

Backpacking Food Guide

Breakfasts

- * Instant oatmeal
- * Bagel with jelly
- * Bagel (pre-buttered)
- * Bacon (2 slices)
- * Freeze-dried scrambled eggs
- * 2 Breakfast bars or Pop-Tarts Pancakes with Syrup/butter
- * Dry cereal (pre-sugared variety) with Powdered milk
- * Tang
- * Hot cocoa / Tea / Coffee
- * Dried Fruit

Lunches

Eat frequent small snacks of complex carbohydrates all day long. That way the body has a constant source of energy available. We generally recommend nibbling on trail mix all morning and afternoon, with a little more substantial food for lunch. Carbohydrates come in two main types, simple and complex. Simple carbohydrates are sugars. These cause a rush of energy that lasts an hour or so and leaves you with a jittery feeling from low blood sugar/too much insulin. Complex carbohydrates are like tiny time capsules of energy: the body needs to digest them, and when it does they release energy for long period with no waste products. Examples are breads, cereals, beans, pasta, etc.

Trail mix is a good snack food for the day-long lunch.

Bagels, or the small bagelettes, are great breads to take along for the more substantial food break around noon. Make some up at home by cutting them in half and putting jelly and/or peanut butter in it, then wrapping it in plastic wrap.

Crackers such as Triskit, Wheat Thins, and Ritz are also good. Granola bars are also a good form of complex carbohydrates.

Other foods that are good are sardines, ham spread, chicken spread, and so forth, although he will have to carry the weight of the can both in and out with you. In addition, small chunks of cheese or a package of string cheese also tastes good.

Remember, however, that meats and cheeses contain a lot of fat and the Scout should not have much of this during the day; the best hiking lunch going is a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

Suppers

- * Any Flavor Cup-a-Soup
- * Hamburger patty and Mashed potatoes
- * Chicken Top Ramen
- * Small can chicken and 1/2 Cup White Rice
- * and 1/2 package Chicken Gravy Mix
- * Bagel
- * Hostess or Little Debbie Dessert
- * Inst. Pudding & powdered milk
- * Two hot dogs
- * 1 Tablespoon Spaghetti Sauce Mix
- * Spaghetti Noodles and 4 packages McDonald's Catsup
- * 1/2 package Kraft Macaroni & Cheese
- and Small can tuna
- * Stew
- * Sauces
 - *Curry Sauce
 - *Italian Tomato Sauce
 - *Mexican Tomato Sauce
 - *Peanut Butter Gravy
 - *Hot Sesame Peanut Sauce
 - * Basic White Sauce
 - *Cheese Sauce
 - *Mustard Cheese Sauce
 - *Alfredo Sauce
 - *Gravy
 - *Tomato Cream Sauce
 - *Asian Tomato Sauce
- * Rice a Roni
- * Punch
- * Chocolate chip cookies
- * Pasta/Rice
- * Lipton's Noodles and Sauce
- * Ramen Noodles
- * Corn
- * Canned Meats
- * Chicken
- * Mexican Chicken
- * Tuna
- * Beef
- * Corned Beef

Cooking Details

Bacon: Take 2 strips of bacon, cut in half, and pre-cook at home until it's almost done (still a bit limp). Wrap in plastic wrap securely. Bacon prepared this way will keep for a few days and can be easily reheated in his frying pan.

Pancakes: Buy the pancake mix that only needs to add water, and put just enough for 2 or 3 pancakes in a baggie for him. For syrup, get an extra one next time you go to a fast food place in the morning, or he can mix a one-quart package of Kool-aid with only a little water. For real maple syrup, I put brown sugar in a plastic zip lock sandwich bag. I add a couple of drops of maple flavoring. Then, at breakfast, I put a little hot water in the bag (just enough to dissolve all the sugar). Instant maple syrup! For butter, put some margarine into 1 or 2 of the little plastic salsa containers that come with Mexican take-out food.

Tail Mix: You can buy trail mix already put together or mix your own and put in exactly what you like. Try dried fruit, nuts, seeds, M&Ms, peanuts, raisins, shredded coconut, dried banana chips, shelled sunflower seeds, carob, mixed nuts, pretzel sticks, or the little cracker-like snacks. (Go easy on the candy part - it's better to have less candy and more other stuff.)

Hamburger patty and Mashed potatoes: Make up the hamburger patty at home and freeze it. As you get ready to go, wrap the frozen patty in foil and seal in a small Ziploc bag. Buy instant mashed potatoes and send one serving sealed in a bag. Add a dash of powdered milk to make it creamier. Buy frozen whole-kernel corn; bring one serving along, sealed in a bag. Wrap the hamburger and corn in his spare T-shirt for insulation; it will thaw slowly during the day and be ready to cook at night. For punch, try artificially sweetened Kool-aid or Crystal Lite as they are light weight and taste good.

