Class. These may also be signed off by any adult leader.

Star and above

All requirements for Star and above must be signed off by an adult leader.

Scoutmaster Conference

When a scout feels he has satisfied all requirements for a rank, he must schedule a Scoutmaster Conference with the scoutmaster. This should be done before Board of Review night. You should attend a Scoutmaster Conference in full uniform.

Board of Review

When a scout has completed the Scoutmaster Conference, he next contacts the Advancement Chairperson for the troop to schedule a Board of Review (BOR). This is a review board consisting of 3-5 members of the troop committee. They will interview the scout to ensure he has passed all requirements.

This is not a retest on requirements. It is a discussion of what the scout has learned, how he feels about the troop, and what the troop can do better. You must attend a Board of Review in full uniform.

Presentation of Rank badges

Rank Badges will be presented to the scout immediately after completing his Board of Review. Formal recognition of this achievement will be recognized and the scout will be presented his advancement card at the next Court of Honor (COH).

Merit Badges

When a scout feels he is ready to work on a merit badge, he will ask the scoutmaster for a blue card. This authorizes the scout to work on the requirements with a merit badge counselor approved by the scoutmaster and the troop advancement chair. The scout is responsible for scheduling sessions with the merit badge counselor, and returning the completed blue card to the scoutmaster when work is completed. Merit Badges are presented at the next Court of Honor (COH).

Activities

It is the goal of Troop 1600 to conduct at least one outdoor activity each month. All Troop activities are planned by the PLC. All activities require two deep adult leadership (over age 21 and trained). The Troop will strive to have four (4) adult leaders on any activity, with a minimum of 2 required. All registered adults must be BSA Youth Protection trained. Times, meeting places and uniforms will be announced in advance of each activity. Activity information is posted on the Troop website.

Costs of the activity will be announced before the activity, and it is the scout's responsibility to pay them. Costs charged per individual will be charged to the scout. Troop charges will be split among all scouts. Food costs will be split among patrol members. Scouts who commit to attending an activity, but do not attend, will be responsible for their share of the prorated cost.

Service Projects

Helping other people is a key part of the Scout Oath and scouts are expected to complete service hours as part of their rank advancement and scout spirit. Troop 1600 engages in service projects and helps with events sponsored by Jordan UCC that can be counted as service hours for the scouts. During the year, scouts will have the opportunity to participate in events such as:

Church Sponsored Events...

- ❖ Setting up and cleaning up for events run at Jordan UCC
- ❖ Helping with the annual church basket social
- ❖ Working on the grounds of Jordan UCC
- ❖ Offering services through the annual "Time and Talent" auction where we provide service (usually yard work) to a church member that has made a significant donation to the Church in exchange for our help.

Assisting with Cub Pack 1600 Events...

- ❖ Assisting with the annual Pinewood Derby
- ❖ Helping with other Pack events where extra hands are needed

Community Service – different events each year...

- ❖ Helping with a book fair at the community library
- ❖ Helping with the annual MS Bike-a-thon
- ❖ Helping with the Miracle Baseball League which benefits children with disabilities.

This is not meant to be a complete list of the opportunities for service. Scouts are encouraged to seek opportunities for service and to propose ideas for Troop service projects to the PLC. Scouts can earn service hours outside the Troop sponsored activities with the approval of the Scoutmaster.

Troop Calendar

Our troop is planned by the PLC each October for the following calendar year. It will list all the planned meetings and events. Calendar updates will be distributed quarterly at the Court of Honor meeting.

Regular activities include – PLC Meeting on the second Monday of each month, Troop Committee meets on the third Tuesday of each month, Board of Reviews

Mess Kits and Utensils



Official scout mess kits (pictured) are available at the scout shop for about \$25 and contain a plate, personal size pan and pot and a small cup. There are many other brands and styles available at prices usually less than the official scout brand.

Scouts essentially need a plate, bowl, cup, and a set of utensils (knife, fork and spoon).

Please make sure this equipment is clearly marked in some way so you can recognize it easily during cleanup!

The cups included with most mess kits are very small (intended to also be used as measuring cups). Most scouts also bring a larger coffee mug style cup with a lid to camp.

Compass



There are many types and styles of compasses. The two pictured are the best for scouts to learn orienteering. The compass pictured on the left is a standard mapping compass and the one on the right is a sighting compass. Both work really well and the scouts will get to learn how to use both styles.

