

# Baggy's guide to ~~expensive and unnecessary~~ important and useful kit

Introduction.....	1
Rucksack/Kitbag.....	2
Sleeping Bag.....	3
Footwear.....	4
Waterproofs.....	5
Fleece (or similar).....	6
Trousers.....	7
Base Layers.....	8
Other Clothing.....	9
Towel & Wash Kit.....	10
Mug/plate/bowl.....	11
Knife/fork/spoon.....	11
Torches.....	12
Other Items.....	13
You will probably NOT need.....	13
You may want/need many other items.....	13
Shopping Around.....	14

## Introduction

Please note that this is a rough guide to the basics of collecting equipment. All the views are my own personal opinion. It is very important to remember that my needs and abilities may be very different to your own. If you are only going to go camping on a local campsite 3 times a year you will not need the latest and most expensive mountain climbing equipment and clothing. There is no need to buy a £30 torch if you have a perfectly useable one at home. You must adjust these recommendations to your own needs and budget.

However it is generally true that the more you can afford the better quality item you will receive. A saving of a few pounds on outdoor clothing, boots, waterproofs and such like can lead to a false economy in the long run and perhaps even as serious as endangering your life in a worst case scenario. You don't have to buy a top of the range item, just make sure the item you get is of a decent quality.

If you have any questions or want any further advice please feel free to contact myself or any other leader. Don't be afraid to go into the outdoor shops and ask for help and advice without committing yourself to buying anything. If the staff don't give you an honest recommendation or pressurise you into buying something then go find another store.

Think carefully about any purchase and wherever possible test it. Millets is a good example, they allow you to test your boots and clothing and if you find you don't need them you can return them for a full refund (assuming they are in perfect condition, not after you have worn them for a hike!). it is in their best interest that you get the best possible item for your needs.

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<p><b>Rucksack/Kitbag</b></p>	<p>Firstly please remember that no rucksack is 100% waterproof. Ideally items inside should be in a plastic liner. You can buy special bags for this purpose or failing that an old 'cement' bag or similar tough plastic will do. A kitbag may be a better choice for use within a tent if you are not hiking or likely to be carrying your kit far. They are more flexible and can hold more (and are cheaper!).</p>
<p><b>Look out for ...</b></p> <p>Eurohike/Regatta – good basic range</p> <p>Vango – high quality</p> <p>Karrimor, Lowe Alpine, Crag Hoppers, Berghaus</p>	<p>If you go for a rucksack go for a good one...poor quality ones will not last anywhere near as long as a well made one.</p> <p>If you want a rucksack for hiking (where you will be carrying the weight all day walking) then a good hip belt is a must. It must have a large padded hip belt that can be tightened to take a large portion of the load, along with adjustable shoulder straps (and a strap to pull the two shoulder straps together across your chest.). Most have extra straps attached to the shoulders that can be pulled by hand for temporary relief on the shoulder.</p>
<p><b>Price range ...</b></p> <p>£10 – 20 for a good daysack</p> <p>£25 – 35 for a basic to good rucksack</p> <p>£50 – 100 for a top quality rucksack</p>	<p>Good strong pockets with a flap over the zip are a must. Any extras such as straps on the top and bottom for attaching your rucksack and a bungee for awkward shapes and loads can prove useful. Look for additional pockets on the top or side for easy access to things like maps, food, water, first aid, torch and waterproofs.</p> <p>Ideally the top hood should be able to be securely held down, normally with straps and clips. Extra straps may act as compression straps helping to hold the rucksack together, useful when you don't have a full load (or perhaps if you have too much!).</p> <p>A padded back, and in particular modern air flow areas, can prove to be very useful and cause much less problem with sweating on longer hikes with higher loads.</p> <p>Sizes are measured in litres... 55 litres or higher should be considered large and more than enough. 25 litres or so is around the size you want for a daysack. Your major considerations are what is it for, how much room will you need and the physical size and capability of your own body.</p>
<p><b>Recommended ...</b></p> <p>Eurohike Metro Daysack - £13</p> <p>Eurohike Wilderness 55 - £30</p> <p>Regatta Survivor 100 - £40</p>	<p><b>Baggy has...</b> Several rucksacks.</p> <p>A Vango Orbit 26 (26 litres) for day to day use and day hikes with minimal equipment. Has two side pockets and an external net for awkward loads. Nice strong material and a useful velcro loop inside for hanging your keys.</p> <p>A Berghaus Rhythm (22 litres) is a very nice daysack, something that would be very useful in day to day school life. It has a large compartment, a smaller one with slots for pens and maps and a clip for your keys. It also has a small zipped compartment on the shoulder strap for easy access whilst wearing it.</p> <p>A Regatta Survivor 85 (85 litres) for humping lots of gear, hiking and generally taking gear to camp. This has a large internal frame supporting two main sections (bottom can be accessed separately) with two side pockets, a top pocket and a small mesh on the back. It has draw loops at the bottom for tying on light stuff and plastic runners on the top for threading rope through to tie down your sleeping bag. Nice padded shoulder straps and a very padded hip belt make it comfortable to wear although it does make your back sweat a bit (its an older type and doesn't utilise air flow technology)</p> <p>A Craghopper Dri-pac (45 litres) for hiking and outdoor camping. This is rather unique in that it has a special in built second lining and claims to be waterproof. It has a nice sealed main compartment with several smaller compartments on the outside and top (not fully waterproof). A good set of adjustable straps, airflow system and load carrying bars make it a good hiking rucksack.</p>

