

**The Ultimate
Outdoorsman's Guide to
Wilderness Hiking and
Camping**

Tools for Enjoying all 4 seasons

Scott Rauvers

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Portland, Oregon

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DEDICATION

This Book is dedicated to the Forest, whose wisdom
and enrichment knows no limit

About the Author



Scott is a master herbalist and routinely spends weeks at a time gathering herbs in remote areas

to make tinctures, as well as embarks on wellness hikes for fitness and pleasure. He is also the Inventor of LampStove.

It was during these times in remote wilderness locations, gathering herbs for making healing tinctures that Scott learned the art of camping in any season.

He is also the author of How to Make Tinctures, Extracts, Flower Essences and Homeopathic Remedies including 4 books on longevity and wellness and is the founder of MightyZ.com, a website devoted to health and wellness.

Other Books by Scott Include:

Released November 2013.

Foods, Herbs and Pharmaceuticals that
Extend Lifespan. A Summary Of Over
200 Research Studies Proven To
Lengthen Lifespan. ----

Released August 2013.

Anti Aging Nutrition Secrets. The
Fountain of Youth Seekers Guide to
Longevity-

Released August 2013.

A Centurion's Toolbox for Longevity
Living Beyond 120 - 2nd Edition

Released Late-December 2012.

How to Make and Sell Your Own
Aromatherapy and Herbal Products

Released Mid-December 2012.

How to Sell Your Homemade Products
Online

Scott Rauvers

**The Ultimate Outdoorsman's Guide to Wilderness
Hiking and Camping**

**READ THE FIRST 55 PAGES OF THIS BOOK
FOR FREE AT
WWW.MIGHTYZ.COM/SURVIVAL_CAMPING.HTML**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank “*Forest Jim*” for sharing his many experiences and secrets of camping outdoors in weather extremes

INTRODUCTION

Written by the Inventor of the LAMPSTOVE (www.LAMPSTOVE.com), this book makes it possible to comfortably camp in rain, desert or snow. It just takes the right information and planning. This unique book makes a great survival book for military, boy and girl scouts, outdoor rescue departments or any outdoor enthusiast. At the end of this book, you can view the images and illustrations needed for you to make your own LampStove for under \$10.

From the author: Out of spending many years camped in remote regions and in all climate conditions, I have yet to find a good book that covers camping in extreme cold, hot or wet conditions with the information in one easy to read book. Sure there are some good survival books out there, but there is a big difference between survival, and camping and hiking for the sheer

pleasure of it.

This book gives you the much sought after tools and information to make camping in the snow, rain or desert an enjoyable and rewarding experience. With more and more campgrounds becoming crowded each year, by properly planning to camp in snow, rain or desert, you have increased privacy and comfort.

After reading this book you will have increased self-confidence and solutions that you can apply while camping in just about any climate. This book can also make a handy emergency book to save your life if you happen to find yourself unexpectedly caught in a weather extreme.

This is not just another how to camp or hike book, but instead gives you straight forward practical tips and techniques not found in other camping

or hiking books. What many camping books on the market today neglect to tell their readers is how to camp in snow, rain or desert conditions and how to turn those conditions into an adventure filled with memorable experiences. Many of these books are hard core "survival" books making those extremes look life threatening.

This book assumes the reader has a background of general camping experience and maybe even a small library of books related to camping and hiking, and is fairly well educated about hiking and safety in the wilderness.

You will always get the most out of any camping experience by learning how to effectively adapt quickly to the environmental conditions you are exposed to. This book teaches that with the proper planning, you will learn that nature accommodates you in all weather environments. The keys are the right tools and having respect for nature.

**The Ultimate Outdoorsman's Guide to Wilderness
Hiking and Camping**

By having this book available in your library of adventure books, you will have at your fingertips one of the best resources, tips and information on surviving comfortably in the snow, rain or desert.

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***Dedicated to nature's seasons whose
beauty knows no bounds***

Chapter 1

How New Technology is Making Camping and Hiking in the Wilderness More Enjoyable than Ever Before

Technology has made the camping and hiking experience much more enjoyable and rewarding. It is almost impossible to get lost nowadays as long as you carry a reliable GPS device. Or if you have a cell phone, the soon to be completed worldwide internet network, will mean you can call for help anywhere on earth and emergency crews will be able to pinpoint your position just from your cell phone. How neat is that? Now longer can we fear getting lost anymore at any remote region on earth. We can just make a phone call.

One of the major advantages of living in this age of technical marvels, is that the days of carrying heavy equipment on a hike or camping trip are drawing to a close. Now with technology making items much more lighter and durable, a hike without extra weight leads to a more memorable camping experience.

Also if you do a search for the weight of tents over the last few decades you will see that they are gradually getting lighter and lighter. Also the materials that they are made from is also getting more and more durable. This means that in the near future as technology in lightweight materials continues to improve, we could expect to see tents that weigh under one ounce or less and are more durable and less vulnerable to water than ever before.