Stuff Sacks



Nylon stuff sacks are very convenient for keeping things organized and dry. These are available at any store that sells camping equipment. If your sleeping bag does not have a manufacturer supplied sack, you should purchase an appropriately sized stuff sack to put your sleeping bag in to keep it clean and dry. *No garbage bags for sleeping bags!*

Features

- **Hood:** As much as 25% of a person's body heat is lost through the top of the head. Insulated hoods are a standard feature on most sleeping bags (except summer bags). Often tightened with a draw string.
- **Velcro closure tab:** Often found at top of zippers and on draft collars to ensure that the zipper or collar does not open when you move around in the sleeping bag.
- **Insulated draft collar:** Helps keep the warm air in and the cold air out by forming a collar around your neck - often tightened with a drawstring.
- **Staggered seams:** Help prevent cold spot by ensuring that seams of the inner liner do not line up with seams on the outer liner.
- **Zipper draft tube:** Runs the length of the sleeping bag inside the zipper. Keeps cold air from seeping in through the zipper teeth.

Care of the sleeping bag

- **Storage sacks:** Do not leave your sleeping bag in its stuff sack for long periods of time. Sleeping bags can lose their loft and their insulating abilities if maintained in a compressed state for too long. It is best to store a sleeping bag in a large, breathable sack.
- **Bag liners:** A bag liner helps keep your sleeping bag clean by absorbing your perspiration and the grit from the previous day's hike. A clean sleeping bag is warmer (oils don't make good insulators) and loftier. Fleece bag liners can also add warmth in colder weather. A fleece liner will improve the performance of a bag up to 10°

Tips for staying warm

- **Stay dry:** If wet, dry yourself off before getting into the bag. In the sleeping bag, adjust the hood tightness and zipper height to prevent sweating. Do not breathe into the sleeping bag which causes condensation within the bag. The insulation value of all fills decreases when they are wet.
- **Use a sleeping pad:** A pad not only increases your comfort, but provides an important layer of insulation between you and the heat robbing ground.
- **Wear long underwear:** Long underwear keeps you warmer by retaining heat near your body, keeps your sleeping bag drier, and helps keep your bag clean.
- **Wear a hat:** Even if your sleeping bag has a hood, a hat provides a layer of insulation next to your skin that retains heat.
- **Eat and drink well:** Your body needs plenty of calories and fluids to maintain a warm state in a cold environment.
- **Loft the bag:** Lay the sleeping bag out at least an hour before bedtime. This allows the insulation to expand which maximizes its insulating ability

are scheduled during Troop meetings by our Advancement Chairperson, and our Court of Honor takes place quarterly on the third Monday of the month.

Troop Finances

The scouts are responsible for financing the troop. Troop dues are \$80.00 per year. These are Dues are paid on an annual basis in April/May.

The troop runs two Troop fundraisers each year. Proceeds from these sales are used to support our yearly program and troop equipment and supplies. Each scout is expected to participate in at least one of these fundraisers. Failure to meet this goal will result in an extra participation fee of \$60. The troop runs other fundraisers such as Boy Scout Popcorn and Hoagies. Proceeds from these sales go directly to the individual scout accounts which can be used for paying scout-related expenses: uniform costs, equipment, activity fees or dues.

"I can't afford it" is not a reason to avoid scouting. If you have problems with costs of the program, talk to the Scoutmaster or a troop committee member.

Suggested Equipment

The information contained in this document is a listing of suggested equipment for boys participating in the Troop 1600 outdoor program. It is not required that all of this equipment is acquired immediately as the scout enters the troop. There are a few items that are required to camp (indicated in the list), but, all others can be acquired over time.

Required Items

- Sleeping Bag** – This is an important item and you should think about the range of activities that you will be participating in. More information on sleeping bag on page 2 of this guide.
- Poncho or Rain Jacket** – Scouts are asked to bring rain gear on every trip regardless of the weather forecast. Ponchos work well as they usually fit over backpacks.
- Footwear** – Some form of hiking boot or shoe is preferred. Sneakers or similar casual footwear really do not work well in camping or hiking activities. Finding boots that are waterproof is also a big plus as we hold events rain or shine. Lastly, insulated boots for winter activities is also recommended. It is not recommended to wear insulated boots year round.
- Mess Kit and Utensils** – Scouts need a mess kit or something similar to eat meals on camping trips. More information is provided on page 3 of this guide.
- Water bottle or Canteen** – Having a personal supply of water is part of being prepared. Any canteen or water bottle will work.
- Flash Light** – Flashlights that are small and can fit into pockets or belt cases are best. LED flashlights work well and are easier on the batteries.
- Personal Care Kit** – small bag containing tooth brush, tooth paste, soap, comb, wash cloth, etc. – remember a scout is clean!
- Scout Handbook, Notebook and Pencil** – required equipment for all scout meetings and events!
- Clothing and shoes appropriate for the event and time of year**

Higher Priority Optional Items

- Backpack** – Many styles and options available – see page 4 of this guide for more information
- Daypack** – used for day hikes and outings. Simple backpack similar to those used for school. External pockets to carry water bottles or an internal water bladder are nice features.
- Personal First Aid Kit** – small personal first aid kits can be purchased or easily put together using supplies from home. Putting together a personal first aid kit is a requirement for first aid merit badge. Things to include are listed in the scout handbook
- Compass** – More information provided on page 3 of this handout
- Camp Chair** – Although certainly not required, most scouts bring along a camp chair for use around camp.
- Stuff Sacks** – Keep things dry and organized – more info on page 3
- Foot Locker** – required for summer camp only. Plastic models sold at Walmart work very well and are priced at about \$20. Once you have it, a foot locker is an excellent place to store your camping equipment at home in between trips.

