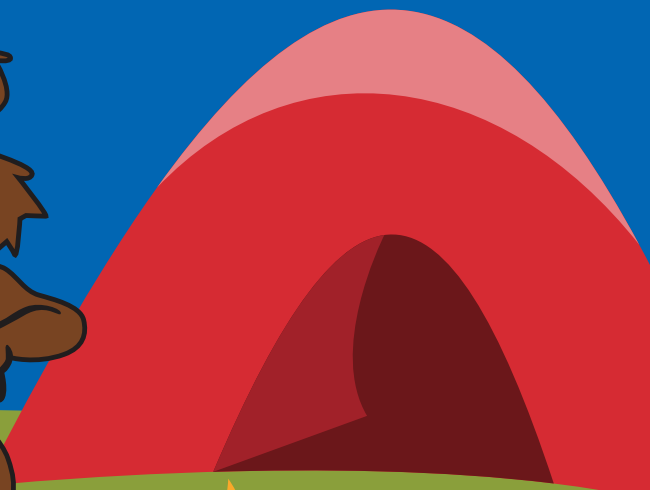


**IT'S NEW!**

# Beaver Scout Camping



It starts with Scouts.

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## GREAT NEWS

This fall, our Beaver Scouts will be celebrating 40 years of Scouting! This isn't the only news for our youngest Section; in an effort to harmonize many items in our policies, a decision was taken to make camping more accessible for Beaver Scouts. We aim to ensure that all of our members receive the best possible Scouting experience. Getting Beavers outdoors is a must. The Scouting Adventure starts in Beaver Scouts! Finally!

Lots of Colonies get Beaver-aged youth out family camping, so what exactly is new? Our goal is to enable Beavers to go camping without their parents. Some Beavers won't be quite ready for a night away from home, while others will be very excited about their first camping adventure. Both reactions are to be expected. This guide will provide you with some helpful tips to give Beaver Scouts, their parents and Scouters amazing new experiences.

*"Children are born naturalists. They explore the world with all of their senses, experiment in the environment, and communicate their discoveries to those around them." -The Audubon Nature school.*

Let's get our Beavers OUTSIDE! Here is a collection of easy tips to keep our Beaver Scouts safe and to make our camping trips the experiences we know they should be.

[New changes in BP&P](#)



## WHERE TO START?

We must remember that when we introduce Beavers to outdoor adventure, we are taking them out of their comfort zone. Beavers experience this with a sense of wonder, but often their imaginations help the process along. This is where we can have some trouble. Beaver Scouts are not little adults; their needs are very different, and if everyone is to enjoy camp, you need to pay attention to Beavers' unique perspectives.

For this age, pulling them along is better than pushing. This is especially hard for Scouters who are avid hikers and campers, but pushing Beavers risks creating negative associations with the activity and the outdoors. Keep inviting Beavers to the journey; pique their curiosity. "Hey, come see this!" "Look at that!"

There are five things Scouters need to remember when taking Beavers on outdoor adventures:

**They get cold faster.**

**They get hot faster.**

**They get hungry faster.**

**They get bored faster.**

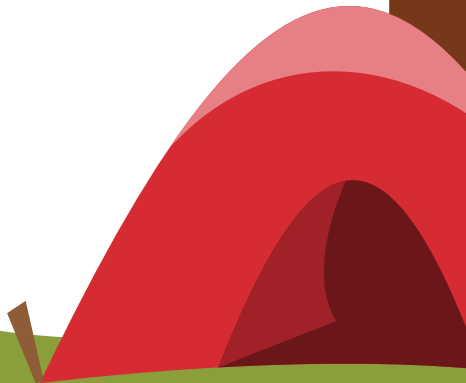
**They want to be helpful.**

Start with one night away. Commence camp on a Saturday instead of a Friday. Camp somewhere close to home—a local camp or nearby provincial park. Arriving during the day gives Beavers a chance to really understand their surroundings and feel safe.

More experienced Beavers—Blue Tails and White Tails—may begin the camp a night earlier, on a Friday, and set up some of the camp and activities to make the Brown Tail Beavers feel welcomed when they arrive on Saturday morning.



What's familiar and easy for a Scouter or parent can be intimidating for a Beaver Scout. Evaluate Beavers' readiness for something new based not just on physical ability, but on how well they've handled previous experiences that presented comparable stress. Remember that each Beaver is different; be prepared to address hesitation with reassurances. Think of the activity as a snack, and give reluctant Beavers a taste and permission to have more. Prepare them before the activity with the information and skills they'll need to be amazing Beaver Scout campers!