One major milestone is the ability to now charge batteries using flame usb chargers. Flame usb chargers are devices that create electricity from

flame(s). One device is the Power Pot, which not only allows you to cook a meal in your cooking pot, but as you cook, the excess energy generated by the heat will charge your cell phone or other rechargeable device. This is a really cool invention, because while you are cooking your food, you could also be charging your flashlight, which you can now buy flashlights with USB ports.

Another amazing piece of technology is the FlameStower, which also charges your devices just from the heat of an open flame. And soon you will be able to power your flashlight just by the warmth of your body, allowing you to walk at night as long as the LED does not burn out. Considering LEDs have a general life expectancy of 50,000 hrs you could use the flashlight non-stop for 2083 days before the LED burned out. If you want to research this amazing new flashlight, you can look up the name: **Ann Makosinski from**

Victoria, British Columbia, who is one of the inventors of the flashlight. This sure takes the fun out of using those wind up generators to make light.

Another bonus for outdoor hikers and campers are the new nano waterproofing sprays that you spray on clothing and objects to keep you dry. Before you run out and purchase a nano waterproof spray, I strongly recommend that you read the reviews carefully and find out the best brand. Not only are they getting better and better, but because this market is so new, the quality of some of the nano sprays will vary. The brand DG Nano Ultra-Hydrophobic Waterproof Spray has good reviews on Amazon and sells out fast. It also has great videos on YouTube showing its amazing performance.

Chapter 2

Camping and Hiking in Rain and Fog Conditions

Camping in the Rain

Camping in the rain is much like snow, you mostly have the entire campground or trail to yourself, the temperatures are usually cooler and you don't have to worry about dehydration.

Predicting Changes in the Weather

If the weather changes from cooler to slightly warmer, this usually means it will rain within the next 24 hours. This is because the excess water moisture in the air traps and reflects the heat

that is coming from the earth as well as higher elevations.

One neat little trick to know when the rain will be lighter is if it has been raining heavily all night, than just before or during dawn, the rain always gets lighter or stops altogether. This "pause" usually lasts between 20 and 40 minutes or longer. This is not always the case, but I have found it to be a valuable time window to use to get out of bed and hike to a location before the rain starts again.

Moon Phases and Changes in the Weather

Planning your camping trip in sync with fair weather conditions can greatly improve your camping experience. There has been for centuries a supposed link between the moon's phase and the changes in the weather. Today, with computers and technology, experts can find out if this theory holds any water.

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To put this theory to the test a group of geographers and climatologists from Arizona State University and another team from the National Climatic Data Center in Asheville, North Carolina ran a scientific analysis for stream runoff levels. They used data from almost 11,000 U.S. Geological Survey stations that were based on inland streams. These streams had runoff measurements going from as far back to the 1900's. They then compared this data to the phases of the moon and discovered in their findings that the streams flowed more often during a quarter moon and again at the halfway moon and again between the full and new moons.

It is also possible these increases may also be associated with a perigee moon (*times when the moon is closer to the earth*) although further studies are needed to confirm this.

In two additional studies done in 1965

by G. Mahoney and F.A. Berson, titled: **Rainfall and Moon Phase and Heavy Rainfalls and the Lunar Cycle**, they studied rainfall levels of monsoons in Jakarta and rainfalls on the west coast of India of Magalore. They discovered that it rained more often during times of fewer sunspots and that in Jakarta it rained most often shortly before a full moon and it would rain least just after new moon. In the city of Magalore it would rain most often when the moon was in its first quarter and it would rain least during the moon's last quarter. In temperature studies done by G. Maoney and F.A. Berson, they discovered that nighttime minimum temperatures were slightly higher during the full moon.

From my camping experience, I have found these moon phases are correct and that it does rain more often around these moon phases. I have also noticed that there seems to be more moisture in the air. So in summary, the best time to camp without having to worry about rain would be to begin

your camping the first 5 days after a full moon and camp until the last 5 days after the moon's last quarter during lower solar activity (*solar activity is at seasonal lows from November to January of each year*). Although this is just an observation based on scientific analysis, you should always check the weather ahead of time to be absolutely sure.

Also as a guideline if you are in a cooler environment and you see that it is about to rain, it means that just before the rain, you will experience slightly warmer temperatures, especially at higher elevations. And after the rain has passed, the first 24 hours the sky is clear, will mean cooler temperatures.

How Sudden Weather Changes can be accurately Forecasted

As a hobby I research and study solar

weather and have learned a great deal over the years how it affects our local weather. I want to share with you some of these secrets which I believe may help you get over the uncertainty of when the weather will suddenly change.

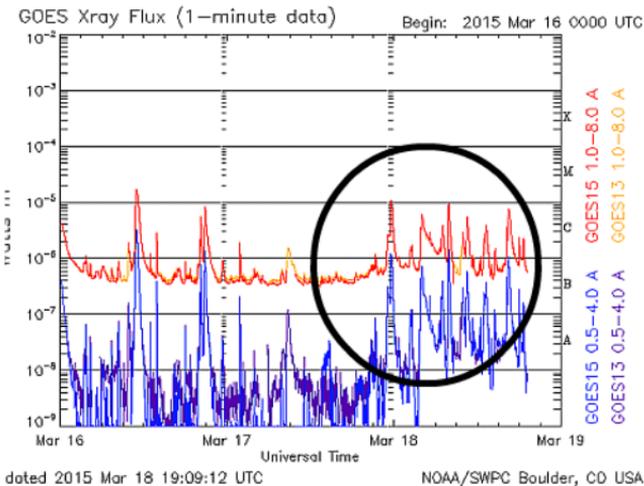
We have all seen the weather man/woman on TV forecasting the weather, and than a few days or hours later he/she is completely wrong. The changes in our weather are a direct result of the amount of increasing and decreasing solar activity taking place on our sun. The more solar activity that is occurring, the more dramatic and unexpected the changes in the weather. So by monitoring our sun's weather, we can get a pretty good idea of when the weather is going to change and how intense the change will be.

