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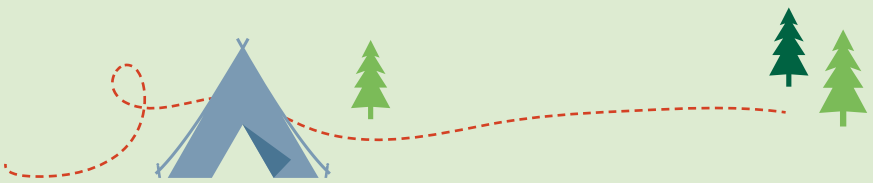
THE NORWEGIAN GUIDE
AND SCOUT ASSOCIATION

Welcome
to the scouts



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Scouting is fun!

Scouting is a fun leisure activity for anyone who likes spending time outdoors with others, be they children, teenagers or adults! Scouts learn and discover new things every week. It could be cooking food over the campfire, building something fun out of wooden poles and rope, helping someone who's been injured or putting up a tent. We work together to succeed, and it's OK to try, fail and try again – until we make it.

Scouts spend a great deal of time outdoors, because that's where the big adventures and challenges can be found. We go hiking come rain or shine, wind or snow. Together we explore nature and learn how to look after it and ourselves.

But scouting is much more than hiking and camping. When joining the scouts children and young people learn to truly engage with important issues such as climate change and the environment, peace, tolerance, inclusion and community. We make the world better!

Scouting is fun and gives you friends for life!

Dear parent

Whether or not you're already familiar with the scouts, chances are you will have some questions. In this booklet we provide an insight into what scouting is along with lots of useful tips. If you still have unanswered questions after reading it, you can find more information at speiding.no/english. You can also contact your local scout group or the Norwegian Guide and Scout Association.

Scouting is fun and meaningful for all the family. Many parents sign up to become scout leaders or contribute in other ways. You don't need any particular skills to join. Combining the children's activities with your own leisure time makes for great adventures and allows you to make new friends of your own! Contact your scout group and talk to them about the opportunities that are available.

Scouting is fun and meaningful for all the family.





Foto: Alexander Vestrum

Foto: Lars Rørnaas

What is scouting?

Scouting means friendship, outdoor pursuits (**friluftsliv**), camping, camaraderie, fun, play, fulfilment and much, much more! It lets children and young people engage with important issues to encourage them to make a contribution to society.

Scouting began in England more than 100 years ago and is now the world's biggest children and youth movement with a total of 60 million members in more than 200 countries and territories across different cultures, languages, religions, genders, ages, (dis)abilities and education levels.

The Norwegian Guide and Scout Association has thousands of members and some 350 local scout groups throughout the country. Most of the scout groups organise activities (scout meetings) for the different age groups every week. There are also several weekend trips during the year and perhaps a week of camping in the summer.

We are a voluntary, faith-neutral and non-party political organisation. We wish to reflect our diverse society and are always working to welcome more children and young people into the scouting community.

Scouting is for most people!



Foto: Christian Sangereid

Scout law

The scout law is not a list of dos and don'ts. Rather it forges a path for scouts and describes what is expected of us. It's about taking responsibility for ourselves and for others, for society and for nature.

1. A scout contemplates on their beliefs and respects the beliefs of others.
2. A scout knows to be responsible for themselves and for others.
3. A scout is helpful and considerate.
4. A scout is a good friend.
5. A scout is honest and reliable.
6. A scout knows nature and is protective of it.
7. A scout thinks and acts independently and tries to understand others.
8. A scout does their best in times of adversity.
9. A scout is thrifty and tries to look after themselves.
10. A scout works for peace and understanding between people.

This is reinforced by the scout promise that scouts make to their scout leader when they are admitted at the investiture ceremony:

"I promise to the best of my ability to contemplate on my beliefs, help others and keep the scout law."

Why scouting?

The Norwegian Guide and Scout Association's goal is to empower people to become independent and actively take responsibility in their community in line with scouting values.

Be prepared!

The values are expressed in the scout law, the scout promise and the motto "Be prepared". The scouts motto means that a scout is prepared to accept challenges, to offer help when needed, and to do their bit when it matters.

