

10 Wet Weather Camping Tips

Into everyone's life a little rain must fall and if you've camped pretty much anywhere in Southern Ontario this summer you know exactly what I mean. There was a time when I would plan a camping trip and come what may we'd be on the road. These days I tend to watch the weather a bit more and often defer until I have at least a reasonable chance at good weather, but still if you wait for the perfect weekend you may never go anywhere.

Hope for the best, but prepare for the worst; is a mantra that I have uttered for many years. It has often made the difference between a miserable weekend sitting in the tent and an enjoyable experience in the great outdoors.

Here are a few tips that will keep your next camping trip dry and happy:

Personal Apparel

1. Waterproof hat with a brim that goes all the way round. Ball caps are great but don't keep the rain from running down your neck. Rain coats with a hood are OK but they do impair your peripheral vision and hearing.
2. A waterproof jacket is essential. I prefer something made with a breathable material so perspiration doesn't build up on the inside during warm summer rains.
3. Waterproof pants are another essential. Again a breathable fabric is my preference.
4. Last but not least is waterproof footwear. This can range from lightweight, but expensive, hiking boots if you plan on hitting the trails to a simple pair of rubber boots. Rubber boots are fine for around camp but remember that rubber boots + hiking = blisters.

Around Camp

5. A kitchen shelter with flaps all around is a wise investment. They're big enough to enjoy games around the picnic table while the rain falls and are more comfortable than sitting in your sleeping tent, especially when it comes to keeping the kids entertained.
6. Dig a shallow trench around your tent so water will drain away and won't form puddles around, or under, your tent.
7. Cover your firewood. There's nothing like a warm fire after a downpour but fighting to get wet wood to burn can be a frustrating experience.
8. Bring games along. Whether it's a deck of cards for the adults or snakes and ladders for the kids, the rain becomes nothing more than a slight distraction if everyone is happy.
9. Look up...particularly if the storm is severe. Falling branches can destroy your tent or worse if it happens to land on someone. Taking refuge in the car is often the best option in a severe storm.
10. Rainy days are a great time to check out the local sites and attractions, perhaps even a trip to the theatre. Save the hike or paddle around the lake for tomorrow.

A bit of preparation and forethought will see you through a few damp dreary days, but know when to cut your losses and head for home. There comes a time, especially if you have kids along that it's just not worth it. Retreat in the face of overwhelming odds is an honorable strategy.