For example, say the weather man/woman says it is going to rain tomorrow with a 50% chance of the rain occurring. This really means that

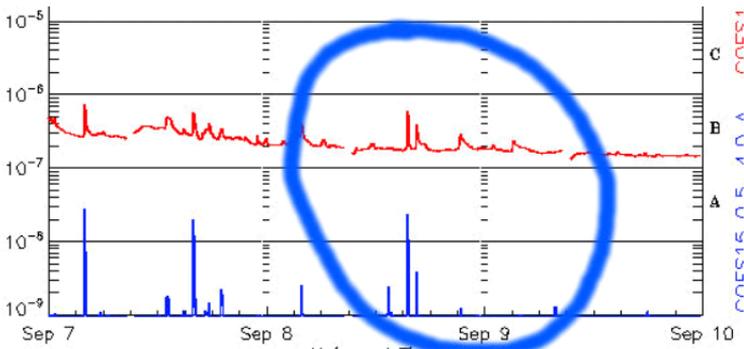
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the weather man/woman is 50% uncertain that rain is going to occur. So let's take a look at the solar activity occurring.

The following image below gives a more clear illustration.



As shown above, the increasing solar activity is a time when solar activity is changing from a quiet line to a more active one. This is a period where your local weather microclimate will change.



As shown above, the line is going into a decrease and then flat. Solar activity is decreasing. This is a period once again where your local weather microclimate will change.

**Title: Goes X-ray Flux 1 minute data
Solar Flux Link**

<http://www.swpc.noaa.gov/products/goes-x-ray-flux>

So the line that you see is the activity of the sun. When this line gets more active after being quiet for a period of time, the local regional weather will change all over the world. This is

known as the weather "microclimate".

The weather could go from hot to cold, dry to wet, windy to calm etc. But if you already know that the forecast is 50% rain, than it will go from dry to wet in the next 6 to 12 hours when the line becomes more active or the line starts to decrease from a high of activity. If there are more sunspots occurring the change will be almost sudden.

Now the opposite is also true, when the line has been active for a number of days and starts to go "calm" or "decline" the weather in your region will undergo a change again. It could be dry, than after this change, it may rain or if it has been higher temperatures the last few days, than it will get cooler or any range of weather changes. One very interesting effect of this, is that in coastal areas, especially along the northern coastline of the

United States, when this "flat line" in solar activity has occurred for a number of days, the coastline will get more foggy and have more dense mist than usual.

Now as explained earlier, when the sun's activity is more active, the changes are much more severe. Just say for example the rain this past month has been mild and drizzling. As the sun's sunspot level increases, instead of mild drizzling, the mild drizzle could turn into thunderstorms and heavy showers.

Luckily, thanks to NOAA, we can plot when these periods of higher solar activity (*increasing sunspots*) are going to occur. As will be shown in the next illustration, the higher numbers represent estimates of days the solar activity is going to be higher than usual and the lower numbers days the solar activity is going to be reduced or lessened. The most quiet periods are the first 24 to 48 hours after entering the lowest

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number or point forecasted.

-
27-day Space Weather Outlook Table
Issued 2015-03-16
#

| # | UTC | Radio Flux | Planetary | Largest |
|---|-------------|------------|-----------|----------|
| # | Date | 10.7 cm | A Index | Kp Index |
| | 2015 Mar 16 | 115 | 8 | 3 |
| | 2015 Mar 17 | 112 | 15 | 4 |
| | 2015 Mar 18 | 110 | 20 | 5 |
| | 2015 Mar 19 | 108 | 18 | 4 |
| | 2015 Mar 20 | 100 | 12 | 3 |
| | 2015 Mar 21 | 95 | 8 | 3 |
| | 2015 Mar 22 | 95 | 8 | 3 |
| | 2015 Mar 23 | 100 | 20 | 4 |
| | 2015 Mar 24 | 105 | 8 | 3 |
| | 2015 Mar 25 | 110 | 5 | 2 |
| | 2015 Mar 26 | 110 | 5 | 2 |
| | 2015 Mar 27 | 110 | 15 | 4 |
| | 2015 Mar 28 | 110 | 30 | 5 |
| | 2015 Mar 29 | 105 | 25 | 5 |
| | 2015 Mar 30 | 105 | 12 | 4 |
| | 2015 Mar 31 | 105 | 10 | 3 |

As the above image shows, periods of higher solar activity occur from March 18th to March 20th and again from March 27th to

March 29th. This is because the column marked Planetary A Index has higher than normal numbers.