Chicken and Rice: Put the rice (regular long-grain rice) in the small pot with 1 cup of water, dump in the chicken, cook for 15 minutes on low heat, covered. Mix the gravy up according to directions, dump in with chicken and rice, reheat until boiling.

Spaghetti: Break spaghetti noodles into smaller lengths at home. At camp, boil in pot for 10 minutes or so. Pour off most of water, put sauce mix and catsup into pot with noodles. Cut hot dogs into small chunks and add to noodles and sauce. Cook over low heat, stirring, until hot dogs are hot. Clean out pot after eating out of it, put pre-measured instant pudding and powdered milk into pot, add proper amount of cold water, stir, let stand until thickened, eat.

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Macaroni & Cheese with Tuna: Repackage the 1/2 of macaroni in a Ziploc. Also 1/2 of cheese packet in another Ziploc bag, along with some powdered milk. Cook according to directions; add the tuna at the end, reheat, eat.

Stew: Freeze some stew at home in a small 2 by 3 by 4 in Tupperware. Put into a Ziploc in case of leaks. Put a piece of cake into another Tupperware and send along for dessert.

Curry Sauce

1 tablespoon olive oil	1 1/2 to 2 teaspoons curry	1/4 cup dried apples, chopped
1 tablespoon flour	1/2 teaspoon salt	1/4 cup raisins
2 teaspoons onion flakes	1 cup water	1 teaspoon brown sugar

Heat the oil and flour over low heat, stirring constantly until the mixture is smooth. Add spices, water, fruit and sugar. Bring to a boil and simmer until tender. Rice, couscous or bulgur will never be the same. This is for someone looking for something innovative and different on the trail. .

Italian Tomato Sauce

1/2 to 2 cups water	1/2 cup tomato powder	1/2 teaspoons dried basil or oregano
1/4 cup dried tomatoes, mushrooms, peppers or other vegetables (optional)	1 tablespoon onion flakes	1/2 tablespoon cooking oil
	1/2 tablespoon dried parsley	1/4 teaspoon garlic powder

Bring water to a boil with dehydrated vegies. Add remaining ingredient and simmer over low heat, stirring frequently. .

Mexican Tomato Sauce

2 tablespoons dried red a green peppers	2 to, 3 tablespoons tomato powder	1/2 teaspoon basil or oregano
2 tablespoons dried tomatoes	1 tablespoon onion flakes	1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1 cup hot water (more for thinner sauce)	1/2 to 1 teaspoon chili powder	pinch black pepper
1 tablespoon oil	1/2 teaspoon cumin	1 tablespoon cornmeal or flour

Rehydrate the peppers and tomatoes in the hot water. Heat the oil, seasonings, and cornmeal in a pot. Add in the veggies and water, stirring frequently for 5 to 10 minutes... .

Peanut Butter Gravy

1 cup water	1 1/2 tablespoons soy sauce	3 tablespoons dry milk (optional)
1/2 cup peanut butter (crunchy is best)	pinch cayenne	
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder	2 tablespoons vinegar (optional)	

Heat water, remove from heat, and add the remaining ingredients. Reheat carefully if the need arises; peanut butter loves to scorch your pan. Excellent on noodles of any shape or size. Add zip to vegetables, too. .

Hot Sesame Peanut Sauce

1 cup water	1 1/2 teaspoons soy sauce or tamari	2 tablespoons vinegar (optional)
1/2 cup peanut butter (crunchy is best)	1 teaspoon onion flakes	
3 teaspoons spicy sesame oil	1/2 teaspoon crushed hot red pepper	

Heat water, remove from heat, and add the remaining ingredients. Reheat carefully if the need arises; peanut butter loves to scorch your pan. Excellent on noodles of any shape or size. Add canned chicken for a major meal. It is great! .

Basic White Sauce

4 tablespoons powdered milk	3 tablespoons margarine
1 cup cold water	2 tablespoons flour

Add the powdered milk and the water and mix well. Set aside. in a pot, melt margarine over low heat. Add the flour (use 1 tablespoon flour for thin sauce, 3 tablespoons for thick sauce) and stir until the mixture is smooth. Add the reconstituted milk and stir constantly to prevent burning. Cook over low heat until the sauce is thick enough, usually about 5 minutes. Remove from heat and add salt and pepper to taste. This is great as a white sauce and even better when used to make other sauces (below). .