<p><b>Sleeping Bag</b></p>	<p>The first consideration should be the 'seasons'. Sleeping bags come in a wide variety and the first thing you should consider is when and how often you will use it.</p>
<p><b>Look out for ...</b></p> <p>Eurohike – good basic range</p> <p>Coleman – nice mid range bags</p> <p>Vango – high quality</p>	<p>Those designed for winter use will be warmer but generally heavier and more expensive. Those designed for summer may well be cheaper and lighter but you will find yourself regretting it if you use them in cold weather.</p> <p>Unfortunately, as is often the case, you may be better suited to investing in a decent quality bag although this is not an easy choice for those on a budget, especially considering how many times you may (or may not!) be using the bag. Then again if you are camping 15 nights a year it can be hard to put a price on the warmth and comfort that a decent bag will give you.</p>
<p><b>Price range ...</b></p> <p>£15 – 30 for a good basic bag</p> <p>£30 – 50 for a better bag or a higher season rated bag</p> <p>£50 + for a top quality bag</p>	<p>Almost all modern sleeping bags are now the 'mummy' type.. make use of the hooded area in cold weather and zip the bag right up and use the drawstraps to draw the bag close around your body.</p> <p>Many consist of layers of artificial fibres although some of the best (most expensive) use 'natural' down like materials and can even prove to be nice and light. However you need to be much more careful when looking after them. These may need special attention and require special washing.</p> <p>Weight is another consideration...if you are going to use your sleeping bag on a hiking weekend you will soon regret the extra couple of kgs that a poorly chosen one will add to your shoulders.</p> <p>Be sure to go to the shop and try it out. Younger scouts may need to look at the length of the bag in particular.</p> <p>2 or 3 season should suit most camps although this depends on your location and time of year. Don't wrap it up in a plastic bin liner or similar...it will only get split or lost. Enclose in a strong waterproof bag. Most bags nowadays come with their own compression sack. You should be able to roll the bag up tightly and put it into its own sack and draw it up tight. Practice rolling your bag up before camp as us leaders seem to be forever helping Cubs and even Scouts do this at camp.</p>
<p><b>Recommended ...</b></p> <p>Eurohike 300 – 2 Season - £30</p> <p>Coleman Peak – 4 season -£50</p>	<p><b>Baggy has...</b></p> <p>Vango Predator 300 This cost me about £50 for a brand new one from ebay. They normally retail for about £100. Warm isnt the word. It has an extreme temperature rating of –18 °C. It is a mummy style bag with an excellent hood and covers across all zips and openings. Very comfortable and very warm.</p> <p>Vango Ultralight 700 M R This cost me about £30 for a brand new one from ebay. They normally retail for about £75. It wont cope with artic weather but is good enough for most british winters. The main advantage is that it is extremely light and small (I often take both my Vangos and use this one as a pillow!), ideal for hiking.</p> <p>Eurohike 350 This cost me about £30 some years ago and has proven useful in all camps. Although it will not cope with the very coldest of weather s it must be said that most of our camping is done in relatively mild conditions on a standard campsite and not up on the mountains in the depths of a Scottish winter.</p> <p>It is a mummy style bag so is a little restrictive with the lower legs but properly done up and with your head in the padded hood it is nice and snug. It is not the lightest of bags though. It can be washed in a normal machine cycle and dries quite quickly.</p> <p>Since I acquired the Vangos I have stopped using the Eurohike, although it was perfectly adequate for most purposes the Vangos keep me toasty warm in all weathers.</p>