Title : 27-Day Outlook of 10.7 cm Radio Flux and Geomagnetic Indices

Internet Hyperlink:

<http://www.swpc.noaa.gov/products/27-day-outlook-107-cm-radio-flux-and-geomagnetic-indices>

Or if you don't feel like typing in the above link, just enter into Google the search term: **27-Day Outlook of 10.7 cm Radio Flux** and the page will automatically pop up for you.

Season-wise, solar activity is at its lowest from November to January, and at its highest from March to June. March to June also happen to be the months that unexpected and surprising tornadoes are most common.

Source: USTORNADOES.com

<http://www.ustornadoes.com/2013/03/19/monthly-tornado-averages-by-state-and-region/>

This means if you want to plan a perfect camping trip, than go when solar activity is winding down or quiet, combine this with the right moon phases, lower solar activity (*reduced mosquito attacks, as we will cover later on*) and you have yourself the perfect outdoor camping trip. I also suspect that some event planning companies use this same technique to plan the best time to hold outdoor parties and events.

What is the Dew Point?

Sometimes if you leave clothing or articles outside overnight they will be frozen stiff the following morning. This is especially so during cooler temperatures. This is from the dew, or more water moisture in the air. Don't worry about frost if the outside dew point is 45 degrees or higher.

A good point to remember is that the dew point temperature is NEVER GREATER than the outdoor air temperature. So if the outside air cools, the excess moisture has to be removed from the air. This occurs through condensation. When the condensation occurs, it results in tiny water droplets that cause fog, frost, clouds, or even precipitation.

Fire starters for Moist and Damp Conditions

Fire starters can make a great way to get a fire going quickly. One of the most versatile fire starters is Duct tape. Besides being used as an emergency repair item on the trail for repairing a torn boot or to seal a hole in your pack, it works well as kindling if you tear it into small pieces.

I personally have used the charcoal briquettes that don't require lighter fuel to make my fires, as they make great fire starters and can even be used to

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cook mid to hot meals on. If using charcoal briquettes, just be sure to buy the briquettes that require no lighter fuel, reducing the need for you to carry lighter fluid with you. The only weakness in using briquettes is that if the air is cool and damp, due to the porous structure of briquettes, they tend to soak up the moisture in the air, so you have to use more of them or burn them with some wood to get a decent amount of heat.

Another good fire starter is cotton balls soaked in Vaseline. Vaseline is extremely waterproof and moisture proof, making it a great rain fire starter. As a bonus, the Vaseline can be used to soothe chapped skin, a lubricant for zippers, as well as many other uses.

Making a Fire in the Rain

If you are not using propane or charcoal briquettes for your fire, and want to use the natural timber around you, here are a few important tips to get you started.

If possible, before you leave home, take some large amounts of dryer lint and steel wool with you, because they light well and will act as a good tinder, or you could use the fire starters just covered earlier.

When planning for your location to burn wood, first select a location that is dry and guarded from the rain. It is okay for the ground to be moist; however it should not be sopping wet. If no major tree cover is available then place a tarp above the campfire location high enough so flames and rising embers don't create small holes, and don't build the fire so strong it burns the tarp.

Next locate ample amounts of tinder

and gather everything at your disposal. Everything does not have to be completely dry. A good rule to follow is 10 parts dry wood and twigs to 1 part moist tinder.

If you can gather the bark from birch trees, even if it's wet, you have a particular advantage, because this particular type of wood contains a special type of oil that will repel moisture, especially as it warms. So if you are able, plan to camp in a location where birch trees are common and you will have a source of plentiful fuel throughout the rain.

For wood from other trees, strip away the outer layers of bark. When you do this, you will discover an inner drier layer underneath. How neat it is that nature has left us with certain "dry spots" that we can make use of. I always find it amazing that in any weather extreme there is always exists

an opposite.

For example, in even the soggiest, dampest, most rain laden climates, there exist “dry patches”, under a set of trees, which are locations where the rain will not touch or the rainfall will be severely less. This is the miracle of nature, always leaving a “gap” in the chaos, which can be used as an opportunity to gain strength from or make good use of.

Returning to topic, when on your tinder hunt, also look for grass, twigs, pine needles, or branches that are located underneath shrubbery or are laying at the base of these trees. These are usually not as waterlogged as other tinder. If you are able, use sap covered wood from pine trees, as they contain an incredibly combustible accelerant for your fire. Highly Combustible barks include: Cottonwood, Cedar and Tulip Poplar.

Because there is a lot of moisture in

the air during the rain, it is key to first be sure you stockpile as much fuel for your fire as possible. This is because if you have to search for more fuel as you use up your fuel, the fire will go out and you will have to start over again. So be prepared with plenty of fuel before you start your fire, preferably enough so that you can burn enough wood to create some warm, glowing and hot coals.

Woods that burn quickly include Pine, Birch, Spruce and Poplar. Longer burning woods include Maple and Oak. They also produce hot glowing coal beds.

Flash Floods

This is one very important measure any camper should be aware of before they set up camp. Be sure to check the weather reports before leaving. You

can now get an idea of the weather up to 10 days in advance at Weather.com, giving you an idea of how to plan out your rain adventure.