Cheese Sauce

1 cup Basic White Sauce	1/2 to 1 cup cheese, cubed or grated
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Make the Basic White Sauce, add your favorite cheese just before removing the pot from the heat. Stir until the cheese is melted, but be careful: Cheese burns easily. Say goodbye to that horrible boxed macaroni and cheese. .

Mustard Cheese

1 cup Basic White Sauce	1/4 teaspoon garlic powder	(or 1 tablespoon prepared mustard)
1/2 cup cheese, cubed or grated	1/4 teaspoon mustard powder	dash of cayenne or Tabasco

Combine ingredients and stir until well mixed and cheese is. melted. I really like this on Raman noodles and I add a bit of ham. .

Alfredo Sauce

1 cup Basic White Sauce	1/2 teaspoon dried basil or dill	salt and pepper to taste
1/2 cup parmesan cheese	1/4 teaspoon garlic	

The perfect complement to spaghetti. Even Ramen noodles are greatly improved with this sauce. .

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Gravy

1 cup Basic White Sauce	1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon onion flakes	1 beef bouillon cube

This sauce is great on pan biscuits for breakfast, should you happen to be a backcountry baker. Use it with dehydrated potatoes for dinner. .

Tomato Cream Sauce

1 cup Basic White Sauce	1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
2 tablespoons tomato base (powdered tomato)	1 teaspoon dried basil

The easy option: Use 2 cups of reconstituted instant tomato soup instead of base (available in the health food section of Kroger). .

Asian Tomato Sauce

1 cup Basic White Sauce	1/4 teaspoon ground ginger	Soy sauce to taste
2 tablespoons tomato base (powdered tomato)	1 tablespoon onion flakes	

The cream-based tomato sauces are superb on Ramen noodles .

Food Ideas for Backpackers

John Curtis

The Leader, May 1988

When they put together meal plans for patrols heading out on a seven day excursion at Daymar Adventure Centre and Canoe Base near Englehart, Ont., staff have more than the Scouts' immediate health and welfare in mind. The menu is designed to help them learn new skills and practise old. It gives them opportunities to try different cooking styles and techniques and to taste new foods.

A daily menu includes, on one side, a food list and duty roster for each meal and, on the other, recipes and tips. As the days go by, the meal sheets include fewer and fewer details, increasing the challenge and opening up creative approaches for adventuresome cooks.

The emphasis is on lightweight foods available at a supermarket - dried and powdered ingredients, a few small tins, no bottles. Foods you can eat without cooking (hard sausage, cheese, fruit leather) are always a good idea. particularly for days when you face a tough trip and could reach your destination very late and very tired.

From the Supermarket

This list of appropriate supermarket foods offers a good guide for menu planning. The heavier or bulkier possibilities are more suitable for canoeing than hiking, so choose wisely.

Drinks

- * Tea (with sugar, creamer)
- * Coffee (with sugar, creamer)
- * Herbal tea
- * Hot chocolate
- * Powdered milk
- * Sterilized milk
- * Powdered drinks (juice, jello powder)
- * Fruit juice boxes
- * Powdered spiced cider
- * Powdered egg nog
- * Boxed milk shakes

Nibblers

You can add many of these things to other dishes or use them to make your own GORP.

- * jujubes
- * dried apricot
- * nibs
- * raisins
- * jelly beans
- * cherries
- * cashews
- * walnuts
- * BBQ peanuts
- * granola
- * prunes
- * chocolate chips
- * dates
- * butterscotch chips
- * licorice
- * peanuts
- * banana chips
- * corn nuts
- * fruit roll ups
- * beef jerky
- * crackers
- * sturdy cookies
- * sunflower seeds
- * coconut
- * trail mix
- * chocolate bars
- * granola bars
- * pepperoni sticks
- * fruit leather
- * lifesavers

Breakfast

- * Cold cereal: Choose hearty types that won't crumble too easily: granola, All Bran, Bran Buds, Grape Nuts.
- * Instant (one minute porridge) and quick cooking cereals (five minute porridge). These are great with nibblers added. Try dried apple and cinnamon, for example.
- * Toasted English muffins or compact bread (rye, pumpernickel, bagels) with honey, margarine, squeezable jam, peanut butter, chocolate spread
- * Pancake mix (just add water)
- * Pancake syrup (in plastic container). Or make your own on site. Melt margarine in a small pot over low heat, add brown sugar and stir until it dissolves. You can add a bit of water to get the consistency the way you like it.
- * Bacon: Buy in a chunk; it keeps longer. Bacon will become moldy in warm, damp weather. Protect it before you start by washing the meat thoroughly with a vinegar soaked cloth. Wrap it in aluminum foil and keep it in the centre of your pack.
- * Singular sausages (see recipe)
- * Eggs (fresh for early in the trip; powdered for baking)
- * Cheese
- * Instant hashed browns

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- * Powdered or sterilized milk for cereal
- * Brown sugar for cereal
- * Rice cakes
- * Instant breakfast mix
- * Granola bars

A Day 2 Daymar breakfast sample:

- * granola with milk,
- * bannock from the previous night's bake-up, with
- * peanut butter and jam,
- * boiled egg,
- * tea and coffee.