<h2>Footwear</h2>	<p>A good pair of boots are essential around some camps and when walking. Trainers may prove more useful in clement weather or on certain water activities. A pair of slippers will prove useful on a residential visit.</p>
<h3>Look out for ...</h3> <p>HiTec/ Coleman – good basic range</p> <p>Berghaus/Karrimor – high quality options</p>	<p>Walking Shoes – perhaps not as useful for scouts as a pair of boots (soft or hard)</p> <p>Leather Boots – more hard wearing and generally cheaper than the super-duper modern fabrics. Traditional tough old leather boots are perhaps more suited to the rough and tumble of hillwalking and rough ground. You may be better suited buying a softer all-rounder if you are going to do an appreciable amount of walking on hard ground (roads) and in activities within scouting (such as general camps).</p> <p>Fabric and Suede Boots – can be more expensive but generally offer better protection against the elements and a much more comfortable fit and ride.</p>
<h3>Price range ...</h3> <p>£20 – 30 for a good basic boot</p> <p>£30 – 60 for a better quality, tougher, more advanced materials boot</p> <p>£60 + for a top of the range boot</p>	<p>Outdoor Active Shoes – consider buying a shoe for outdoor activities instead of using trainers. The improved protection can not only keep your feet safer and dryer but they will generally last a lot longer than an old pair of trainers.</p> <p>Real leather boots tend to be much stiffer and hard wearing than nubek or other fabrics. These will be very useful in climbing hills and mountains and on rough loose ground and even in the extreme mud or ice. However they can be very hard on the feet and may give you blisters when walking long distances on across level ground such as roads and footpaths. A softer shoe should still give good protection whilst being comfortable in use on all terrain. They may be harder to look after and not last quite as long though. In any case make sure you go for a waterproof boot with high ankle support and ample 'side clips' to draw the boot tight across your foot and ankle.</p> <p>Be sure to choose a good quality pair of boots and learn how to look after them. Correctly cared for they will give you many years of hard working use. You will need to know how to clean and dry them and how to waterproof them with the correct gear.</p> <p>If you have a good set of boots they will protect your feet from injury, enable you to walk over rough ground, wet ground, deep mud with ease and will keep your feet dry and warm. These qualities are not to be underestimated, especially when hiking or at camp in bad weather. <b>Good footwear is essential.</b></p>
<h3>Recommended ...</h3> <p>Hi-Tec Eurotrek – Nice leather boot - £40</p> <p>Coleman (various) – Nice Nubek boot - £40</p> <p><b>Men's Explorer GTX – high quality breathable boot - £80</b></p>	<p>You will need to try them on as you would normally wear an extra pair of socks for hiking and so may need one size larger than you think. You also need to 'wear them in' by wearing them around the house and out and about for a week or so to get used to them. Do not take a brand new pair of boots to camp or hiking else you may end up covered in blisters.</p> <p>Proper care should be taken according to what type of boot you have. Read the manufactures instructions. You should waterproof them occasionally with the correct spray and they should be cleaned and dried properly immediately after use. Do not dry them in front of a hot fire or similar, allow them to dry naturally else they will crack and you will lose your waterproofing.</p> <p>To give a full run down on what you need to look out for would take some time...be sure to ask a leader for advice. When you go to purchase a pair the shop assistant should give you a complete run down on advantages, disadvantages, waterproofing, sizing, looking after your boots and such like.</p>
<h3>Baggy has... several boots</h3> <p>I own a couple of pairs of Coleman boots (Ridge, Acadia) made from nubek leather and an excellent pair of Karrimor. These are much softer than a traditional leather boot and have a suede like finish (at least until it rubs off!). They still give ample support in day to day use, camps and simple hikes. You only really need a stronger leather boot for more demanding use and this will be made clear before you go on the day to such an activity.</p> <p>I also own a couple of pairs of tough old leather boots that I know I can rely upon in the deepest mud. However since using the above softer Coleman/Karrimor boots I have grown to like the comfort and all round value of the softer nubek versions. I wear such boots to scouting activities all the time and they don't look that out of place in day to day use, they are almost like the larger 'basketball' type trainers. However if I knew I would be scrambling across rough ground or the mud was knee deep I would switch to my trusty leather boots or the more expensive Karrimors as these will put up with the worst you can throw at them and are very easy to clean and look after.</p>	

<h2>Waterproofs</h2>	<p>Even the best of 'waterproof' coats from the high street are not. Invest in a high quality set of waterproofs. A jacket, trousers and gaiters. Make sure they are breathable and fully windproof and waterproof. Look after them. You cannot measure the comfort and safety they will give you over the years.</p>
<h3>Look out for ...</h3> <p>Peter Storm – good basic range</p> <p>Berghaus/Karrimor/North Face/Sprayway/ Lowe Alpine – high quality options</p>	<p>First thing you need to decide is the size and weight. Are you going to go for a jacket that will be worn as a jacket all the time or a lightweight waterproof that is carried in the bag and pulled over your existing clothes/jacket in bad weather? Both have advantages. I would suggest that a lightweight jacket to place over the top of your existing jacket/fleece would suit the first time buyer as then you can still use your existing clothes.</p> <p>A jacket should be waterproof and windproof. There are different levels of waterproofing but any decent make will do you fine unless you get into the outdoors and climbing up mountains in a big way.</p>
<h3>Price range ...</h3> <p>£20 – 50 for a good basic jacket</p> <p>£50 – 200 for a better quality, warmer, dryer jacket</p> <p>Slightly cheaper for the trousers</p>	<p>You cannot underestimate how useful windproofing is. On cold days the wind chill can take around 20° off and having a windproof set of clothing can make a big, big difference.</p> <p>Try to buy a jacket with an interactive zip. This is a second set of zips within the jacket which means you can zip a fleece onto the jacket to turn it into a very warm coat. The fleece will need to have an interactive zip too.</p> <p>Trousers can be a god send in bad weather. If you have a jacket the rain just runs off and falls onto your legs (even more so if you have a rucksack) and this quickly becomes uncomfortable let alone cold. The trousers should be used as soon as the weather turns which means they should be able to open up at the bottom to allow you to put them on even if you are wearing boots. Bear in mind that the trousers may well be reasonably tough but shouldn't be thought of as a protective layer in the sense of running through thorns, bushes and trees.</p>
<h3>Recommended ...</h3> <p>Peter Storm Breathable Lite - light, waterproof, windproof and breathable - £30</p> <p>Peter Storm Iceland Parka – More of a jacket but warm and breathable - £50</p> <p>Peter Storm Active Overtrousers – light, waterproof, windproof and breathable - £20</p>	<p>All seams should be taped, the zips should have a flap or wind baffle. Cuffs should be adjustable so that you can tighten them up to prevent the water &amp; wind flowing down your arms. The jacket should have an adjustable cord to pull it tight around your waist to keep the warmth in and the water out.</p> <p>A jacket with a high neckline can make a big difference to comfort and warmth in bad weather. Look out for a decent hood, some people prefer a stiff lined peak to their hood but the further it can be pulled over your head the better.</p> <p>Breathability can be very important to your comfort. Combined with breathable inner layers you can stay warm and dry in all weathers.</p> <p>Very careful attention should be paid to looking after your jacket. Often they will need to be washed by hand or on a very low temp gentle cycle. They will need to be cleaned with a special solution and NOT your ordinary detergent (this will destroy the waterproofing). They will also need waterproofing every so often. Look after your waterproofs and don't use them for roughing about in the dirt else you will soon regret it when the weather turns nasty. <b>A good set of waterproofs can be live savers.</b></p>
<h3>Baggy has... several jackets</h3> <p>I have a Outdoor Scene jacket (about £50) that I bought some years ago. This is waterproof with a built in fleece lining. It has proved very warm and certainly keeps me dry although it is getting harder and harder to maintain the waterproofing.</p> <p>I bought a Peter Storm jacket and trousers (around £70 in total). These are certainly very highly waterproof and windproof (not to be underestimated) and have more zips and pockets than I have gadgets to put in. The jacket is interactive and the trousers have a zipped bottom to enable me to get them on without taking my boots off.</p> <p>I also have a set of Peter Storm Gaiters (around £20). These are most useful for those muddy camps and wet grass. If the weather is nice you just wear these and they keep your bottom legs and feet dry and clean. In really bad weather they can be combined with your trousers as the gaiters are much tougher and wont get ripped when ploughing through the nettles.</p> <p>I tend to use these jackets as day to day jackets as well. They can be a sound investment as they are not simply for camping.</p>	