When pitching your tent or exploring areas that are more challenging to gain access to, be on the watch for flash floods which occur most common in low-lying drainage areas. Because ravines and dry stream beds are the most common desert camping areas, some people have unexpectedly awoken to find debris and a huge wall of water washing over their tent during a surprise flash flood. Your tent should be a minimum of 30 feet above any canyon floor when camped in a flash flood prone area.

Hiking in the Rain

Hiking in the rain requires much more energy than hiking in snow. I have found that taking the SOD Superoxide Dismutase formula shown in this book

to be an invaluable energy source to help increase strength when hiking in heavy downpours.

Be sure your boots have thick and adequate tread so that you avoid slipping on mossy rocks and slopes covered in mud. The rule is the more rain that falls, the more slippery the surface will become.

My experience has taught me that solid, sure footing carefully placed around puddles and dips along the trail significantly reduces the slippage encountered along trails. Also I have discovered that if hiking in tennis shoes going downhill, there is more of a chance to slip and slide, therefore having good hiking boots with thick tread and taking trail switchbacks are the safest way to hike going downhill in rainy weather.

If you happen to be hiking in an area

with lots of vegetation, much of the water will gather on the plant leaves and stems. When you brush against these, they will wet your pants or shirt faster and heavier than a heavy downpour, rapidly soaking them. One excellent method to combat this is to use a stick and gently tap the ferns, plants and leaves as you approach them. This shakes apart the built up water moisture from the leaves and greatly reduces the amount of water that will be soaked up by your clothing.

Keeping Personal Belongings Dry in the Rain

I think zip-locks are totally underrated in their ability to perform a wide variety of tasks. They are a true miracle worker for keeping things dry because they cost little and are reusable. You won't be disappointed using zip-locks! Heavy zip-locks bags make great waterproofing bags. Store your cell

phone, batteries, or other moisture sensitive item in them.

How to Use Plastic Bags to Your Advantage to Keep Your Items Dry

These work best and are great at keeping out moisture. They can also be placed over your socks to keep your feet warm at night.

Necessary Rain Gear for Rain Hikes

If you happen to bring an umbrella with you such as the 8oz Golite Chrome Dome, than before you go to bed at night, or while you are taking a break open the umbrella and place it over your backpack, shoes or other items you wish to keep the rain from entering, to provide a layer of protection from the rain. The Golite Chrome Dome umbrella is storm rated

and has many good reviews from hikers who use it for not only rain but for protection against desert heat.

You can also wear waterproof pants (*Gaiters*) and a poncho. You can also make a poncho from a heavy duty trash bag. Just be sure you get the extra heavy duty trash bags that are only sold in good hardware stores. Use a heavy duty trash bag as a tarp for your pack. There are also plastic liners you can purchase or make that cover your ankles to just below your knees to keep the water out of your shoes.

If you wear glasses, carry a non-cotton ball cap to keep the rain off your face.

Recommended Clothing for Rain Hikes

It is essential that the clothing you have on is similar to that worn on winter hikes as we will cover later on in this book. Be sure that you use clothing that has zippers, because if

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you are in a humid environment, you can sweat quite a lot and it is always much easier to unzip a layer when carrying a pack. Sweating is further amplified as you move towards higher elevations where the air currents begin to get warmer. If you are carrying an extra heavy load, the rain will dampen the pack making the load even heavier, so be sure to plan for this.

It is always handy to unzip a few layers to allow your body to breathe if hiking in humid conditions. So try to choose clothing that breathes well and repels moisture.

Try to avoid wearing cotton clothing in cold and damp conditions. Cotton makes you clammy and uncomfortable in the rain. Wool or Polypropylene layers are recommended. Wool for socks and sweaters is the preferred clothing choice because they keep you warm even if you get wet or damp.

Goose Down is the preferred fill for sleeping bags because it is light and has a very high insulation value.

The best long underwear is polypro long underwear. Even if this gets soaked with rain or sweat, the specially made fabric is designed to draw moisture away from your skin and keep you feeling reasonably dry.

Drying out Soaked Clothing

You can dry small items such as gloves and socks by submitting them to the body heat in your sleeping bag. Even if they don't dry out completely, at least they will be warm when you put them back on again. You can also place these articles of clothing down your inner shirt, or next to your vapor barrier (*see section on vapor barriers*). This allows the warmth of your chest to slowly dry them out.

Another handy trick is if you are

wearing double socks, and one layer of your socks are damp, be sure to remove one pair and leave one pair on to allow the heated air in your sleeping bag to keep your feet warm and dry out the second layer.

Backpack Packing Basics

Always carry a dry pair of socks wrapped in a plastic bag so you can change out after hiking.

Many of us nowadays carry digital devices, extra memory cards and the like. And towards the end of our camping trip, these devices are filled with rare memorable and unforgettable moments on the trail. How much of a tragedy it would be to suddenly lose it all! There is no amount of insurance that can replace memorable trail moments. Therefore if you bring USB memory sticks with you, or similar

digital memory devices be sure they never get wet. Because once they encounter rain or are dropped in a river, the water will destroy the information inside them, so be careful. What I have found works best is to place the USB memory stick in a moisture proof pouch, than place the stick inside a strong plastic bag. This keeps it free from any type of water or moisture that may enter it.