Use the One Minute Boil for eggs. Boil them one minute, remove from heat and cover pot. Let stand three minutes for soft eggs, five minutes for hard.

Lunch

- * Cheese (bars, sliced, squeeze, cream)
- * "Sturdy" crackers
- * Compact bread
- * English muffins
- * Pita bread
- * Peanut butter, jam, honey, chocolate spread, margarine
- * Tinned meats, fish, and spreads
- * Hard smoked meats (pepperoni, polish sausage). Protect from sun by wrapping first in cheesecloth, then in foil, and they will keep well.

- * Meat sticks
- * Powdered soup mixes (fortify with real meat early in the trip). These mixes also add colour and flavour to rice at suppertime. Instant rice or noodle mixes (e. g. Rice-a-roni)
- * Beef jerky
- * Fresh produce: Apples, oranges, carrots, celery, radishes, and cucumber are heavy, but travel well.

A Day 3 Daymar lunch sample:

- * Fill pita bread with tinned chicken or ham,
- * leftover slaw,
- * banana chips.
- * Serve with juice.

Supper

- | | | |
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| * Powdered soup mixes | * Sauce and seasoning mixes (spaghetti, taco, chili, sloppy joe) | * Dried vegetables (mushrooms, onions, peas, beans, carrots, etc.) |
| * Pasta (noodles, macaroni, spaghetti) | * Hamburger helper | * Tinned meats (ham, chicken, turkey) |
| Chow mein noodles | * Tuna helper | * Brownie mix |
| * Cheese and cream cheese Beef cubes | * Rice mixes | * Snacking cake mix |
| * Noodle and sauce mix | * Stove top stuffing | * Pudding mix |
| * Boil-in-the-bag meals | * Dip mixes | * No bake cheesecake mix |
| * Powdered mashed potatoes | * Fresh produce | * Cookies |
| * Instant hashed browns | * Fresh meat for the first day. Freeze it before you leave. | * Fruit cake |
| * Scalloped potatoes | | * Frosting mix Jello |
| * Salad dressing mix | | |

A Daymar Day 3 supper sample: Curry in a Hurry (for 10).

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|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| * 3 tins tuna | * 1/2 cup dry mushrooms (rinsed) | * 2 cups cold water |
| * 2 tbsp chicken soup base | * 2 tbsp dry bell peppers | * 1 1/2 cup cold milk |
| * 2/3 cup cream of celery soup mix | * 6 cups rice | * curry powder |
| * 1/2 cup dry onion | * 4 cups dried fruits | |

Prepare rice (you need 12 cups water and your biggest pot). Put dried fruits in a pot with just enough water to cover and let stew while rice is cooking. This makes an excellent chutney side dish for the curry.

Add cream of celery soup mix to cold water and milk and stir well. Heat to boiling, stirring constantly, reduce heat and simmer three minutes, adding onions, peppers, chicken soup base and mushrooms. Add tuna, liquid and all. Add curry powder to taste (about 3 teaspoons is perfect). Serve over rice.

Odds and Ends

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|-----------|
| * bacon bits | * spices, seasoning | * ketchup |
| * vegetable shortening salt | * popcorn | * relish |
| * pepper | * salad oil | * mustard |
| * croutons | * vinegar | |

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Recipes to Make Ahead

Singular Sausages

These will keep for several days without refrigeration.

- * 2.5 kg ground beef
- * 2 tsp coarsely ground pepper
- * 2 tsp mustard salt
- * 5 tsp tender quick curing salt
- * 2 tsp garlic salt
- * 1 tsp hickory-smoked salt

Mix together spices. Crumble meat and, with the hands, thoroughly mix in spices. Cover and refrigerate for 24 hours. Mix again and refrigerate another 24 hours. On the third day, shape into five rolls about 38 mm in diameter. Place 50 mm apart on a metal rack and bake at 150 degrees F (65 degrees C) for 8 hours, turning every 2 hours.

