

Scout Essentials and Outdoor Hazards

The Scout Essentials provide basic supplies and gear for outdoor adventures. The Trip Plan, a key element in planning, is vital for the safety of lone travelers and for groups. Attention to details in planning the experience and in packing properly increases the probability of everyone returning home safe and sound.

The items on the list Scout Essentials are much the same as the key items on the packing lists of SAR team members as they assemble their Field Packs for service for a search assignment. The hazards of outdoor adventures for Scouts are the same as those experienced by SAR teams.

Scout Essentials Personal Items	Hazards Addressed	SAR Team Member Field Pack
Whistle	Lack of Emergency Communication	A lost subject or a search team can call for help with whistle blasts. A lost subject can respond to whistle blasts from a search team to become found.
Signal Mirror	Lack of Emergency Communication	A signal mirror is a device that backs up a radio, cellphone, and whistle for rescue communications.
Water	Dehydration	Supply should allow for 2 to 4 liters of water per person per day, depending on season, weather, temperature, altitude, and level of exertion.
Extra Food	Hunger	Food should be high in calories and enough to sustain your energy for one day.
Flashlight or Headlamp	Darkness	Two light sources (flashlight and/or headlamp, plus extra batteries and replacement bulbs, or extra lights). Light is a safety resource to avoid nighttime injuries.
Rain Gear	Cold	An outer layer with bottoms and top with hood should provide shelter from wind and water.
Extra Clothing	Cold	Head cover(s), gloves and/or mittens, socks and extras*, inner layer* of long underwear bottoms and top, middle layer(s)* of warm pants and shirt, *indicating wool or a warm synthetic fabric.
Backpack	Falls (Injuries)	A pack to carry gear and clothing allows mobility and hands-free, safe walking.
Personal Care Kit	Impaired Well-being, Infections	Daily attention to personal hygiene improves personal wellness and outlook. Handwashing reduces risks of food poisoning and cleanliness decreases risks of skin infections.

Scout Essentials Shared Items	Hazards Addressed	SAR Team Member Field Pack
Trip Plan	Incomplete Planning, Lack of Emergency Communication	A Trip Plan with itinerary, contact information, emergency medical care plan, and specific date, time, and place of expected return is important for every Scout trip participant and their families. SAR teams coordinate their searches with detailed communication planning for phone and radio contacts for two-way communications and safety.
First-Aid Kit with Emergency Blanket	Injuries and Illnesses	Basic first aid supplies and shelter are for the SAR team member and the lost subject.
Sun Protection	Sunburn	Shareable sunscreen products and personal avoidance, clothing, and eye protection from UV exposure apply to all outdoor activities.
Bug Protection	Bites and Infections	Shareable bug repellents and personal avoidance and clothing apply to all outdoor activities.
Map and Compass	Navigation	A map and compass are tools for navigation into and out of a search area.
Matches and Fire Starters	Cold, Isolation	Matches, lighters, and ferro rod kits can start fires for cooking, boiling water, heat, drying clothes, signaling, and good company.
Pocketknife or Multitool	Failed Gear	Multi-tool devices, including tweezers and scissors, are useful for gear repairs and for first aid.
Gear Repair Kit	Failed Gear	Paracord, duct tape, and zip ties are basic gear repair supplies.
Watch	Time Mismanagement	A watch protects the wearer from lapses in time management. An analog watch with hands can double as a compass.
Other SAR Safety Gear		
Radio	Lack of Communication	In remote areas or disaster zones, satellite radio may be a reliable means of communication.
Specialty first aid supplies (splints, intravenous fluids, trauma dressings)	Injuries and Illnesses	Rescue teams in remote settings or disaster areas may not have ready access to medical care for found subjects. Early treatment in the field can begin before the subject is transported for hospital care.
Eye protection	Injuries	Searches at night expose team members to the risk of eye injuries from brush and limbs as they walk through wildlands in the dark.

Leather gloves	Injuries	Hand protection from cold, blisters, falls.
Helmet	Injuries	Head protection from falls and falling rocks, debris, or limbs.
Safety vest	Injuries	High visibility vests identify SAR team members and increase visibility in traffic and in remote areas.