If you don't want to use a heavy duty trash bag over your pack, line the inside of your backpack with a large plastic heavy duty trash bag and place your items inside the large plastic bag.

If you want to give your pack a "**wash**", wrap everything in your pack in strong plastic bags that are sealed or tied tight. You will than have your pack washed by the rain, while your items remain inside.

It's always nice to take a rest after hiking a few miles, but when you sit

down your duff gets wet. How to solve this? Personally I have found the best method that works is to use a dry plastic bag and place it down where I need to sit, or I will use my beanie and sit on it or you can place your beanie inside the plastic bag and make a temporary cushion. Before I leave I place the beanie inside my coat, close to the skin and by the time I return to camp, my body heat has fully dried out any moisture that may have been exposed to.

Avoiding Lightning Strikes

Another very important thing to consider if hiking at high elevations in a rainstorm is the possibility of getting unexpectedly struck by lightning. Just remember this one Chinese proverb when hiking in the rain “***The tallest blade of grass is the first to be cut by the scythe***”. This means lightning is

attracted to tall, isolated objects, such as a hiker or a tree. Also lightning can strike up to 10 miles from the center of a storm and it has even struck out of the blue when no rainstorms are present, although this is extremely rare. Try to avoid standing under a tree during rainstorms when lightening is visibly present, and if possible seek shelter until it has passed. Do not seek shelter under a tree because even if you are a few feet from the tree, the lightning can still get to you.

The Importance of Keeping Dry Emergency Clothing on Hand

It is key that you have clean dry clothing kept sealed tight in plastic bags, so when you return and if you are soaked, you can quickly change into clean dry clothing and hop in your sleeping bag to re-warm yourself. I have found having clean dry clothing on hand when returning to camp after

a long rain hike works wonders to rebuild morale and sleep well.

Layering Your Clothing to Keep Warm

You may have already read this in other books or heard it from experts that the real secret to keeping warm is by being able to properly layer your clothing so that you minimize the amount of sweat you produce, especially if you are hiking in humid rain, which occurs most often in a rainforest and higher temperatures. By avoiding sweating, such as wearing garments that will move your sweat away from the skin rapidly, you'll stay warmer and use less energy.

Warming Yourself Before Going to Sleep

One of the best ways to keep warm after a long hike in the rain, is to

warm yourself before you go to bed. One method that works is to fill a lexan bottle with hot water and then wrap it in some light clothes and place in your sleeping bag, it also serves as a handy warm drink if you get thirsty in the night because your body heat will keep the liquid warm. You must be sure the lid is securely on.

The Importance of Airing Out Clothing and Camping Equipment After a Hard Rain

Moisture will be in everything after it has been raining for 24 hours or more. The more you can allow your clothing to be exposed to the warm sun and dry winds after the storm has passed, the faster they will dry, so try and hang up your clothing in a location where there is good airflow after an especially heavy rain. You will find that shirts will dry first, followed by socks, followed by long pants and jeans.

4 Methods to Wash Clothes Clean and Fresh Without using Laundry Soap

Method #1:

In most cases if you are hiking in a rain environment, there will be plenty of streams nearby. I find that using mild soap, works well for washing clothing. Many experts will recommend that you wash your clothes with soap when camping, however I have found that a couple “*rain rinses*” works fine. If you are going to be camping in the same location for more than a week and you know that there will be a couple of sunny days after a hard day of rain, which is most common in the early to late spring, than hang your dirty socks and clothing over the branches of some trees that have a good airflow. This will allow the incoming rain shower to give them a quick rinse, than allow the warm air to air and dry them out. This saves you much manual labor and

should only be done once or twice, because if you don't eventually use soap to wash your clothes, the dirt will forever remain with them and stain them and no matter how much you wash them the dirt stains will permanently remain. This is especially so for light and white colored shirts.

Method #2:

Another neat trick if you don't want to use laundry soap to wash your clothing, is to place your clothing under a strong flowing stream and place mid sized clean rocks on them. Next wait 24 hours than remove them from the stream and wring dry and hang on tree branches to dry out. Any body odor that may have been on your clothing beforehand will be completely gone using this method. The warmer the water the more dirt will be removed.

Method #3:

Another method that works is by laying your clothing on a smooth stone and then pounding them with another rock or a solid flat stick. This works well when the water is cooler.

Method #4:

For rivers or streams that are fast flowing and contain a strong current, placing a rock on top of them won't suffice, instead tie your clothing firmly to a rope or cord and tie the other end of the cord to a rock or tree and gently place your clothing in the flowing water. You could also put your clothing into a fish net bag and tie the bag to a tree or boulder and place in the stream. Just be sure the fish net bag has a very strong cord or rope if the river current is strong.

The Best Hiking Pack for Raining Conditions

Some experts will recommend a dark color pack to hide dirt and grime, however I have always followed the rule of using darker color packs for cooler temperatures and lighter colored packs for warmer desert type temperatures. This is because light is going to be attracted to darker colors, keeping your items in your pack warmer during cooler temperatures and vice versa.