Trail-Proof Peanut Butter Super Cookies

- * 1 cup margarine
- * 1/4 tsp vanilla extract
- * 1 cup chunky peanut butter
- * 2 cups whole wheat flour
- * 1 3/4 cups brown sugar
- * 2 tsp baking powder
- * 2 eggs
- * 2 cups granola or quick oatmeal, or
- * 1 cup raisins and 1 cup chopped roasted peanuts

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Cream together 1 cup margarine and 1 cup chunky peanut butter. Beat in 1 3/4 cups brown sugar, 2 beaten eggs, and 1/4 tsp vanilla extract. Mix in 2 cups whole wheat flour and 2 tsp baking powder. Stir in 2 cups granola or quick oatmeal, or 1 cup raisins and 1 cup chopped roasted peanuts. Drop by huge spoonfuls onto a greased cookie sheet and flatten with a fork. Bake 10 to 12 minutes. Makes 18 large cookies.

Sherpa Tea

Mix together

- * 2 cups instant dry milk,
- * 1/3 cup sugar, and
- * 2 tablespoons instant tea powder.

At camp, stir 2 to 3 tablespoons of mix into a cup of hot water. Add a dab of margarine.

Basic Baking Mix

The quantities given make enough basic mix for eight people. Turn it into any number of delicious delectables during evening bake-ups. Mix together:

- * 4 cups white flour,
- * 1 teaspoon salt,
- * 2/3 cups milk powder.
- * 2 cups whole wheat flour,
- * 2 tablespoons baking powder,
- * 1/2 cup bran,
- * 2/3 cups shortening,

Then try some of these "basic" recipes. If the Scouts are young and relatively inexperienced in camp cooking, hold some practice cooking sessions before you go so that they can test out planned recipes in easy conditions under supervision.

Basic Bannock: Add approximately 1 cup water to basic mix and stir until moist but not sticky. Shape as you like and bake in a pan in a reflector oven. Good for breakfast.

Basic Blueberry Pancakes (serves 10): Mix powdered egg into basic mix. To 6 cups basic mix, slowly add about 3 cups water or enough to make a batter-like mixture. Stir in wild or freeze-dried blueberries to taste. Dollop onto a hot griddle and watch for holes to appear. When slightly dry around the edges, flip and brown the other side.

Basic Cinnamon Buns: Add about 1 cup water to 6 cups basic mix to get a bread dough consistency as for bannock. Flour a work surface and roll or press out dough to about 12 mm thick. Mix together 3 tbsp margarine, 3 tsp cinnamon, 3/4 cup brown sugar, and 1/4 cup raisins. Spread the mixture over the surface of the dough and roll it up. Slice into rounds about 25 mm thick, place on a greased baking pan, and bake in the reflector oven.

Basic Date Nut Cake: Mix together basic mix, brown sugar, egg powder, chopped dates, orange peel, and chopped nuts. Add enough cold water and oil to form a moist sticky dough. Pour into greased baking pans. For extra flavour, sprinkle orange drink crystals on top, then bake in the reflector oven.

You can also use basic mix to make the crust for individual supper pizzas cooked in a reflector oven. As well as dough, you need spaghetti sauce mix, hard pepperoni, dried onions, mushrooms and bell peppers, hard cheese and Parmesan cheese.

John Curtis is the summer program director at Daymar Adventure Centre and Canoe Base. The article is based in part on resources he offered during a session on dried foods at a fall Scouters' conference in Hamilton Region, and in part on supplementary information he provided. Many thanks.

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Young Backpacker Food Hints & Recipes
By Claude Freaner, Lake Ridge, VA

This was originally written to be given to parents of new Scouts who had just joined our Troop (885) in Chula Vista, CA. Many of the boys, and their parents, came from urban areas and had never cooked in the wilderness before, so we prepared this information to help them out. I hope this helps you with some ideas about food in the wilderness for youth. In the interest of being politically correct, I should mention that this applies equally well to young female hikers. Hopefully, you and your children will have a much better time hiking in the back country when you are well fed.

Food for New Hikers

General: Several of us in Troop 885 think of ourselves as gourmet cooks on our backpack outings. We also realize that a new Scout going on his first hike, probably for the first time in his life, is "leaving civilization and Mom." We would like to suggest food for these inexperienced cooks that usually is nutritious, is always something he will eat, and is easy to fix, particularly when he is tired.