<p><b>Fleece (or similar)</b></p>	<p>Invest in a good fleece (or several). Coupled with sensible use of other layers they can keep you comfortable and warm in all weathers and can be much lighter than cheaper alternatives.</p> <p>A fleece is reasonably lightweight yet very warm.</p>
<p><b>Look out for ...</b></p> <p>Peter Storm / Outdoor Scene / Sprayway / Regatta – good basic range</p> <p>Berghaus/Karrimor/Crag Hoppers – high quality options</p>	<p>If you can afford it look out for the windproof and water resistant versions. These are more than good enough to wear as a coat in the milder weathers and summer.</p> <p>This perhaps one of the easier buys as a good fleece can be used in day to day life and when going out on the town, not just at camp. A good fleece looks nice, is hard wearing and proves to be a very versatile item.</p> <p>Look out for an interactive zip so that you can zip them up into your waterproof jacket for extra warmth and protection.</p> <p>You should seriously consider the higher technologies such as wind proofing, water resistance (no fleece is waterproof) and breathability. This cannot be underestimated as when you wrap up in the very cold weathers or when you are hiking you will be sweating a lot and if you cannot manage this effectively you will get very uncomfortable, may get irritation or sores and will be unable to manage your layers effectively leading to much zipping off and removing and getting cold and ill. There is no point in having a breathable shirt and jacket if your mid layer fleece is not.</p>
<p><b>Price range ...</b></p> <p>£12 – 25 for a good basic fleece</p> <p>£25 – 50 for a better quality fleece</p> <p>£50 + for a very high quality special fleece</p>	<p>Pay careful attention to what layers the fleece is rated. Generally you will be using your fleece as a mid layer (above a shirt and below your waterproofs/jacket).</p> <p>There are many fleeces on the market as they are becoming a day to day clothing item but be warned that they vary wildly in quality and warmth. If you can afford it you are much better off buying a good quality fleece from an 'outdoor' company and you will most certainly feel the difference in the cold weather. The sheer fact that fleeces will range from £10 to £200 should tell you that there is a marked difference in quality and warmth. Don't expect a cheap fleece from the local chain store to stop your teeth chattering in the winter!</p> <p>In fact there are some good alternatives to fleeces but these tend to sit at the higher end of the market.</p>
<p><b>Recommended ...</b></p> <p>Peter Storm Bonded Fleece Jacket – decent basic fleece - £20</p> <p>Berghaus Spectrum – nice and warm, high neckline - £40</p> <p>Buffalo Special 6 Shirt – you want to stay warm and dry then get one of these! - £90</p>	<p><b>Baggy has...</b> several fleeces</p> <p>I have a Karrimor ( £50) that I bought some years ago. This has served me well and has put up with much abuse and much washing without the fleece piling and falling off.</p> <p>I bought a Berghaus (£40) and love it. This is the warmest of the lot and has a nice high neckline. It is also wind and water resistant. In fact I now own several of these. Including two warmer versions (polartec 300, cost around £50). You can certainly tell the difference between the 200 and 300. The 300 feels lovely and warm.</p> <p>I also have a Regatta and Peter Storm fleeces. These are perfectly adequate although some of them are a bit on the thin side and not suited to the coldest of weathers.</p> <p>Having worn all of them on the cold winter camps the Berghaus is noticeably warmer and more comfortable. Combined with one good base and outer layer I was warm and toasty whilst not being uncomfortable or sore through sweating, whilst other people with many more layers around me were complaining of the bitter cold.</p>