## TIPS AND TRICKS

Considerations for camping with 5-7 year-olds

### Expectations

- Introduce them to the gear they'll be using on a camping weekend (tents, tarps, etc.).
- Beaver Scouts can help around the camp, assisting with preparing meals, gathering wood (naturally), washing dishes, and pitching tents. It's all part of Scouting!
- Project confidence in your camping abilities. Let the Beaver Scouts know they're in good hands.
- Take the Beavers somewhere really cool. Scouters like big views, but Beaver Scouts want to interact physically with the environment. They want to play in water, climb on rocks, crawl in bushes, wave sticks and toss pebbles. Choose outdoor destinations that you know will provide natural features that engage and excite Beavers' imaginations.

### FEED ME SCOUTER!

- A grumpy Beaver may simply be a hungry Beaver. Carry lots of granola bars and fruit. Never underestimate the power of licorice as a pick-me-up (for both Beavers and Scouters). Watch for signs that Beavers are getting hungry: walking slowly, dreamy look in their eyes, sighs, and not being as talkative.
- Being outdoors all day is not something that Beaver-aged youth are used to, so they burn more energy than they usually do. Have them eat and drink every hour or so.
- Pick the right food. Cream of mushroom soup and tuna melt sandwiches may be a delicacy at your place, but they're not great picks for Beavers. Quick, tasty and fun meals will do the trick. Make sure that most of your meals are familiar to your Beavers. Have them help create the menu. Having Beaver Scouts salivating for the food will encourage them to go to camp!



### **Schedule:**

- Beaver Scouts will want to explore and touch everything. Give them the opportunity to explore. This can be done with some supervised free time.
- Pace is important. A good mix of active time and rest time will be needed.
- Your schedule is not written in stone. Be prepared to tear it up if need be.
- Plan to do the same thing at the same time—Beavers and Scouters alike. Time to fill up our bottles; time to goop up for bugs; time for a washroom break; time for a snack; time for bed. (Good luck with that one!) Routines are important.

Keep all of the Colony's water bottles in one place. This could also be a good place to make communal bug spray and sunscreen available.

This space should become the gathering area before going to any activity.



## HOMESICKNESS

These are great tricks to help build anticipation and alleviate anxiety.

### What Scouters Should Do to Prevent Homesickness

1. Keep parents in the loop. Let them know all the fun stuff that the Beavers will experience at camp.
2. Reinforce to both Beavers and their parents that camp is something fun that they'll be doing with their friends.
3. Highlight some of the fun places that the Beavers will visit while camping.
4. Ease the transition. Camps will feel different from meeting in a Scout Hall. Make sure that the camp feels familiar to the Beavers. Use Riverbanks and perform an opening ceremony to reassure Beavers with familiar routines.
5. Tour the site with Beavers upon arrival. Highlight washrooms and safety boundaries. Show the Beavers activity spaces and hint at the fun they'll have.
6. Scouters should bring a teddy bear! Do away with any stigma around the idea of bringing something comfortable from home.

### What Parents Should Do to Prevent Homesickness

1. Tell your children that you want them to have fun. Children need to go off to camp with your blessing—not your anxiety. Let them know that you can't wait to hear all about their great adventures at camp!
2. Let your Beaver know that their Scouters are there to help him or her. If he or she has any problems, he or she can talk to the Scouters. Mention Scouters by name—especially if there's a Scouter that your Beaver relates to the most.
3. Beaver Scouts and parents should pack for camp together. It's good for Beavers to know where to find their things in their bags. This also assures Beavers that they're prepared and have all the fun items they need for camp.





## AGAIN: PLAN-DO-REVIEW

Process to help our Beaver Scouts get the most out of their experience.

### Plan

Facilitate a conversation with the Beaver Scouts to answer these questions and carry out these steps:

1. What we are going to do at camp?
2. What would we like to eat at camp?
3. Learn all new skills required (packing, dressing for the rain, etc.)
4. Practise signs and gathering signals for the Colony. Consider using bells and/or whistles.
5. Ensure the Beavers understand their roles, tasks and duties at camp.
6. Agree on all the details.

### Do

1. Learn any new skills at meetings. Prepare Beaver Scouts for their roles, tasks and duties at camp.
2. Take part in the adventure!
3. Beavers and Scouters help to make sure it runs successfully!

