

TROOP 150 GRUBMASTER GUIDELINES

Congratulations – You are assigned the important job of Grubmaster for the next Patrol/Troop outing. Remember that the requirement is more than just cooking the food. Selecting the menu, planning a budget, shopping for food, readying the Chuck boxes, and assigning Scouts to assist with cooking and cleanup are also key parts of the requirement.

To the Grubmaster: One of the most important skills to learn is that the kinds of foods that are cooked on outings may be different than the foods you are used to eating at home. Some of your fellow Scouts may have certain restrictions on the kinds of foods they eat due to medical conditions, religious customs, or cultural restrictions. Troop 150 has more than one Scout with these types of restrictions. Be flexible in your planning and be adventurous by trying new things. You may even like them!

Clean-up is an integral part of cooking – plan for Scouts to assist with washing dishes following every meal. Remember that if you put dirty cookware away, you may cause the whole Troop to become sick because of the many bacteria that grow on dirty dishes. If you have questions about how to properly clean the dishes, check your **Scout Handbook** for help. Patrol Leaders, Senior Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader Troop Guide, Instructors, Junior Assistant Scoutmaster, and other senior ranking Scouts are excellent resources.

To the parents of the Grubmaster: Some of the skills we attempt to teach for cooking include the flexibility to try different foods and varying means of food preparation. Naturally, planning a healthy balanced meal using foods from all food groups (found in the **Scout Handbook**) is a must when planning the menu. The Grubmaster must bear in mind that he is budgeted \$3.50 per Scout per meal. He must prepare enough food to feed the adults on the outing out of that budget. While the Scout shops for the food items, he needs to bear in mind the “Leave No Trace” principle of camping endorsed by the Boy Scouts of America, and buy food with packaging that is suitable for the camping environment. Do not buy frozen food for a 5-day hike or canoe trip as there are no freezers. Likewise, avoid buying lots of canned food for a hiking trip, as someone has to carry that weight in a backpack. The Scout must bear in mind the availability of resources for cleaning cookware, utensils, etc., when deciding the menu. We strongly encourage you to sit down with your Scout and carefully read the requirements for First Class that deal with planning and preparing meals. Read the relevant pages in the Scout Handbook and plan menus accordingly.

These food guidelines should assist when making decisions about food choices and menu preparation. Please allow the Scout to do the planning with your guidance and advice. If you feel that something is not a good idea, coach your Scout into discovering this on his own. These guidelines also allow for each Patrol to prepare meals similar in nature to other Patrols. We do not want to have one Patrol eating frozen pizza and drinking soft drinks while another Patrol eats hobo-packs and drinks water.

If you or your Scout have any questions, please contact the Patrol Leader, Senior Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader Troop Guide, Instructors, Junior Assistant Scoutmaster, or Assistant Scoutmaster for his Patrol.

PLANNING FOR THE OUTING:

MENUS: We STRONGLY suggest that you and your Scout discuss some of the meals he has shared with the Troop/Patrol on similar outings. This should help the beginning Grubmaster select menu items that have already been tested. Again, we encourage adventurous planning; just avoid making things too difficult to prepare a meal if the Grubmaster has no experience with that type of food.

It is always a good idea to talk to the Scouts for which you are preparing meals to get their input on menu items. You will not be able to make everyone happy, but you can get close. In the end, YOU make the final decision on menu selection. Remember, your menu must reflect balanced meals drawing from protein, carbohydrates, and fats in order to provide nutritious meals in the outdoor environment. These meals must reflect the available budget as outlined earlier.

A more experienced Grubmaster may expand his skills with more ambitious menus involving different levels of cooking skills. One such skill is using Dutch ovens to prepare meals or deserts. Another skill is learning how to properly cook over an open fire.

BUDGET: The Troop plans for \$3.50/Scout per meal. If the outing begins on a Friday afternoon, this means there will be a dinner on Friday, a breakfast on Saturday, a lunch on Saturday, a dinner on Saturday, and a breakfast on Sunday. That is six meals at \$3.50 each, or \$21.00 per Scout for the weekend. The adults do not pay for food, thus you must buy enough to feed the adults based on the budget for the number of Scouts planning to attend the outing. To meet the requirements for rank advancement for First Class you MUST cook at least three of the meals. You may plan a light dinner, or have Scouts bring a bagged meal from home for the first meal of the weekend, or you may decide to use cereal or Pop Tarts for the Sunday morning meal, but you cannot do both.