Hopefully you have read everything else up to this point and have purchased your Scout a Silverstone frying pan and a small pot. The official Scout mess kit is just exactly that - a MESS - because it takes a lot of skill and patience to cook on uncoated aluminum. Nothing will turn a boy off quicker than the frustration of having all his food stick to the pan and burn when he is tired, hungry, and away from home. The meals recommended below are relatively easy to fix and are appealing to most boys. Have your Scout use his camping equipment and practice cooking some of these meals at home on a weekend. This way, he will already know what he likes and how to fix it. Other than freeze-dried eggs, nearly all of the food items listed are available at local supermarkets.

Parents will notice a distinct lack of vegetables in these meals. If your Scout likes vegetables at home wants to take some hiking, then by all means add them to the menus. Otherwise, remember that the adult hikers will also be tired and hungry at dinner, and cannot be expected to force a boy to eat his spinach on a weekend hike. Let the Scout look forward to a hike with minimum hassle and make him eat vegetables at home. Then, after he gets tired of the same old food after a few hikes, he will start looking at what the gourmets are eating and will begin to appreciate some vegetables and other weird foods. (As an aside, when we go on week-long Sierra Treks, we do make them eat vegetables, fruit, other healthy stuff.) You will notice that we sometimes include "junk foods" in the menus as we believe a little bit won't hurt much and the Scouts really like the stuff. We do recommend that each Scout take 3 or 4 pieces (not pounds) of hard candy per day along for the steep stretches of trail. Sucking on the hard candy will provide additional quick energy. However, please don't send a lot of candy and junk food instead of the meals listed below. All that sugar tends to make kids hyperactive and we don't need a kid along who is higher than a kite on sugar. Our meals have a little protein, a little fat, and a lot of complex carbohydrates, which is what the body needs for sustained energy on a hiking weekend.

Feel free to rearrange these items - these are merely suggestions. As a Scout's experience grows, he may like to add in some of the options. When you help him organize his food, remember to help him repackage everything from large boxes or bottles into small baggies or Ziploc bags. Please do not pack more food for a meal than he will eat, because he has to carry it on his back. For example, don't send a 16 oz. jar of instant Tang - put enough for one cup of juice into a baggie and tie with a twister seal. If the item is already in a single serving size, such as individual Kool-Aid packets or hot cocoa packets, then leave it in its original wrapper. Put all the ingredients for a single meal into a single larger baggie or Ziploc. Then put all the bags into a small trash bag, or plastic grocery bag, and tie shut. This way, all food is together for a single meal and not lost throughout his backpack.

Breakfasts

1. Instant oatmeal

Tang
Hot cocoa
Dried Fruit

2. Bagel with jelly

Tang
Hot cocoa
Dried Fruit

Bagels are the preferred bread for hikers. They taste good, don't crush, and won't dry out appreciably.

3. Bacon (2 slices)

Freeze-dried scrambled egg
Bagel (pre-buttered)
Dried fruit
Hot cocoa

Take 2 strips of bacon, cut in half, and pre-cook at home until it's almost done (still a bit limp). Wrap in plastic wrap securely. Bacon prepared this way will keep for a few days and can be easily reheated in his frying pan.

4. 2 Breakfast bars or Pop-Tarts

Tang
Hot cocoa
Dried fruit

5. Pancakes

Bacon
Syrup/butter
Hot cocoa

Buy the pancake mix that only needs to add water (Krusteize is good), and put just enough for 2 or 3 pancakes in a baggie for him. For syrup, get an extra one next time you go to a fast food place in the morning, or he can mix a one-quart package of Kool-aid with only a little water. For butter, put some margarine into 1 or 2 of the little plastic salsa containers that come with Mexican take-out food.

6. Dry cereal (pre-sugared variety)

Powdered milk

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Hot cocoa
Dried fruit
Lunches

The best time to eat lunch when backpacking is from about one hour after breakfast until about one hour before dinner, continuously. In other words, frequent small snacks of complex carbohydrates all day long. That way the body has a constant source of energy available and the Scout is less likely to get too tired. We generally recommend nibbling on trail mix all morning and afternoon, with a little more substantial food for lunch. Carbohydrates come in two main types, simple and complex. Simple carbohydrates are sugars. These cause a rush of energy that lasts an hour or so and leaves you with a jittery feeling from low blood sugar/too much insulin. Your system yo-yos back and forth and you don't really have the sustained energy you need. Complex carbohydrates are like tiny time capsules of energy: the body needs to digest them, and when it does they release energy for long period with no waste products. Examples are breads, cereals, beans, pasta, etc. So, what kinds of complex carbohydrates should a Scout take hiking? All kinds!