A scout meeting often ends with the scout leader declaring "Scouts, be prepared!". The scouts then respond "Always prepared!" in unison while making the scout salute with their right hand at shoulder height, palm facing forward. The three fingers represent the three aspects of the scout promise. The thumb and little finger form a circle to symbolise the international community of scouts. There are scout groups in almost every country in the world.

Scouting is fun!

What do scouts do?

Scouting is fun! It's also a great way of learning how to work together and take responsibility for yourself and others. This is how true friendships are made.

In the company of other children and adults, scouts are able to explore nature and learn different skills such as hiking in all sorts of weather, using a map and compass, cooking food over the campfire and working together to solve tasks. And much, much more. Scouting helps develop the whole person!

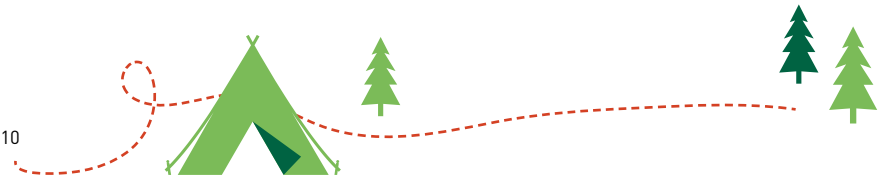




Foto: Kristianne Marholm



Foto: Alexander Vestrum

The youth programme

Scouting activities – i.e. the skills a scout needs to master, and how to learn them – are defined by what's called the youth programme. The programme has been created to ensure that the activities and learning are useful, engaging and interesting. It's based on the children's stages of development and on widely acknowledged principles of learning.

The activities in the youth programme are divided into five different themes:

- outdoor pursuits
- social engagement
- friendship
- creativity
- quality of life

These categories encompass a wide range of activities, which is precisely why scouting is so varied. The main thing is to offer the scouts fun and enriching experiences in a safe and welcoming setting. There's always something new to explore and discover when you're a scout!

Age-based activities

Most scout groups meet every week and go on hikes or other weekend adventures several times a year.

Many groups will spend a week camping in the summer, either by themselves or as part of a larger gathering or jamboree – maybe even abroad! A national jamboree is held somewhere in Norway every four years. It attracts several thousand scouts aged from around 11 upwards. The national jamboree is an unforgettable experience!

Our members are aged six and over. Activities are organised in sections according to age, and a scout group consists of one or more such sections:

- **Beavers,** ages 6–7
- **Cubs,** ages 8–9
- **Scouts,** ages 10–15
- **Rovers,** ages 16–25

Young leadership

Scouts start to practise leadership when they reach 8–9 years of age. Scouts in this age group could be asked to lead a task or teach a game to others, for example.

Activities are tailored to suit the children's age, maturity, skills and experience. The learning is very much based on play, often in an outdoor setting, and with older scouts and adults providing guidance.

Prepared for life

Practising how to tackle new challenges lets you build experience that can come in handy in other situations, too. Whether it's water pouring into the tent, the campfire going out or taking the wrong path to the camp site: in the scouts you're guaranteed to experience mishaps, but you will learn how to deal with them safely.

Scouting furnishes children and young people with resilience and confidence in their own abilities.

You will soon learn that tents and sleeping bags can be dried, you will get the campfire lit again, and you will always reach your destination in the end. Having faced a variety of tricky situations – and successfully dealt with them – is a big advantage in the workplace and in life in general. You know that challenges can be overcome, especially when everyone is working together. Scouting furnishes children and young people with resilience and confidence in their own abilities.

The youngest scouts will always have scout leaders nearby to guide and encourage them until they master the new skills. One step at a time, the scouts become more independent.





Foto: Runar Sørensen



Patrols

Once you join the Scouts Troop you will also become part of a patrol comprising 4–8 Scouts between the ages of 10 and 16. Together you will plan and carry out a few hikes and meetings on your own. This allows you to learn from your experiences through trial and error. And perhaps most importantly: you get to decide most of the activities yourselves.



Foto: Alexander Vestrum

Heroes and role models for younger scouts

Rovers are between 16 and 25 years of age. That makes them the oldest scout section and role models for younger scouts.