IMPORTANT NOTE: You will only be reimbursed for food expenses by the Troop to a **MAXIMUM** of the budgeted amount. **ANY** overage is the responsibility of the Patrol to collect from the Scouts attending the outing. Use this formula to determine your budget:

$$\frac{\text{---}}{\# \text{ of Scouts}} \times \$3.50 \times \frac{\text{---}}{\# \text{ of Meals}} = \$ \frac{\text{---}}{\text{Total Budget}}$$

AT THE STORE:

THE SHOPPING EXPERIENCE: Scouts must shop responsibly. Parents/adults should use this opportunity to point out the advantages of purchasing the “store” or generic brands, judging the sale stickers to keep within budget, the ability to make MINOR menu changes in order to take advantage of these sales and the trade-offs between preprocessed foods and bulk foods. Point out how some of the non-food items needed eat away at the budget. Use a shopping list and make sure to include the individual components of any recipes. For instance, if macaroni and cheese is on the menu, make sure you buy the milk and butter needed to make it properly. Do not forget to buy enough food for everyone on the list, as well as for the adults in attendance. Parents should guide, but not “shop,” for the Scout.

- **DRINKS:** Soda is not allowed as a menu item purchased by the Grubmaster. Unless we plan to camp in an area where fresh water is not available, avoid purchasing bottled water. Some drink mixes and/or powders are allowable, but try to avoid the overly sweet mixes. Milk and Juices may be appropriate if camping where having a large supply ice poses no problems. If offering cereal as part of a meal, remember to buy enough milk for it. If any of the menu item recipes call for milk, allow for that as well.

- **Chips & Other Snack Foods:** Generally discouraged in large amounts and other than in a trail lunch. Bags of chips do not fit well in a backpack, but individually wrapped packages of peanut butter crackers pack nicely. Trail mix, jerky meat, and other lightweight, yet nutritious snack foods will serve our purposes better than almost any junk food.

- **Breakfast Items:** Individual instant oatmeal or cream-of-wheat packages work best on hiking trips, but bulk packaging is cheaper if we have a base camp. These items are cheaper than breakfast cereals, and generally have less sugar, and a greater amount of the nutritional needs for active Scouts. Breakfast bars or similar may be appropriate; however, the budget likely will not allow too many of these. On layover mornings where time for cooking and cleanup is available pancakes, French toast, or egg dishes are good choices for breakfast. Breakfast rolls may be appropriate on the morning of a trail day or departure. Try to avoid heavily sugared breakfast items such as doughnuts, sweet rolls, Twinkies, etc. Hot chocolate or Ovaltine are alternatives to juices and milk. If using a base camp, fresh fruit always complement breakfast.

- **Breakfast Meats:** Most pre-cooked meats are too expensive for inclusion in a weekend menu; however, the first morning before beginning a long hike may require the extra proteins from these meats. Precooked bacon, sausage, or Canadian bacon that just require warming result in less mess and less chance of a food borne illness.

- **Paper Products:** Paper cups, bowls, plates and disposable flatware are permitted if we plan to camp in an area where we will not have to pack out our trash. Camping at Camp Ala-Flo allows for the use of paper or disposable products, but a long hiking trip does not. If in doubt, ask the Patrol Leader, Senior Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader Troop Guide, Instructors, Junior Assistant Scoutmaster, or Assistant Scoutmaster for the Patrol.

One of our goals is teaching Scouts how to properly wash and sanitize dishes in an outdoor environment. The Chuck boxes should have paper towels and a limited number of paper plates for food preparation; however, these are for use as a substitute for Patrol cooking and personal Scout eating equipment.

About a week before the outing, a good Grubmaster checks the inventory of disposable products, spices, condiments, paper towels, dish soap, bleach, and other items necessary for maintaining a clean kitchen. If the supplies are low, the Scoutmaster may authorize a small increase in the budget to replenish the supplies.

- **Spices & Condiments:** The Chuck boxes should be stocked with basic spices: (salt, pepper, garlic powder, Tabasco) so these items are generally not needed. When purchasing other condiments try to obtain the smallest container sizes possible despite the slightly higher price/ounce so as to minimize waste. Also, check the refrigerator in the church to determine if there are partial bottles of condiments available for us to use.

- **Breads:** Depending on the nature of the outing, tortillas travel better than loafs of bread. Wraps are an alternative to sandwiches and provide a break for an ordinary sandwich. Likewise Bagels, English muffins, and French bread travel much better than loafs of bread, and provide additional variety at breakfast and dinner. Biscuits (as skills develop) are excellent accompaniments to stews and soups.