Trail mix is a good snack food for the day-long lunch. You can buy trail mix already put together at the Price Club (inexpensive) or nearly all supermarkets. You can also mix your own and put in exactly what your Scout likes. Most trail mixes consist of dried fruit, nuts, seeds, etc. A recipe that most Scouts like is one part of M&Ms, two parts peanuts, and one part raisins. You can also throw in a little shredded coconut and some dried banana chips, if he'll eat them. Other good things include shelled sunflower seeds, carob, mixed nuts, pretzel sticks, or the little Japanese cracker-like snacks. (Go easy on the candy part - it's better to have less candy and more other stuff.) As to how much he will need, for each day of hiking the most he will need is a double handful (less than a cup, if you have to measure it). By comparison, one pound of trail mix will last for a week in the high Sierras. Whatever you get for him, make sure your Scout likes it by having him try it at home first.

Bagels, or the small bagelettes, are great breads to take along for the more substantial food break around noon. Make some up at home by cutting them in half and putting jelly and/or peanut butter in it, then wrapping it in plastic wrap. Crackers such as Triskit, Wheat Thins, and Ritz are also good. Granola bars are also a good form of complex carbohydrates.

You should stay away from fats entirely during the day while hiking, as the body takes a fair amount of time to digest fats and convert them to energy. Some fat in the evening meal is good for the hiker, as the body can make use of it while asleep, but it is not good for you while working hard. Jerky, salami sticks, beef sticks, dry salami, etc. are good meats to take along, but only in small amounts for lunches. Other foods that are good are sardines, ham spread, chicken spread, and so forth, although he will have to carry the weight of the can around with him. In addition, small chunks of cheese or a package of string cheese also tastes good. Remember, however, that meats and cheeses contain a lot of fat and the Scout should not have much of this during the day; the best hiking lunch going is a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

Dinners

This is the second most important meal for a hiker's physical needs (breakfast is first), but the most important for his mental well-being. By the time dinner rolls around, the Scout will be tired, his feet will hurt, he'll be sunburned and mosquito-bitten, he'll itch, his patience will be nonexistent, and he'll be very hungry. This means the meals need to be simple and quick to fix and appealing to his palate (something he will eat) as well as containing the right foods for the body. The evening meal is when he should eat the majority of the day's supply of protein and fats. Since fats take more time to digest than carbohydrates, his body will be using the fats and proteins to repair itself while he's asleep.

The ingredients and possible dinners listed below are always changing but will give you an idea what's available. All it takes is a little imagination and you have a first class meal. When you must repackage things that need directions, cut out the directions from the box, put into the baggie with the food, and then seal with a twister; rewrite the directions in simple language on a piece of paper, portioned according to the amount he will prepare, and include with the food.

Try to include soup with each dinner; this is to help get more water back into his system to prevent dehydration, and also gives him something quick to eat while the rest of the meal is cooking. Listed below are some ideas for new hikers. If your Scout really wants some more vegetables, or you insist he have them, send along carrot and celery sticks; most kids will eat them. Deserts can be just about anything. Instant puddings mixed with dry milk are always good. Other alternatives are anything made by Hostess, such as Ding Dongs, Twinkies, Fruit Pies. Also good are home made cookies or brownies.

1. Chicken Noodle Cup-a-Soup

Hamburger patty
Mashed potatoes
Corn
Punch
Hostess Fruit Pie

Make up the hamburger patty at home and freeze it. As he gets ready to go on Friday afternoon, wrap the frozen patty in foil, shiny side in, and seal in a small Ziploc bag. Buy instant mashed potatoes and send one serving sealed in a bag. Add a dash of powdered milk to make it creamier. Buy frozen whole-kernel corn; send one serving along, sealed in a bag. Wrap the hamburger and corn in his spare T-shirt for insulation; it will thaw slowly during the day Saturday and be ready to cook at night. For punch, we recommend artificially sweetened Kool-aid or Crystal Lite as they are light weight and taste good. He won't need the sugar in the evening from the other kind. Fry the hamburger until done enough. The junk food dessert is because he's a kid!

2. Vegetable Cup-a-Soup

Chicken Top Ramen
Bagel
Small can chicken
Punch
Hostess Ding-Dongs

Dump the chicken into the Top Ramen while it is cooking.

3. Chicken Noodle Cup-a-Soup

Small can chicken
1/2 Cup White Rice
1/2 package Chicken Gravy Mix
Punch
Twinkies

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Put the rice (regular long-grain rice) in the small pot with 1 cup of water, dump in the chicken, cook for 15 minutes on low heat, covered. Mix the gravy up according to directions, dump in with chicken and rice, reheat until boiling.