Rovers run their own activities in the Rover Crew. Together they plan and embark on hikes and other activities. They may also take part in fun events and camps locally, nationally and internationally.

Many Rovers serve as scout leaders for younger scouts, although scouting with peers in their own age group remains the core activity for Rovers.

Membership fees

All members pay an annual membership fee to be part of the scouts.

Scouting is one of the most inexpensive organised activities for children and young people. The membership fee covers the calendar year and is payable to the Norwegian Guide and Scout Association. It covers participation in scout meetings and may also include local trips. Everyone who has paid the membership fee is covered by our group personal accident insurance. We also have liability insurance cover for scout leaders (read more about insurance on page 19). The cost of attending camps comes on top of the membership fee.

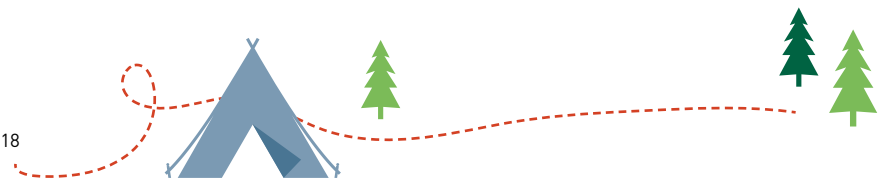
You will receive an invoice by post, email or eFaktura when you sign up and every January thereafter. The fee may vary from scout group to scout group. The invoice provides a breakdown of the membership fee.

If you are three or more members from the same household, i.e. you share the same address, you are entitled to a household discount. Remember to tell the scout group so that the info can be put on our member register.

Financial hardship is not a barrier

Joining the scouts does not mean having to buy new, expensive equipment and clothing! Much of it can be found second-hand and is just as good as new.

We do acknowledge that some people may struggle to afford to buy everything they need to participate in our activities. This is why we have set up Speider-sport-fondet – because everyone should be able to join us no matter how much money they've got. The fund can meet the cost of outdoor equipment, which the scout group will then lend to those



who need it. Your group may even already have equipment that you can borrow.



You can also talk to your scout group about other ways they can help, e.g. help to go on camps or shared transport to meetings and trips. Simply talking to them is a great start!

Your local authority will also have schemes for financial support or for borrowing equipment for activities.

Read more about equipment on page 30–34.

Transportation to and from scouting activities

The best thing is always for scouts to walk, cycle or take public transport to and from scout meetings. If that's not possible, we encourage car-sharing with other families. Not everyone has a car, so talk to the scout group to make arrangements.

Insurance

The Norwegian Guide and Scout Association has two different insurance policies for its members: group personal accident insurance for scouts and liability insurance for the organisation and its leaders.

We also recommend that individuals take out travel insurance to cover loss or damage to personal property and repatriation in the event of illness or unforeseen events.

Because we care!

Scouts engage with the community in a variety of ways, e.g. by picking litter on the beach, inviting children in refugee reception centres to take part in activities, playing board games with older people in care homes or participating in search and rescue operations.

Speideraksjonen is the scouts' annual fundraising event. Every April scouts of all ages make a formidable effort to help children and young people in other parts of the world. This gives the scouts an insight into the lives of others, and they get to learn about the situation in the recipient countries.



Foto: Mads Ankarstrand



SPEIDEREN by post

Every member receives the member magazine SPEIDEREN four times a year. It contains everything from jokes and riddles for the youngest to inspiring articles about mouth-watering camping food, fun activities, relevant topics and much more. Young and old, scouts and parents are guaranteed to find something for them.

If there's more than one member living at the same address, you may choose to receive just one copy of the magazine. That way you reduce paper waste, which is good for the environment!



Photo: Daniel J. Widnes

How can parents play a part?

It's normal for parents to feel a bit anxious when their offspring are roaming the countryside without them, but you should never worry when your child is out scouting.

The scouts are committed to making our members develop independence. Practising and assessing risk is a big part of becoming independent, both in and outside the scouts. Just think about how children learn to look out for traffic or be careful with scissors or hot water.

This does not mean you should relinquish all responsibility to the scout group. If there's something we ought to know about your child, it's important that you tell us! If you have any questions, we ask that you approach one of the scout leaders in the group.