- **Beans and Rice:** Both of these are also major building blocks of camping food. Both can easily combine with most meats for a healthy meal. Both lend to “one-pot” cooking, or you may prepare them separately for those that do not eat meat.
- **Pastas:** Packaged pastas are a major staple of camping meals. Keep in mind that spaghetti requires a lot of cleaning later. Sometimes pre-cooking the pasta at home prior to departure and finishing the recipe at camp on the first night is an option that simplifies preparation.
- **Meats:** Ground beef, stewing beef, beef tips, and London broil cuts are preferred to steaks. Chicken, especially boneless, skinless breasts, are versatile and generally easily prepared in a pan, Dutch oven, or grill. Seafood generally cannot be accommodated within budget and is rarely appropriate for camping. Hot dogs should not be the sole meat selection for a dinner, however, chili dogs offer more than just grilling a wiener.
- **Soups:** A good soup or stew is a welcome treat on a cold day. Avoid canned soups and opt for instant “cup of soup” Ramen noodles. An imaginative Grubmaster can build on these soups to create some unique camping food.
- **Vegetables:** Scouts need color in their meals. Most fresh or dried vegetables steam easily, travel well, are easily added to other recipes, and meet many of the nutritional needs for active Scouts. Consider including carrots, broccoli, snap peas, and corn to your menu. These make excellent alternatives to green salads and often don’t require dressing. Unfortunately, leafy greens do not travel well when hiking, so for other than base camp meals, avoid these.
- **Peanut Butter & Jelly:** If the menu does not provide enough food sources for those with special dietary requirements, plan on having peanut butter and jelly sandwiches available. PB&J sandwiches make good between meal snacks when necessary. Before you purchase these, check the Quartermaster closet and the church refrigerator.
- **Desserts:** With deserts, simpler is better. Some desert preparation requires a lot of skill and others are as easy as dumping ingredients into a Dutch oven. Know the method required for preparing what is on the menu. Some chocolate desserts are appropriate, in a limited quantity. S’mores are a tried-and-true camp favorite – just do not forget the graham crackers. Keep in mind that pop corn travels well, provided you have the necessary cooking oil for popping the corn.
- **Trail Mix:** Trail mix is a great hiking food and a healthy snack food. Unfortunately, it is also very expensive when purchased at the grocery store. If you want it, then consider purchasing it through bulk suppliers such as bulkfoods.com. You need to allow enough time to receive and prepare the bulk items prior to departure.
- **Snacks:** Use some creativity with snacks. Consider trail mix (above), dehydrated fruit, fruit and meat jerky, some vegetables (carrot and celery sticks), cheeses, pilot biscuits, and crackers. Small amounts of hard candy provide some sugar and are appropriate to maintain mouth hydration on the trail. Gum is discouraged due to disposal issues. Avoid large amounts of refined sugars without some protein component.

BEFORE DEPARTURE to CAMP:

- **Check the Chuck Boxes:** Check the supplies in the Chuck boxes to make sure you have everything and that you know where everything is.
- **Prepare a Duty Roster:** Check with the Scoutmaster and coordinate making a duty roster that includes enough people to prepare each meal and to clean up after the meal. Post the Duty Roster as soon as you set up the kitchen. Remember, you have to do some cooking, but others may assist you.
- **Prepare a Written Menu:** Use the guidelines above to help you plan the menu in consultation with the Scouts for whom you are serving as Grubmaster. Post the Menu beside the Duty Roster as soon as you set up the kitchen.

AT CAMP:

- **Post the Duty Roster and the Menu:** Post the Menu beside the Duty Roster as soon as you set up the kitchen.
- **Setup the Kitchen:** Your main focus is to get the kitchen off the trailer and set up as quickly as possible. Coordinate with the other Grubmasters so that you are not getting in the way of each other. Have someone from your tent take care of putting your personal gear in your tent. If a meal is to be served the first night, get started as soon as the kitchen is set up correctly.
- **Supervise the Kitchen:** Stay on top of the schedule and remind those assigned to assist you what time you need them to start preparing the meal. Remind those assigned to cleanup that their duty begins as soon as the first person finishes eating.
- **Say Grace:** Coordinate with the SPL and/or Chaplain’s Aide to have someone say the grace before each meal.
- **Make Notes:** Keep written notes of items needed in the chuck boxes, or if we need more of some spice.

AFTER CAMP:

- **Inspect Chuck Boxes:** Make sure that all pots, pans, dishes, utensils, etc., are clean and dry. Make notes of anything that the Troop needs to purchase prior to the next outing. Go over this list with the SPL, Quartermaster, your ASM, the JASM, and the SM.
- **Return Condiments:** If there are leftover condiments, clean them and put them in the refrigerator in the church.
- **Excess Perishables:** Distribute any remaining food among the Patrol members, or take home anything that your family may use. If you take home unopened items, or nearly full items, subtract them from the amount you submit for reimbursement.
- **Excess Non-Perishables:** Store any non-perishable food items in a dry ice chest and close the chest. This keeps pests out of the food and allows us to save money on future outings.
- **Submit Receipts:** After making any adjustments to your receipts, make a copy for your records, write your name legibly on the receipt, and submit it to the Troop's Treasurer for reimbursement. Remember, unless you had permission to exceed the budget, the Troop Treasurer will only reimburse you for the budgeted amount using the formula given in these guidelines.
- **Review Notes:** Review the notes you made during the trip with the Scoutmaster, SPL, Quartermaster, etc. It is best to do this while the trip is fresh in your mind. Make sure to follow through with them to make sure that the items needed get purchased and put into the chuck boxes.
- **Get Your Scout Handbook Signed:** On the last night of camp, give the SM, or the ASM in charge of the outing, your Scout Handbook for them to review and sign off on the requirements.