Compared to a summer backpack, where you want to keep your items inside your pack as protected as much as possible from dust, heat and wind, when hiking in the rain, you want the opposite. You want certain items to "breathe" in the rain such as deodorant sticks, or items that would melt easily in the heat.

Where possible choose a pack with

external pack pockets. The best ones will have black mesh pockets on the outside. These are particularly useful for storing gear that you want to quickly access during times it's raining cats and dogs outside. As an added bonus you don't have to open your pack to access the items you need in a hurry due to the unexpected pouring downpour entering your pack and drenching your inside items. You can also place a flashlight in these exterior mesh pockets while you set up camp and use it to stabilize the flashlight. And if you are mountain biking, you can place the flashlight in the mesh pocket, place it on a front or rear bike rack and use as a flashlight holder.

Foods that keep you warm in the cold and damp

When it rains, your body's ability to digest food is slightly reduced. Your

appetite is also reduced. This is due to the blood being diverted to your extremities to keep your limbs warm, with less energy being put on your stomach.

I have found throughout the years that I will get a stronger appetite in the afternoon after hiking while I am resting, therefore I will have a meal high in protein to give me strength the following morning.

Experts recommend a meal high in protein and calories before bed to keep you warm as you sleep. In a University of Utah Study it was proven that the body burns slightly more calories when exposed to cold (*probably due to involuntary shivering and other autonomic nervous system responses*)

A Recipe for Warming the Body During Cold Damp Conditions

Spiced Chickpea and Tomato Soup

This is a old favorite that, taken before going to sleep, will help keep your body warm during the night. Take with some cod liver oil capsules to boost your immune system. You can pre-prepare the ingredients beforehand than just heat and serve while camped.

Ingredients:

- 1/8 teaspoon caraway seeds
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 can (15 ounces) chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 1 1/2 cups crushed canned tomatoes, with juice
- 1/2 cup drained jarred roasted red peppers, rinsed

- 3 1/2 cups homemade or low-sodium store-bought chicken stock
- Parsley sprigs, for garnish
- 3 garlic minced cloves
- 3 dried chopped hot red chilies or 1/2 teaspoon red-pepper flakes
- 1 teaspoon of ground coriander
- 3/4 teaspoon coarse salt

Crush the chiles, coriander, garlic, salt and caraway to form a paste. You can also use buy the powder and forgo the crushing if you like. Next add olive oil and add garlic mixture and cook until just softened (this takes about 3 minutes).

Next go ahead and stir in the chickpeas, tomatoes roasted red peppers, and stock.

Simmer and stir for around 15 minutes. After 15 minutes, heat the soup and than add in the mixture and serve.

Spices are also a good that help keep your body warm. Suggestions include:

Cumin Seed, Paprika, Cinnamon, Nutmeg and Allspice. Spices boosts your metabolism which generates body heat. Cumin Seed also helps curb your appetite. Ginger is one of the best because not only does it help warm your body, it increases the ability for your body to digest food and also boosts your immune system. It's a great spice to keep you warm and your immune system strong in the wet cold damp. If you are eating cold foods, remember that your body is naturally warmest during the afternoon, so you can take slightly cooler foods during this time.

Why Rodents are Attracted to Your Food While Camped

I have discovered over the years that when I bring reading material to camp, especially magazines, that they attract small rodents like crazy. This is

because when you are at home and in the kitchen, the magazine absorbs the odors of your home, which usually smells of food.

Also any type of strong food scent, especially protein related, like seeds and nuts will attract small animals. I use a small round pop up tin to store my food in while camping, as animals can't eat through it.

Toiletries such as toothpaste, and especially laundry or bath soap will attract small animals like crazy. One big no-no is to use too much tide for washing your clothing before you go out camping. This is because the residual fabric softener scent of washing powder attracts rodents.

If you can avoid it, try to wash your clothes without soap the last day you leave for camp, because the rodents are attracted to the laundry power scent residue used in washing powder.

The Best Types of Clothing to Wear for Rain Hiking

Keep Emergency Dry Clothing on Hand

It is key that you have dry clothing kept in plastic bags, so when you return and if you are soaked, you can quickly change into dry clothing and hop in your sleeping bag to re-warm yourself. As discussed earlier, clothing that is mildly wet can be placed with you in your sleeping bag so that your body heat warms and dries them.

The best Socks to Keep your Feet and Toes Cozy in Cold, Damp Rainy Conditions

Wool socks are the preferred clothing choice. Wool keeps you warm even if the dampness gets in.

Building Morale

Excess rain can dampen ones spirits. Besides a warm cup of tea or hot chocolate and clean, dry clothing, keep a deck of waterproof cards or harmonica to help maintain morale. I personally enjoy reading a good book.

Keeping Warm at Night During the Rain

The key secret to staying warm at night is to avoid where possible sleeping on the ground in cold weather. Many people find this out the hard way. This is because the ground is always the first to freeze during cold nights and it has a habit of slowly drawing out the warmth of your body as you sleep. Unless you are lucky enough to be camped near hot springs or near volcanic activity, you will get colder on the ground than if you were camped in warmer conditions.