Out and about

Norwegians love spending time outdoors whatever the weather. Being outside and physically active is good for both body and soul. Research shows that spending time in nature has a calming effect, gives us energy and prevents stress and negative thoughts.

Nature is easily accessible to Norwegians. There's a legal clause called the right to roam. Simply put, it states that everyone is free to take to the outdoors and enjoy and use nature provided they look after it and don't cause harm.

The scouts are committed to making our members develop independence.

When your child goes on a scouting trip or camp, you have an important role to play. A successful trip is the result of good co-operation between the scout, scout leaders and parents/carers.

The scout leader is responsible for making sure that the trip is safe, yet challenging enough, and that the scouts are prepared. Good preparation means the scouts have all the knowledge, skills and equipment they need. The scout leader is also responsible for communicating with parents and providing reassurance that the trip is safe. The scouts have a long-standing history of focusing on safety when hiking and camping.

The scout is responsible for bringing equipment and other items requested by the scout leader or patrol leader and for turning up at the agreed time and place. It's also important that all participants do their best to work with the other scouts and leaders so that everyone has an enjoyable trip.

Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that the scout is prepared and has the necessary equipment and clothing so that they can keep safe and make the most of the trip. Remember that the scout can pack their backpack themselves as long as they have a good packing checklist.

Once your child has set off on the trip you are bound to worry about whether they are OK, whether they are able to get to sleep in the tent, whether they are feeling homesick or whether the woolly jumper you gave them is warm enough. Then you should know that as long as you don't hear anything, everything is likely to be just fine.

The chances of your child having a good and successful hiking experience increase greatly if you have faith in the scouts and their leaders to resolve any challenges that may arise along the way – rather than have the child phone home and cutting the trip short.

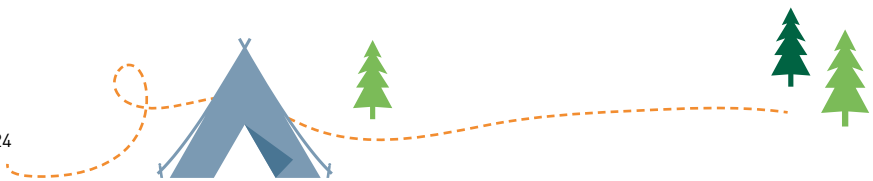




Foto: Alexander Vestrum

Learning by doing

One important scouting principle is learning by doing: getting cold hands and feet, struggling to light the campfire and maybe having to stick a plaster on a sore finger are all common examples of things that allow a scout to grow and make them better prepared for the next trip. Successfully overcoming trials and tribulations gives the scouts confidence that they can deal with the unexpected by themselves. It helps them gain independence and lets them take responsibility for themselves and others, which is precisely the main goal of scouting.

This is also true for the weekly scout meeting. Many of the required hiking and camping skills are practised here, be it putting up a tent, working together to light a fire or using a map and compass. Remember to check whether the meeting is taking place outdoors – make sure they bring appropriate clothing!



Foto: Mads Ankarstrand

Safe scouting

Scouting should be a safe activity for both young and old! It's true that outdoor life can sometimes result in minor injuries, but it's extremely rare for anything serious to happen. Practising how to deal with different situations, e.g. first aid training, is an important aspect of scouting. Should you be so unlucky to hurt yourself while on a scouting trip, don't worry: you're in good hands! The youngest scouts are always accompanied on activities by adult scout leaders. The slightly older scouts learn and practise first aid and other techniques before they go on hikes without adults.

At big national events there is always someone to oversee safety and administer first aid. We have extensive experience of ensuring that our activities are safe for the participants.

The scouts are often described as the world's biggest group of friends, and we want everyone to be able to be part of this great community that we are so proud of. This means raising awareness of values such as inclusivity, inclusion, friendship and respect. The aim is to foster enlightened and confident children and leaders who are prepared to act if they see bullying, exclusion, harassment or other unacceptable behaviours, not only in scouting but also elsewhere in society.

The scouts are often described as the world's biggest group of friends.

