



EXPEDITION SKILLS

PACKING A RUCKSACK

WEEK 12

When you go on Expedition, you will be staying over for

1 Night (Bronze)

2 Nights (Silver)

3 Nights (Gold)

Which means you will need to take a few things with you. The best way to take all of your kit is in a Rucksack.

Your rucksack will contain a number of items such as a tent, a stove, clothes, a sleeping bag, food, water, and a First Aid Kit among other items so it may be **Heavy**.

The Best advice we can give you is: **Keep It Light!**

This module will let you know

- what you should take on expedition and
- how to pack your rucksack properly and as light as possible, so it is balanced and you can carry it with ease throughout your Expedition.

This module will focus on a **Bronze (1 Night) Expedition**. If you know you are going on a Silver or Gold Expedition, you will already know what to take, and now it needs to be for more nights away, so you can plan accordingly.

Two things to consider when packing your Rucksack:

Principle 1. Heavy items should be packed close to your back and evenly weighted (side to side) and near the top. Keeps you from toppling over!

Principle 2. Items you may need during the day should be easy to reach

We will show you how to pack a rucksack before you have to do it yourself. This module gives you ideas and things to think about

What Items will I need to take in my Rucksack for Bronze?

- A Tent (+Tent Poles and Pegs)
- A Sleeping Bag
- Sleeping Mat
- Stove and Fuel
- Clothes
- Washbag (toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, etc.)
- First Aid Kit Shoes (trainers for the campsite)
- Waterproof Clothes (jacket and trousers)
- Food (lunch, snack, dinner, breakfast, snack, lunch)
- Water
- Head torch
- Whistle
- Hat
- Gloves? (Depending on the time of year and weather)

Lunch food



Lunch needs to be filling and give you lots of energy to continue on your walk and for your activity. Try to choose a food menu that is as light in weight as possible.

- Dried fruit is better than fresh as it weighs less.
- Canned or tinned food is Not good as it is Very heavy.
- Ready to eat or dried foods are great.
- For Silver and Gold Expeditions, the amount of food you take will be more and will add weight, so think carefully about that when you plan your menu.

You will have looked at these options in the Exped Menu Planner module.

Stove

You probably won't need this until you stop for camp in the evening and make your evening meal. If it is toward the top of your rucksack, you can get to it easily. It also means you can start heating water for your evening meal while you put up your tent!

Wash kit

You may or may not need this during the day, but it is useful to have toward the top of your rucksack. Travel sized bottles and toothpastes are great because they are small and lightweight. Remember, you won't be gone very long, so only take what you need. (False eyelashes and glue, makeup, and hair gels are not needed, so don't pack them).

Remember: Keep your Rucksack as Light as possible

Sleeping Bag

You shouldn't need this until you have set up your tent and wish to go to sleep. It is a good item to balance one side of your rucksack with your tent on the other side. This must be kept dry, so make sure that it is covered in a waterproof bag before you pack it into your rucksack. **Never put it in your rucksack wet!**

Tent

Like your sleeping bag, you probably won't need this until later on in the evening when you have made camp. This is a heavy item and should be used to balance one side of your rucksack with your sleeping bag on the other. You want to make sure to put this in a waterproof bag before packing it. **Never put it in your rucksack wet!**

Principle 2: Easy to Reach Items

With each rucksack there is a Top Flap which is great for smaller items that you can reach easily: First Aid Kit, snacks, head torch, whistle, toilet paper.

Then there is the Top Part of your Rucksack where you can put other items you might need during the day: Waterproof clothes, gloves, hat.

Then there is The Front of your rucksack, this is the space left after you have put in your sleeping bag, tent, Trangia and wash bag toward the back. These can fill the empty spaces. Clothes, other cooking gear (plates, cup)

Think of it as packing layers from your back outward.

There are other items which can go in the outside Pockets of your rucksack such as your **water bottle**, fuel for the stove, and other snacks. You can also roll your sleeping mat and hook it onto the bottom of the rucksack on the outside. The sleeping mat can be put inside your rucksack if another member of your group is carrying a 2 or 3 person tent for you and you have the space.

On the right is a screenshot from the dofe.org site where they have downloads of how to pack your rucksack. I think this is a good picture that shows how to work from the back of the rucksack (closest to your back) outward. This keeps the heaviest items close to you and high up so that you keep your centre of balance.

- If you put too much heavy stuff on the bottom of the rucksack (near your bum), your shoulders will take a lot of that weight and your shoulders will hurt and you'll get tired easily.
- If you put all the heavy stuff away from your back, then you could topple backward!
- If you don't balance the weight on both sides (with your sleeping bag and tent) you may just tip over sideways!



Keep Items Dry

It is very important that everything in your rucksack stays dry. It is a good idea to use either a bag liner or a large bin bag inside your rucksack before placing any items inside. Or Put everything in waterproof bags

Rucksack Weight

Your rucksack should be no more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of your weight. Any heavier than this and you may hurt your back or shoulders. And, you will end up getting very tired. ****Keep It Light****

Clothing

Clothes are very heavy! So, take as few as you can. Expedition is NOT a fashion show or a time to worry about what you are wearing or how you smell. We will still think you are Awesome!! Just as you would do for a holiday where you have a weight limit on your case, you have a weight limit on your rucksack.

Layers of clothes are great because it means that you are not carrying very many items. A t-shirt and a sweatshirt (hoodie) over is enough and you will have your waterproofs if it gets wet or a bit colder.

- **For a Bronze Expedition**, you really only need a change of socks and underwear. If you sweat a lot, you may want another t-shirt. That's it! You don't need anymore than that.
- **For a Silver Expedition**, you will just need 2 changes of underwear and can actually wear socks from day 1 on day 3 as long as you dry them out before you put them back in your bag and on your feet.
- **For a Gold Expedition**, you will now need 3 changes of underwear and can swap your socks as long as you dry them after each day of walking. T-shirts are lightweight so wearing the same one twice, if you can, would be ideal, but taking one to change into is fine.