<p><b>Trousers</b></p>	<p>NOT JEANS OR SHELLSUITS. Wet jeans drain body heat at a horrendous rate, are very uncomfortable, and are also difficult to dry in camp conditions. There are frequently sources of flame at camp (open fires, gas stoves, etc) and some shellsuits have almost instantaneous ignition on contact with flame, as well as melting onto the wearer! (although please note that most walking trousers and waterproofs should also be kept away from fire).</p>
<p><b>Look out for ...</b></p> <p>Peter Storm / Regatta – good basic range</p> <p>Crag Hoppers – high quality options</p>	<p>Almost any other type of trousers will be suitable but again good walking trousers with modern fabric are available at very reasonable cost from outdoor shops. They can be hard wearing, water resistant and quick drying.</p> <p>Modern fabrics in the trousers mean they will dry very quickly and this can be useful both in the summer and the winter.</p> <p>Look out for the toughness of the material if you intend to use these for camp too. Many of them are almost as tough as a pair of jeans yet are much lighter and more comfortable and offer extra protection around the seat and knees.</p>
<p><b>Price range ...</b></p> <p>£10 – 20 for a good basic trouser</p> <p>£20 – 40 for a better quality trouser</p> <p>£40 + only for the serious enthusiast</p>	<p>The trousers will not be waterproof (that's why you have your waterproof trousers and gaiters) but should be water resistant and quick drying.</p> <p>You can normally step up in the range to get a lined pair of trousers that will keep your legs warm in the winter weather and offer improved waterproofing.</p> <p>Look out for the number and types of pockets. A thigh pocket is very useful when hiking and in camp. Pockets should be secured with a good zip or velcro fastening. A good belt normally comes with the trousers.</p> <p>Trousers with zip-offs that change into shorts can be very useful both in hot weather and when it gets really, really wet and muddy!</p> <p>Note: There are official activity trousers offered by the Scout Association as part of our uniform. These are actually made by Regatta although for actual use (considering their price!) they don't compare with the Craghoppers at all. However they are official and part of the uniform so will still prove useful (they are not bad...just not as good as a Craghopper, mainly down to the stupid pockets)</p>
<p><b>Recommended ...</b></p> <p>Craghoppers – nice range - £20-40</p> <p>Peter Storm Activity – good basic set - £20</p> <p>Regatta – similar to the scout activity trousers - £20-25</p> <p>Scout Activity Trousers - £20</p>	<p><b>Baggy has...</b> several trousers</p> <p>I used to use a pair of woollen-like trousers when I was a scout. These were excellent, tough and warm, but very difficult to get hold of. I have several pairs of unbranded activity trousers that zip off and these proved most useful...however...</p> <p>Craghoppers – since I bought a pair of these and used them I haven't turned back. I now own 4 pairs. They are light, tough, good looking, dry very quickly and are actually water resistant so light showers mean you don't get soaked. Some are one piece but some are zip-offs which mean you can wear them as shorts. The pockets are well designed and very secure with zips and velcro (not to be underestimated.. not like the stupid official scout activity trousers where everything falls out of your pocket when you sit down!). I use these for all activities and day to day use in camp and even in 'real life' as they look smart. The belts are tough and strong and they have a D-ring for clipping on things like keys and torches.</p>

<p><b>Base Layers</b></p>	<p>A good base layer can make all the difference. If you can afford them (and they tend to be much cheaper than most 'in-fashion' items) a good warm wicking layer from an outdoor shop can make an excellent investment. Control of layers is the secret to staying warm and dry. Warm underwear can prove useful and in the worst weather your best friend will be a pair of tights (no, honest!).</p>
<p><b>Look out for ...</b></p> <p>Peter Storm / Outdoor Scene – good basic range</p> <p>Berghaus – high quality options</p>	<p>First thing to consider is a good base layer shirt. This could be a T-shirt or a shirt of even a thick polo neck jumper. Look out for items that are breathable and wick moisture away from your body. This is where your comfort and warmth starts. If you simply wrap up in the winter by wearing 10 layers of ordinary clothes you will quickly overheat, sweat and become very uncomfortable (this may lead to stripping of layers and being wet in the cold weather is not good!), and if you are hiking you will get sore as the clothes rub when they are damp from perspiration.</p>
<p><b>Price range ...</b></p> <p>£10 – 15 for a good basic trouser</p> <p>£30 + only for the serious enthusiast</p>	<p>You need the base layer to provide the first layer of insulation, to wick moisture away from your body outwards and to feel nice and comfortable against your body.</p> <p>You could simply wear an ordinary old T-shirt but these proper base layers really come into their own in very hot weather, very cold weather and very wet weather.</p> <p>They also tend to be very lightweight, pack easily and are crease resistant (all reasons to buy them and use them in 'real life' too!).</p> <p>Yes it can be tempting not to spend money on 'just another shirt' when you have loads at home but you will certainly notice the difference.</p> <p>You can control the base layers easily...if the weather really is bad try wearing one extra shirt and seeing if that makes the difference. The key to keeping warm is in having many good layers, not just one big ultrathick layer.</p> <p>Base layers designed for use in extreme weathers (Helly Hanson do a good range) are perhaps a little beyond typical use in Scouting.</p>
<p><b>Recommended ...</b></p> <p>Peter Storm Coolmax T-Shirt – wicks moisture away - £10-15</p> <p>Regatta X-ERT – wicks moisture away - £10</p> <p>Berghaus Antares - high quality shirt - £40</p>	<p><b>Baggy has...</b> several shirts</p> <p>I normally just wear old cotton T-shirts and lightweight cotton shirts in camp. However after purchasing some of the coolmax shirts that wick the moisture away from the skin I now have about 8 of these. They are lightweight, comfortable and look good. Most importantly even after physical exertion and wrapping up warm my skin and the shirt feels quite dry whereas my old ordinary shirts would be dripping wet with sweat and prove most uncomfortable to wear. In fact you can now buy a Craghopper version with built in mosquito repellent for the same cost.</p> <p>A good base layer, combined with a good fleece and good over jacket are all you need to stay warm and dry all year round.</p> <p>At winter camps I just wear my coolmax T shirt, my Berghaus fleece and my waterproof jacket and I am very warm and comfortable whereas I know other people wearing 2 shirts, 3 fleeces and a large jacket are still feeling the cold.</p> <p>I haven't yet felt the need to wear a base trouser layer...in the bad weather (cold or windy) I simply wear my waterproof trousers or a fleece lined trouser.</p>