Some scouts may benefit from a few additional provisions to feel safe and at home in the scouts. This could involve physical adaptation, dietary needs, cultural needs or social interaction. Scout groups are good at finding solutions through constructive co-operation with the scout's parents/carers. Get in touch with the scout group, and we'll work something out!



Safeguarding

The scouts should be a safe space for everyone. One of a number of safeguards in place is the use of police certificates.

A police certificate of conduct is a document issued by the police containing information obtained from police records. We request police certificates to ensure that every adult working with the scouts is law-abiding and has never been convicted of certain offences.

A certificate must be produced by all scout volunteers and employees who regularly interact with children under the age of 18 and all those in regular contact with people with learning disabilities.

The requirement for a police certificate applies to both these groups, without exception, in all parts of the Norwegian Guide and Scout Association.



Foto: Christian Sangereid

Become a leader

Many parents sign up to become scout leaders or contribute in other ways. Once they discover how much they're enjoying themselves they often want to do even more!

You don't need any particular prior knowledge – you can learn most things as you go. The main thing is that you enjoy the company of children and young people and that you like being outdoors.



Foto: Katinka Rosbach

Training

Successfully leading others is a key part of what we scouts practise. It could involve organising a fun game, teaching the youngest scouts basic first aid or making sure everyone is having fun at camp, even when the weather is bad.

We hold a number of different leadership courses both regionally and nationally. Most of them are a combination of theory and practice, and many of them take place outdoors with nature as a backdrop. Some of the training is also provided in the form of short e-learning modules. The courses offer personal development, and many people find that the things they learn come in handy outside the scouts, too.



Foto: Thomas Markento Andresen

It's great being a leader!

What equipment does a scout need?

The scout scarf (or neckerchief) is the worldwide symbol of the scouts, but you don't have to rush out and buy one straight away!

It's common for new scouts to gain their scarf after an induction period. The scarf is presented at a small, formal ceremony where the scout is admitted to the group. It takes place either at the end of the year, at the start of the year or before the summer holidays. Feel free to ask about your scout group's traditions to determine whether or when you need to buy a scarf.

The shirt is also part of the scout uniform, and many new scouts want one. But again, don't rush into buying, there's no hurry. You might even be able to find a second-hand shirt in a good condition.

Check out Speider-sport's Facebook group for pre-loved items. The group is called "Speidereffekter – Bytte, gi bort, kjøp og salg". The group lets you exchange scouting kit, clothing and hiking equipment that the user has grown out of or no longer needs.

Ask the group about second-hand equipment to buy or borrow. Reuse is good for the planet and for your wallet!

Badges

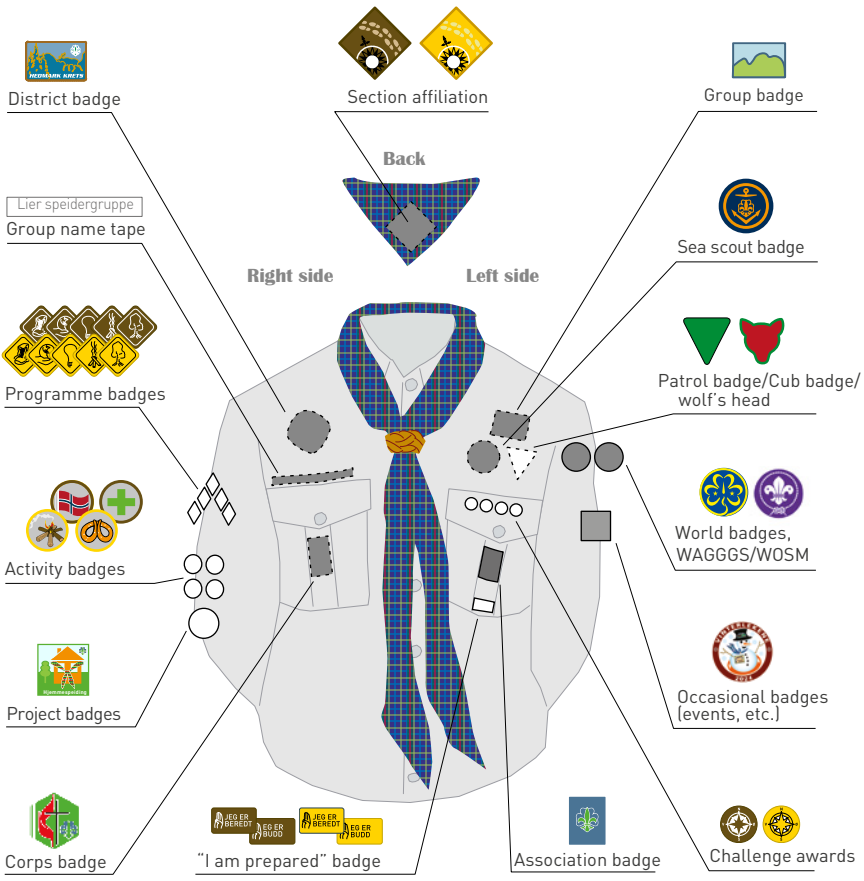
There's a huge range of scout badges, and they are popular amongst the scouts! Some badges are linked to the youth programme. To earn them you will need to complete several activities, either by yourself or together with other scouts. Many of the badges and award criteria are tailored to the scouts' ages and abilities. Some badges relate to events and participation.