### Review

1. What do we know now that we didn't know before?
2. How did we handle the activity ?
3. Did everyone play a part?
4. What was good about this adventure?
5. What did not work out as planned?



## INFORMING PARENTS

To make sure that Beavers have a great camp, make sure that their parents have all the information needed to support their little Scout. Your emails and information letter to the parents should contain the following:

- Dates and times.
- Transportation details
- Emergency contact number
- Theme of the camp
- Highlights of the program schedule
- Information about the camp site (facilities and accommodations.)
- Directions to the site
- Parents' role in preparing for camp
  - Share some of the tips and tricks in the document, including parents role in preparing a Beaver for camp.
- Gear list should include:
  - Proper clothing items for the trip
  - Medications and related information for Scouters
- Proper clothing items for the trip
- Medications information

All this information will make sure that the parents and Beavers have all the right details to have one amazing camp experience!

Don't forget to fill out any of the required forms:

Camping And Outdoor Activity Application

[Scouts.ca/bpp/forms/Camping-Outdoor-Activity-Application.pdf](https://scouts.ca/bpp/forms/Camping-Outdoor-Activity-Application.pdf)

Incident report forms

[Scouts.ca/bpp/forms/Incident-Report-Form.pdf](https://scouts.ca/bpp/forms/Incident-Report-Form.pdf)

## FAQ'S

### **What is the correct ratio for Scouters-to-Beavers ?**

Beaver Scouts ratio has not changed; it is still 1:8, with a minimum of two Scouters, just like all other meetings and activities.

### **How many parents should attend the camp?**

Parents are always invited to camp. Just remember to ensure that parents and guardians need to abide with Scouts Canada's screening policies.

### **No more family camps?! =(**

You can still have family camps. Parents are always invited to camp. Just remember to ensure that parents and guardians need to abide with Scouts Canada's screening policies.

### **What can Beaver Scouts do at camp?**

Everything, as long as you have the proper supervision. When talking with the Beavers about what they would like to do at camp, highlight some typical camp activities. Cooking simple items on fires, pitching up a tent and simply being able to touch and manipulate all the fun things in nature are already highlights for most. Avoid long presentations on how a tree works, or why rocks are hard and silent. Be active and interactive!

### **How can Beavers be made to feel safe and comfortable when its time to go to bed?**

It's important for Beavers to know that they're sleeping area is safe. Assign Beavers to bunks and sleeping areas, and let everyone in the Colony know that their assigned space is theirs. No one should be in somebody else's bed; it's personal space. A good rule for any Colony is that no one should touch anyone else's personal gear without asking.

A great trick to make sure everyone has a great night's sleep is to give every Beaver Scout a [glow stick](#) (available from the Scout Shop) to decorate his or her sleeping space and use as a night-light. What's even cooler is that a glow stick looks like a mini lightsaber!

Some things to remember about bunk beds:

- Beavers must be at least six years-old before they can use the top bunk.
- Beavers must always use the ladder when going up and down on a bunk bed.
- Only one person is allowed on top at a time.
- It's not safe to play underneath a bunk bed unless it is specifically designed that way by the manufacturer.
- Beavers must not tie anything—such as cords, sashes or ropes—to the bed.
- Beavers must not keep toys or other objects in the bed.

### **Do we need flush toilets?**

No, but make sure there is some form of facility for when nature calls.

You can refer to the [BP&P listing 10001.1](#) as it relates to required structures and facilities.

### **What about winter camping? Can Beaver Scouts really do that too?**

Yes, by respecting the following:

1. At least one of the adult volunteers must be an experienced winter camper.
2. A parent or guardian of each Beaver Scout must receive a list of required clothing and bedding.
3. A telephone or similar communication device must be available for emergency use.
4. A vehicle, to be used in the event of an emergency, must be present on site.
5. The weather-resistant shelter must have a heat source.
6. Indoor washroom facilities must be available.
7. A supply of drinking water must be available.
8. An emergency evacuation plan must be in place.

**When does this come into effect? Is it just part of the changes coming with the Canadian Path?**

NOW! This change in policy was approved by the Board of Governors and is effective immediately. So what are you waiting for? It's time to get your Beavers engaged in planning a great camp!

If you have further questions or feedback, please contact your [Scouting Service Centre](#) or [Scouts Canada's Help Centre](#).