4. Chicken Broth Cup-a-Soup

Two hot dogs
1 Tablespoon Spaghetti Sauce Mix
Spaghetti Noodles
4 packages McDonald's Catsup
Punch
Instant Pudding with powdered milk

Break spaghetti noodles into smaller lengths at home. Boil in pot for 10 minutes or so. Pour off most of water, put sauce mix and catsup into pot with noodles. Cut hot dogs into small chunks and add to noodles and sauce. Cook over low heat, stirring, until hot dogs are hot. Clean out pot after eating out of it, put pre-measured instant pudding and powdered milk into pot, add proper amount of cold water, stir, let stand until thickened, eat.

5. Chicken Broth Cup-a-Soup

1/2 package Kraft Macaroni & Cheese
Small can tuna
Corn
Punch
Home made chocolate chip cookies

Repackage the 1/2 of macaroni in a Ziploc. Also 1/2 of cheese packet in another Ziploc bag, along with some powdered milk. Cook according to directions; add the tuna at the end, reheat, eat.

6. Chicken Noodle Cup-a-Soup

Stew
Bagel
Punch

Freeze some stew at home in a small 2 by 3 by 4 in Tupperware. Put into a Ziploc in case of leaks. Put a piece of cake into another Tupperware and send along for dessert.

Gourmet Suggestions

Below are listed some ideas for menus that have been prepared by the High Adventure Gourmets of Troop 885.

- * Fettucini Alfredo with White Clam Sauce and fresh Broccoli with Hollandaise Sauce
- * Mexican Tacos with Spanish Rice and Refried Beans
- * Corned beef, cabbage, and new potatoes (St. Patrick's day)
- * Beef Stroganoff with Green Beans and Corn Bread
- * Roast Beef, Mashed Potatoes, Peas, Gravy
- * Roast Turkey, Mashed Potatoes, Stuffing, Broccoli with Hollandaise Sauce
- * Beef Burgundy, Braised Noodles, Steamed Carrots

Listed below are pre-packaged, canned and dry foods from the local supermarket that are great for preparing delicious meals on the trail. Many of the meats and seafoods can be found in very small cans. The fresh or frozen vegetables are great for variety, but do tend to be somewhat heavy for a younger Scout. Take a tour through the supermarket and make up your own list with what your son likes.

Supermarket Backpacker Foods

Pasta/Rice

- * Kraft noodles and Cheese
 - o Fettucini Alfredo
 - o Cheddar Broccoli
- * Lipton's Noodles and Sauce
 - o Butter Noodles
 - o Sour Cream and Chives
 - o Cream Garlic
 - o Alfredo
 - o Stroganoff
 - o Parmesan
- * Macaroni & Cheese
- * Rice a Roni
- * Lipton's Flavored Rices
 - o Spanish
 - o Cheddar & Broccoli
 - o Chicken
- * Long-grained white Rice
- * Wild Rice

Sauces

- * Brown Gravy
- * Chicken Gravy
- * Mushroom Gravy

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- * Hollandaise
- * Taco
- * Teriyaki, etc.

Soups

- * Lipton Cup-a-Soups

Vegetables

- * Frozen Corn
- * Frozen Peas
- * Frozen Green Beans
- * Fresh Broccoli

Breads

- * Bagels
- * Marie Calender Corn Bread Mix
- * French Rolls
- * Bisquick biscuits

Canned Meats

- * Chicken
- * Mexican Chicken
- * Tuna
- * Beef
- * Corned Beef

Desserts

- * Anything by Hostess
- * Fresh Fruit
- * Small Pies

In conclusion, you can send just about anything the Scout will eat, but please send stuff that is easy and quick. Eventually, as he gets older, he may take an interest in his food and become a good wilderness cook, experimenting with all sorts of stuff, just like the rest of us. If parents or Scouts have any questions about any of this, please don't hesitate to come down to a Troop meeting and talk to us about it. Any of our High Adventure Leaders will be happy to discuss and debate at great length the various aspects of cooking in the great outdoors. We especially like to receive new ideas or suggestions from others.

Backpacking food ideas:

- <http://www.troop137.com/index6/food.html>
- <http://www.qnet.com/~sierrame/TrailFood.html>
- <http://www.netwoods.com/cooking/bp-recipe.html>
- <http://www.netwoods.com/cooking/bp-food.html>
- <http://www.netwoods.com/cooking/bp-food2.html>
- <http://www.netwoods.com/cooking/bp-food3.html>
- <http://www.macscouter.com/Cooking/YoungBackpacker.html>
- <http://www.macscouter.com/Cooking/GourmetBackpacker.html>

Cooking ideas (including backpacking and camp cooking):

- <http://www.netwoods.com/d-cooking.html>
- <http://www.macscouter.com/Cooking/>