<p><b>Other Clothing</b></p>	<p>Make sure you have a nice warm woolly or fleece type hat. A good set of gloves and scarf can be useful. Even if it is summer, sometimes the temperature late at night can drop dramatically.</p>
<p><b>Look out for ...</b></p> <p>Thinsulate – good basic material</p> <p>Regatta/ Peter Storm – nice range</p> <p>1000 mile – several good socks</p>	<p>Two pairs would be ideal. Commonly a thin cotton one next to the skin and a warm woollen one outside. Prevents rubbing of the skin and blisters. Alternatively ask in the outdoor shop about the modern sock materials. A loop pile is best. There is a wide variety on offer and they range in price but generally speaking £4 will buy you a good set of thick socks and whatever you want to pay for the comfortable inner sock.</p> <p>Gloves are essential really. With modern thinsulate material they are widely available for very reasonable prices. Be warned that they will not stand up to very cold conditions (or in particular windy conditions) and are not waterproof. This can be mainly solved by using a glove liner (or wearing two pairs!).. you may also consider a combined glove/mitten for cold weather. In fact you can even pair heated mittens! A good pair of waterproof gloves will set you back about £20 though.</p>
<p><b>Price range ...</b></p> <p>£10 for a hat/scarf set</p> <p>£5-15 for a good pair of gloves</p> <p>£3-20 for socks</p>	<p>Hats are essential. In warm weather this could be a nice peaked cap to keep the sun off or a nice warm fleece for the cold weather. Not too much of a problem as they are widely available at reasonable prices. Consider buying a tropic hat for style (!) and better cooling/drying abilities.</p> <p>The serious enthusiast would consider waterproof gloves, sealskinz socks, barkhan hats and a mountain balaclava.</p>
<p><b>Recommended ...</b></p> <p>Peter Storm socks - £4 per pair</p> <p>Peter Storm Thinsulate glove - £8</p> <p>Peter Storm neck gaiter - £10</p> <p>Peter Storm scarf - £5</p> <p>Crag Hopper Barkhan Tropic – good all round summer hat - £12</p>	<p><b>Baggy has...</b> several items</p> <p>I have several pairs of Peter Storm thicker socks for wearing with my boots. My inner socks just tend to be basic, thin, cotton sports wear like Addidas or similar.</p> <p>I have several fleece scarves and fleece gloves. The fleece gloves are not waterproof and will not keep you warm in the coldest of weathers.</p> <p>I have set of Lowe Alpine waterproof gloves (£18) that have a special inner lining and are completely waterproof. They will toast your hands seconds after putting them on but are not suitable for everyday use as you have to be careful when you take your hands out not to pull out the lining, this means you don't really want to keep pulling them on and off. However nothing can beat these in even the coldest of winters.</p> <p>Since buying the neck gaiter and using it at winter camp I must put it down as a must have. Pulled down over your neck it protects your neck and most of your face and head/ears. It really does prevent a great deal of heat loss and keeps you warm and is easier to remove/add than a scarf. It can be used as a hat as well.</p> <p>I have several fleece hats and many baseball caps for summer use. You may want to invest in a good summer hat such as the Barkhan Tropic... this looks much better than a cap and is more useful in the hot sun and rain and has built in mosquito repellent.</p>

<p><b>Towel &amp; Wash Kit</b></p>	<p>Personal choice...toothpaste, toothbrush (not electric), soap as a minimum. Beware of taking deodorants, hair gel and the like. They will destroy the waterproofing on tents and clothes, will ensure that you get eaten alive by insects, and hey! Who do you expect to meet at camp?</p>
<p><b>Look out for ...</b></p> <p>General range in camping shops</p>	<p>1 small hand towel and 1 large bath towel would prove useful. For hiking see if you can afford one of the lightweight towels that absorb a terrific amount of water (and cost a terrific amount of money!)</p> <p>For general camping use and hiking in particular free 'samples' of shampoo, soap and toothpaste means that you can fit them in a small bag and you wont be weighed down with a years supply of toothpaste.</p> <p>There are camping versions of all this kit but generally stuff from home will do you fine.</p>
<p><b>Price range ...</b></p> <p>£10 for a basic set</p>	<p>Make sure all the kit is contained in one tough, waterproof bag. Don't just stuff it in a plastic bag.</p> <p>Try to pick a unique towel as a plain one may end up getting lost amongst everyone else's gear.</p> <p>Other items should be added to suit the individuals needs. These may include insect repellent, certain medication (ALL medication should be reported and handed to the First Aider and be detailed on the form. However some everyday items will be better suited to being handed back and kept in the individuals wash kit or similar) and similar.</p> <p>Remember again you do not want to take hair gel, deodorants, aftershave, perfume or the like. This will be of no use at camp other than attracting the insects and flies and ants and getting you bitten to death. Spraying such items near the tents or waterproof clothes will bring the wrath of the leaders too as these chemicals destroy the waterproofing.</p>
<p><b>Recommended ...</b></p> <p>Small samples of shampoo, soap, toothpaste</p> <p>Good toothbrush</p> <p>Good strong, waterproof bag</p>	<p><b>Baggy has...</b> several items</p> <p>My washkit is stuffed full of lots of useful items. I have small sample sized shampoo, soap and toothpaste. I also take roll on deodorant (although be warned this is not recommended in general as it destroys waterproofing and may attract the mosquitoes like crazy). For the same reason you are better off with a simple unperfumed soap. The idea is to clean yourself properly and not smell, not just to disguise your smell with a stronger artificial one! I do have shower gel for use on those luxury campsites with such facilities.</p> <p>I have a neat little toothbrush that comes in half and slots in itself giving a compact waterproof covering to the brush.</p> <p>I also have a lightweight trek towel that cost a fortune but really soaks up the water and is very quick drying. I have a large bath towel (light though) with cartoon characters on it so I know its mine and a small cotton towel that is stuffed into the wash bag.</p>