Optional Items

- Sleeping Pad and Camp Pillow** – Pad can provide comfort and insulation. Small camp pillows are easy to squeeze into your pack and provide comfort over rolled up clothing. More info on page 3 of this guide.
- Personal Lantern** – Nice to have in the tent. New models are smaller and offer LED lights which are much easier on battery consumption. Try to choose something that will fit in your pack.
- Head Lamp** – Convenient alternative to a flashlight very convenient for walking at night.
- Pocket knife or Multi Tool** – Scouts can't carry a pocket knife until they have passed their Totin' Chip training. Once trained, a pocket knife or multi-tool is nice to have. Appropriate use is always monitored. Fixed blades (sometimes called sheath knives) are not permitted. All other wood tools are provided by the troop and used only following the Totin' Chip training.

Selecting a Sleeping Bag

Usage (Summer vs Spring/Fall vs Winter)

- **Temperature ratings are imprecise:** It is best to take the temperature ratings assigned by manufacturers as a rough guide. There is no industry standard method of determining temperature ratings of sleeping bags. While you can assume that one manufacturer's 20° F sleeping bag will keep you warmer than that same manufacturer's 30° F sleeping bag, you cannot assume that one manufacturer's 20° F sleeping bag will keep you warmer than another manufacturer's 30° F sleeping bag.
- **People and situations vary:** We all have different metabolisms and degrees of cold tolerance. Two people can be side by side in identical sleeping bags while one is "a bit too warm" and the other is "freezing." Multiple factors can affect how warm a person feels while they sleep: amount and type of clothing; sleeping pad insulating capacity; tent insulation and ventilation; type, quantity and warmth of food/liquids recently consumed; level of exertion during the day; wind; humidity; etc.

- **Consider a temperature range:** Given the imprecision of manufacturers' ratings and given the wide variation in people's comfort levels, it is advisable to consider bags within a range of temperature ratings. Sleeping bags can be divided into the following three classes based on manufacturers' ratings and bag design:
 - **Summer camping:** 40° to 50° F (4° to 10° C)
 - **Spring/Fall camping:** 15° to 35° F (-9° to 2° C)
 - **Winter:** -10° to 10° F (-23 to -12° C)

Shape

- **Mummy:** Very space and weight efficient because their tapered shape reduces the amount of fabric and fill that must be packed and carried. The lack of dead space allows these sleeping bags to warm up more quickly and keep you warmer in colder temperatures than does a bag with a less tapered cut. Some people find the cocoon-like feel comforting, others find it claustrophobic.
- **Rectangular:** The whole point of a sleeping bag is to let you sleep comfortably. If a mummy is too constraining, a few more ounces of carrying weight and a few more cubic inches of sacrificed pack space is a reasonable price to pay for a good night's sleep. However, because rectangular bags are more difficult to warm up and bulkier, they are best suited for summer camping and car-camping.

Fill (insulation material)

- **Performance:** Down provides the best insulation for weight and volume (ie, it is light and packs small). However, down is a very poor insulator if it gets wet and down is relatively expensive. Polarguard 3D, Primaloft and Thermolite are all high-end synthetic fills. The fiber manufacturers each claim benefits for their particular formulation. It is generally accepted that Hollofil II is a medium-performance fill in terms of insulation and packability. Primaloft is known especially for its ability to retain insulating capabilities when wet.
- **Price:** As you would expect, the higher performing fills are more expensive. If you don't mind a slight weight and volume penalty, Hollofil II bags can be a bargain for camping or backpacking in mild-to-moderate weather.

Size

- **Length:** The lengths listed in the tables are from the bottom of the bag to the top of the "body" portion of the sleeping bag (ie, the hood is excluded from the measure). Measure your height when standing from the floor to your chin, plus give yourself a couple extra inches of space (if your feet are pressed against the bottom of the sleeping bag, it could be difficult to keep them warm during the night). If you will be placing a few items (eg, the next day's clothes, water bottle, camera) at the foot of the sleeping bag, add a few more inches to your toe-to-chin height. There is no point in buy a bag much longer than your toe-to-chin height because the extra space just increases weight, pack-space and cost while requiring you to warm a larger amount of dead space in your bag.