Some badges should be sewn onto the uniform shirt, while others can be attached to your camp blanket.

The badges go in designated places on the uniform shirt as shown in the illustrations on the next pages.



Badge placements – Cubs



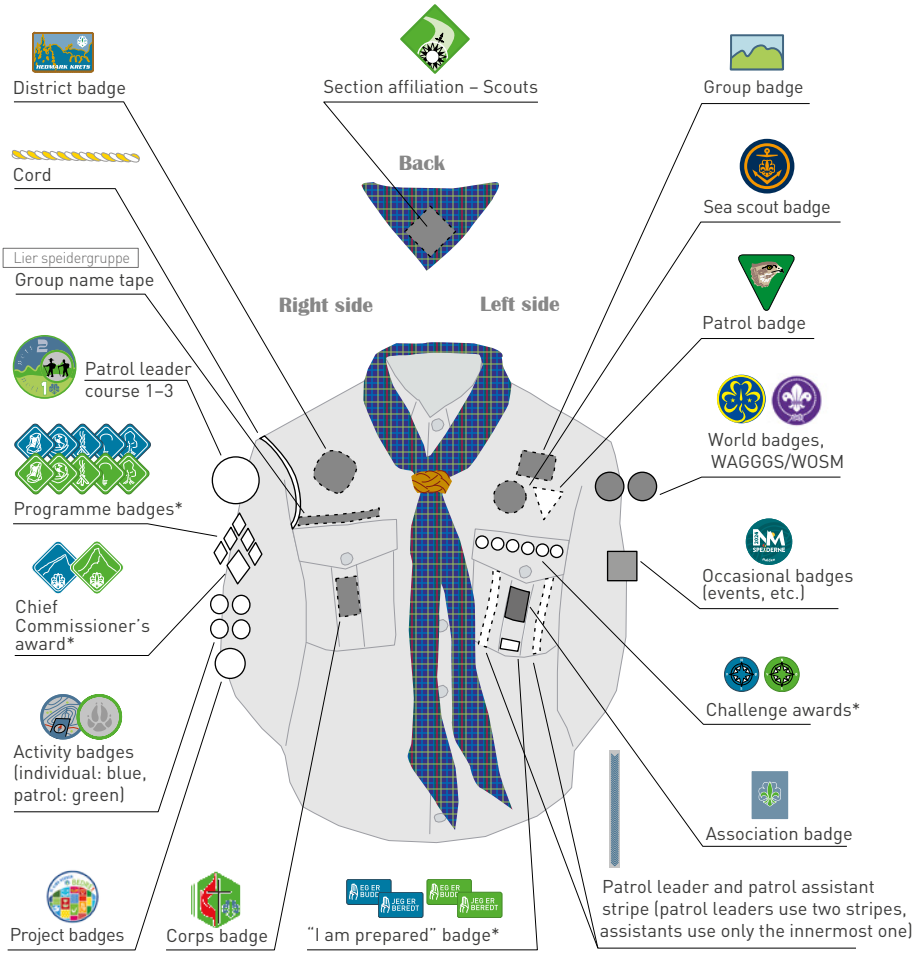
Standard/common badges

Special badges for Beaver scouts*/Cub scouts

Badges showing a particular affiliation, e.g. to a scout group

* Beavers often wear just a Beaver sweatshirt. Badges that the Beavers have earned are usually sewn onto the sweatshirt. The placement of the badges could reflect the placement on the shirt where possible.