<p><b>Mug/plate/bowl</b></p> <p><b>Knife/fork/spoon</b></p>	<p>Plastic plates may be better than enamel although be careful with camp fires. Some people prefer a tin plate (very useful for certain types of cooking). Ensure they are clearly marked (not nail varnish or similar...it will simply rub off, engrave them).</p> <p>It is largely a matter of personal choice although it has to be said that plastic items tend to be cheaper and much lighter than other versions yet just as hard wearing.</p>
<p><b>Look out for ...</b></p> <p>General range in camping shops</p>	<p>"Clip-together" sets of utensils can be useful.</p> <p>Items from home will do just as well, just don't bring along your mum's best china!</p> <p>Special mugs can prove very useful.. just having a lid on them can help protect against the elements and accidents at camp. Look out for tough, strong insulated versions.</p> <p>A large plate and deep bowl will serve you well at camp, and not just in the 'how much can you eat in a day' sense. A large plate can serve several functions around camp and a deep bowl can be used as an extra mug.</p>
<p><b>Price range ...</b></p> <p>£10 for a complete set</p>	<p>Labelling is important as washing up at camp tends to be communal and everyone seems to bring the basic plain silver knife and fork! Don't use anything that will rub off because they will be wiped thoroughly when drying, take especial care with plastic. You may be better off engraving.</p>
<p><b>Recommended ...</b></p> <p>Eurohike thermal mug – keeps your drinks warm or cold - £6</p> <p>Special sets of utensils</p>	<p><b>Baggy has...</b> several items</p> <p>I have a set of strong plastic bowls and plates (thicker than the standard picnic type range) that have lasted since I was a scout. I usually just use ordinary cutlery from home.</p> <p>I have several types of mugs, most of them insulated and with secure lids.</p> <p>The best type of mug is a strong insulated plastic one with a pull out beaker lining (thus allowing you to get twice as much of your favourite drink!).</p>

<p><b>Torches</b></p>	<p>Headtorches are useful, as are good quality lights like Maglites. Any torch will do really as long as you know it works and you have spare batteries.</p>
<p><b>Look out for ...</b></p> <p>Maglites – high quality, tough and long lasting</p> <p>Cybalites – good quality and economic</p> <p>Petzl – good headtorches</p>	<p>A maglite is expensive but is very tough, hard wearing and quite bright for their size. These will last a lifetime. They come in all sizes. The small (£10) Solitaire is ideal for a keyring or attaching to your rucksack. This means you can find your gear or your bigger torch with ease even in complete darkness. The larger AAA and AA versions are ideal for general pocket use. The largest D cell versions are very big and heavy but very bright.</p> <p>Cybalites are useful as they combine modern LED technology with a bright halogen beam. Used in LED mode the batteries can last days yet you still have the option of the brighter halogen bulb (hours). Again they are expensive but high quality and long lasting.</p> <p>A head torch can be very useful around camp where you will need the use of both hands for safety. Again they often come with a choice of LED or bright halogen type bulbs.</p>
<p><b>Price range ...</b></p> <p>£5 for a good small torch</p> <p>£10-15 for a good all round torch</p> <p>£20 + for a top of the round or very bright torch</p>	<p>There is an incredibly wide range of basic (usually plastic) torches on the market. You don't need to spend a fortune, especially if you are going to be throwing it around and knocking it about at camp.</p> <p>Look into the use of rechargeable batteries. Although you won't always be able to recharge them at camp they can prove to save you a small fortune in batteries. Often it is the choice of batteries that determines how bright and long lasting the beam is. Go for Ni-mh as these are only slightly more expensive than Ni-cads but are more powerful and last longer.</p>
<p><b>Recommended ...</b></p> <p>Cyba-lite - £25 – Expensive but will last for days in LED mode and quite tough</p> <p>Maglite AA - £10-15 – cant be beaten for quality and strength</p>	<p><b>Baggy has...</b> a bucketload of torches!</p> <p>Solitaire (£10) on my whistle ... useful for quick emergencies and looking for your bag and other torches in the dark... powerful considering it's a single AAA battery.</p> <p>Many maglites (£10–20)... wide range...including various belt loops and head straps that make them easy to carry and use.</p> <p>Cyba-lite (£25) .. expensive but seems quite tough and can last 3 days constant use (!) in LED mode...useful for reading and everyday use at camp.</p> <p>Spotlight (£30) ... 2 million candle power means you can turn night into day...useful for emergencies, searches, wide games and long distance work.</p> <p>Lanterns (£15) ... fluorescent lamp useful as a room light or table lamp. Can also float on water.</p> <p>PA Light (£20) ... small yet bright. Has a constant glow, useful for finding in the dark. Can be used at a variety of levels like the cyba-lite.</p> <p>Faraday torch (£10– 20) ... these don't need any batteries! A good shake will give you enough light to last for several minutes. Always worth taking as a backup.</p> <p>Various others – basic plastic torches, mini led lights for keyrings and rucksack zippers.</p>