Everyone is going to smell, sweat, and generally look a bit dirty by the end of the Expedition. That is OK! It shows you've earned it.



Fitting Your Rucksack

You can adjust:

- The Back Length
- The Shoulder Straps
- The position of the Hip Belt

Adjusting these 3 parts of the Rucksack, *every time you wear it*, will help to keep the weight distributed evenly and will make the bag feel lighter. These 3 areas of the rucksack are then each taking a bit of the weight, so you don't put too much strain on your back, shoulders, or hips.

Much of packing a rucksack is down to personal preference. It will also depend on if you are each carrying a tent or if you are sharing a tent among 2 or 3 people. (Most likely for all expeditions). Sharing the weight and kit is always a good idea!

If you are Sharing A Tent, it is a good idea to take some of the weight off of the person carrying the tent so that their rucksack doesn't get too heavy. -So, maybe offer to take their Trangia stove or Sleeping Mat.



Well Done!! That is a lot of information about your Rucksack.

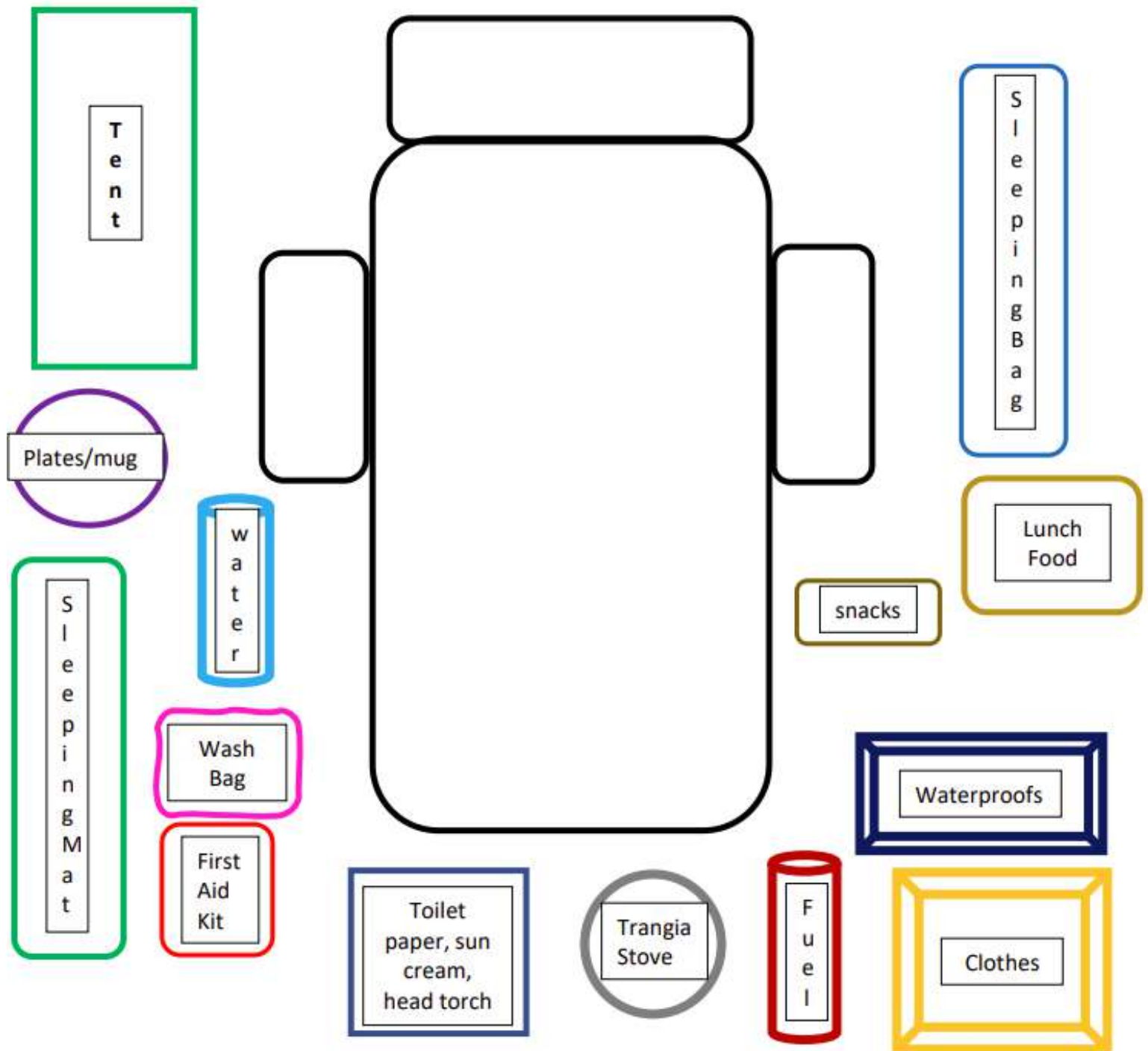
Now what I'd like you to do is my little activity called "Fill My Rucksack!". Please use the drawing as a guide to help you draw and fill your own Rucksack.

Once you have done this exercise, please send it along to your assessor or to admin@pkdofe.com

You can take a picture send that to my email or post it. If you'd prefer to post it, please let me know so that we can pay for the postage!

Activity: How to Pack a Rucksack – “Fill My Rucksack”

I would recommend that you use this as a guide along with the Activity information sheet for How to Pack a Rucksack. Draw your own rucksack and put all the items shown into it from back to front. This means layering the items one on top of the other.



You can find more resources on how to pack your rucksack on the [DofE website here](#). There is also a poster in this week's material.