Badge placements – Scouts



Standard/common badges

Badges for Troop Scouts

---- Badges showing a particular affiliation

* The colour of these badges depends on the section:
ages 10–12 blue badges; ages 13–15 green badges.

Hiking equipment

The adventures are out there, and scouts regularly go on hikes, in almost all kinds of weather. It's therefore important to know how to keep warm and dry and be able to carry your equipment. To ensure a good experience and great trip, here are a few useful items to pack:

Sleeping bag

We recommend using a so-called 3-season sleeping bag, which has a comfort temperature of between –5 and –10 °C. When camping outdoors in summer, spring or autumn, the temperature can drop to near zero at night, or maybe even lower. That makes it especially important to have a sleeping bag that keeps you warm. A sleeping bag liner will also help you stay warm.

Sleeping mat

There are many different kinds of mats, so here's what you need to know: on trips in summer and early autumn you can usually use a basic foam mat designed for camping.

You will also need a mat to insulate against the cold when sleeping in a hammock.

How to choose the right sleeping mat
The mat needs to be of a good quality and provide sufficient insulation. If you will be sleeping outside or in a tent in sub-zero temperatures, you should choose a sleeping mat designed for winter use.

If you're using a sleeping mat filled with air, please note that these mats puncture easily. It's a good idea to use a foam mat underneath to reduce the risk of puncture.

You can also use the foam mat to sit on around the campfire – just remember to keep it away from the hot flames. It's lightweight and can be strapped to the outside of your backpack.

Please note that standard air beds are not suitable for camping. They will leave

you freezing cold. And yoga mats are too thin!

Backpack

Backpacks around 50 litres in size are ideal for hiking. They provide enough room for a sleeping bag, sleeping mat and clothing for a weekend. Find a pack that sits comfortably on your back and has several straps for attaching your equipment.

Clothing

The 3-layer principle is worth knowing. Wear wool next to your skin, then a middle layer to keep you warm, and finally an outer layer to protect against wind/rain. When sitting around the campfire it's a good idea to wear a woolly jumper and trousers that don't catch fire easily.

Knife

A knife can be handy at meetings and hikes, but ask your scout group when it's appropriate to bring one. Scouts must learn how to use a knife safely and take good care of it.

If you're looking to buy a knife, you'll find a wide range of models available. A knife does not have to be expensive. Even inexpensive knives can do a good job, but the knife needs to fit in your palm and not be too big or too small. It's advisable to get a knife with a finger guard for added protection.

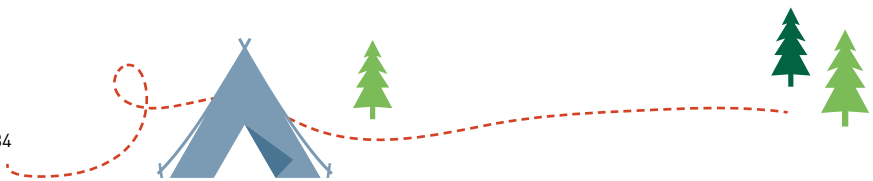
Head torch

In autumn and winter scouts often stay outside after dark. Hiking in the dark is fun, but having a torch is really useful, especially when you don't have to hold it in your hand! It doesn't need to be particularly powerful. Always use your torch sensibly!

Buy second-hand and ask for advice!

Ask your local scout group for help and advice to find the right equipment. You will learn something new and could save money!

You can also find good ideas for hiking equipment and more at speidersport.no/turtips.





Scouts: Ingunn and Henning Sigmundsønn Volt / Rælingen scout group • Photo: Iver Gjendem / Speider-sport

Foto forside: Martin Lundsvoll

Join the adventure!

Your local contact

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