At times during the night be sure to

reposition your body by sleeping on a different side. This is so that the warm side of your body can be exposed to the cooler location, warming the cooler side of your body. This repositioning helps maintain overall body warmth throughout the night.

Dealing with Excessive Rain

It is a fact, no matter how hard you try to keep dry, if it rains for longer than 24 hours, dampness and moisture will be heavy in the air and will enter your clothing because it is attracted to fabrics.

You will need to find ways to dry or air out your sleeping bag or clothing after this dampness phase has passed. One method for soaked sleeping bags is after the rain has passed and the air begins to get drier, hang them on a tree branch and allow the air to dry

them out as much as possible.

If you are using a hammock and it is still raining, re-line the bed of your hammock with dry newspaper. Just be sure your clothes are dry when you re-enter your sleeping bag again. Another method is to keep a spare sleeping bag in a waterproof bag and then use this when the other sleeping bag becomes soaked. This is for during the rare time it rains non-stop.

If your tent floor has become soaked, than using a towel or cloth, soak up the water, than wring it out until the floor is as dry as possible. Next allow to air dry for 20 to 40 minutes and then apply a dry layer of newspaper to soak up any additional moisture.

Using a Cot

Many seasoned experts don't use tents, but prefer a cot instead. This is because the airflow that occurs between

a cot and a hammock is warmer than the airflow that occurs when sleeping in a tent. Besides keeping you off the ground, a cot keeps you above the creepy crawly critters on the ground at night.

Using a Hammock

This is the best choice for excessive rain. Just be sure you set up camp where there are trees far apart that you can string your hammock. As long as you have a good tarp that drains away the water, especially at the ends of the hammock, the hammock's cloth dries easily and you can also put layers of newspapers on the bottom of the hammock to keep you warm and dry. I think it's great that tarps are now made with mold and mildew resistant coverings. This greatly extends their lifespan and can save you considerable amounts of money over

the long term when investing in water resistant materials.

For extra cold conditions, use two sleeping bags, one inside the other, with a layer of newspaper lining the base of the hammock to keep out unexpected cool drafts, especially during the early morning hours.

If you are using a hammock to sleep in, a cool trick is that if it has been raining hard the night before and the ground is wet, the night before stuff a newspaper or two under your hammock. The next morning as you crawl out of bed, place these newspapers on the ground, so that when you step out of your hammock, your socks don't get wet and you can put on your shoes without starting out the day with mud on them.

Handy Tips for Stringing a hammock

I personally have used the Texsport

Hammock brand for years in all weather conditions and the only thing I needed to replace were the small number of strings that hold the hammock in place. The hammock itself is still tear free and mold free, even after I have hung it up outdoors for years in my yard.

Be sure that when you string your hammock, once you have strung the sides, the hammock itself should be a minimum of between 3 and 5 feet off the ground. If your hammock "sags" too much, you will feel "*crunched up*" as you sleep and feel like a clump of clay in the morning. The more tightly strung the hammock, the more easier it will be for you to lay flat and stretch and have better circulation. It also allows for much better air flow and you can sleep on your sides much better.

Secrets to Pitching Your Tent in Rainy Weather To Keep it Dry

When pitching your tent, it is key that if you have doubts as whether or not it is going to rain, set up your tent as if it ***WILL*** rain. It is key to pitch tent in a high location, but not a location exposed to high winds. Remember Murphy's Law. ***If Anything Can Go Wrong It Will Go Wrong.*** This is especially true when you are camped in unfamiliar territory with uncertain weather conditions.

Be especially wary of pitching tent in areas that might become an unexpected puddle later on. It can be nightmarish to feel a slow wall of water gradually encroaching the side of your tent, turning it into a makeshift waterbed.

One way to avoid areas that might "*puddle*" is to look for the highest part of the ground at your camp. Try and angle the location so that water drains away from your tent and not toward

you. Be on the lookout for signs of previous flooding such as washouts, narrowly closed areas etc.

Camping experts recommend, *and you probably already know this by now*, that any items inside your tent be kept away from the sides of the tent because water drips through in locations there is anything making contact with the walls. This also means not touching the walls of the tent, which can let moisture in. It only takes a small drip to slowly drench your sleeping bag in a matter of hours.

One point that a lot of camping experts agree on is that if you are in a location where there are no trees or ridges and in an open area, it is key that your tent is ***stabilized with a strong central rod or other strong post type system.*** Use guide ropes or strings for reinforcement if necessary. This is because at night in some windy areas,

the winds will pick up and cause your tent to act as a kite. This causes severe instability in high winds. There is nothing more disturbing than waking up to a face full of nylon pushing against your face in the middle of the night from high winds. When it happened to me and my friends when we camped on Australia's highest mountain top, it was almost impossible to re-pitch the tent due to the strong winds and our sleepy conditions. We just went to sleep as the tent flapped about us. But I can guarantee you that now if we are camped in a windy location, every guide wire and every stake is firmly planted into the soil. Rocks are also used to stabilize the tents structure. Camping in windy locations requires much more skill and energy than say camping in an undisturbed forest.

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