<p><b>Other Items</b></p>	<p><b>Foam sleeping mat</b> Some people cant do without this item, the rest of us just prefer the natural lumps and bumps. Useful for insulation from the cold.</p> <p><b>Swimming Trunks</b> Useful if you intend to get really wet!</p>
<p><b>Look out for ...</b></p> <p>Sigg Water Bottles</p> <p>Orange Survival bags</p> <p>Fox Whistles</p>	<p><b>Survival bag</b> A thick plastic bag...useful as an insulating layer, a liner, wrapping a sleeping bag and of course keeping you alive.</p> <p><b>1 litre water bottle</b> Vital for hikes, not so useful for basic camps. Normally plastic although the aluminium versions are very hard wearing and more versatile. The 'playtpus' type are ideal for hiking as they sit in your bag and you attach a tube to your rucksack and simply sip from them at will on the move.</p> <p><b>Whistle</b> Be sure to get one with no moving parts, normally plastic. Fox is a good make and official sponsors.</p>
<p><b>Price range ...</b></p> <p>£5 for a Fox Whistle</p> <p>£4 for a survival bag</p> <p>£10 for a Sigg Water bottle</p> <p>£10 for a personal First Aid kit</p>	<p><b>Penknife</b> Be sure to check with leaders first. A good penknife can be useful but beware of cheap copies. It must be kept in good condition, a blunt knife is more dangerous than a sharp one. It must have a good quality locking blade. Generally speaking you are not allowed to take any sort of knife to camp. <b>Ask a leader first.</b></p> <p><b>First-Aid kit</b> Personal first aid kit only. Medication and the like should be handed to the first aid officer and their use explained BEFORE you go to camp.</p>
<p><b>Recommended ...</b></p> <p>Boots First Aid Kit - £10 – Nice little kit in nylon bag</p> <p>Fox Whistle - £5 – stupidly loud, emergency whistle and Scout official too</p>	<p><b>Baggy has...</b> lots of odds and ends!</p> <p>I prefer the plastic flexible water bottles with the sports top although the aluminium Sigg versions are nice for hiking as they are so tough. I have a playtpus bag that is used for hiking as it means you can drink with ease on the move.</p> <p>The Fox whistle has no moving parts and so is an emergency whistle (whistles with peas in them will freeze in cold weather!). It is also stupidly loud!</p>

## You will probably NOT need

**Pocket GPS systems** – Scouts should know basic navigation with map and compass, and these don't suffer from flat batteries, electronic faults, or lack of satellite availability!

**Radio/Tape/CD players, Gameboys, mini-TV's and the like** - Camp sites don't have mains electricity so battery supply can become expensive, and hopefully there are much more interesting things to do at camp.

**Mobile Phones** - In the event of a problem a leader will contact the appropriate person.

## You may want/need many other items

There are many other items that you may consider useful for camp. This list is a guide only to the main items. If in doubt consult a leader or an experienced camper.

**Personal Note:** You don't want to know how much junk and gadgets I usually take to camp!

# Shopping Around

## Local Shops

Millets	Ilford	Romford
Perhaps the best local retailer for all your equipment needs. The staff are honest and knowledgeable and the prices are normally reasonable. Some of their 'own-makes' offer excellent value for money. Go to the Ilford store. Whilst the Romford store is 4 times the size it simply doesn't carry as wide a range and I have found the Ilford store staff very helpful. There is no substitute for actually going in and trying on clothes and boots.	0208 478 7341 154 High Road IG1 1LL	01708 743751 42/44 South Street RM1 1RB
	<a href="http://www.millets.co.uk/">http://www.millets.co.uk/</a>	

Field & Trek plc	
Another premier stockist of all things outdoors. Prices can vary from good deals to experts only. However the staff should know exactly what they are talking about and the shop should stock everything you could want.	23-25 Kings Road Brentwood Essex CM14 4DJ  01277 222230

Camping & General	
Much further afield but they do have a very large store with almost everything on display.	Charfleets Canvey Island Essex SS8 0PL  01268 692141

P J Camping Ltd		
Local enough to go and have a wander round. Mainly geared for selling tents and such like although sometimes offer some good deals on equipment. Be sure to compare prices first though.	The Open Site Collier Row Road Collier Row ROMFORD Essex. RM5 2BJ	01708 722937  <a href="mailto:info@pjcamping.co.uk">info@pjcamping.co.uk</a>  <a href="http://www.pjcamping.co.uk/">http://www.pjcamping.co.uk/</a>

Army & Navy Surplus Store	
Always worth popping into your local store. They can stock some items that other outdoor shops wont carry. Some of the ex-army stuff can prove very useful and cheap.  However the ex-army approach is not always the most suitable as their criterion are very different to ours.	1 Chequers Corner New Road Dagenham Essex RM9 6LA  020 8592 3718

## Internet

I have ordered many of my items from the internet. As long as you can trust the site it is safe, quick, easy and normally much cheaper. You can get some unbeatable special offers online. A selection of some of the sources are listed below:

Oswald Bailey Outdoor Gear - <http://www.outdoorgear.co.uk>

Good value with a wide range. I have purchased many things from here (even won a pair of boots in a competition!)

Gear Zone - <http://www.gear-zone.co.uk>

Can offer a slightly different range although only uses good quality items

Gadgets – <http://www.gadgets.co.uk>

Useful for items like torches (and lots of other more useless gadgets!)

Outdoors - <http://www.outdoors.ltd.uk/>

The official trading arm of the Scout Association (though not always the best)