

Surviving Summer Camp

The Associated's guide to packing, planning and preparing for summer camp.



Packing

Packing for camp can be stressful. Use this list as a guide to pack with your child.

Linens

- Fitted sheet
- Flat sheet
- Blanket
- Pillow
- Pillowcase
- Any "love" or security items
 - We recommend packing these items on top so bed making is easy during move-in.

Toiletries

- Soap
- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Hair products
- Hair brush
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Floss
- Washcloth
- Towel
- Sunscreen
- Bug spray
- Deodorant
- Lip balm
- Feminine hygiene products
- Regular medications
- Emergency medications

Clothes

- T-Shirts
- Shorts
- Long-sleeve shirts
- Sweaters
- Pants
- Underwear
- Socks
- Pajamas
- Bathing suit
- Beach towel
- Jacket
- Rain jacket/ gear
- Hiking shoes
- Water shoes
- Shower shoes
- Rain boots
- Hat
- Sunglasses
- 1 or 2 Dressy outfits (check with camp)

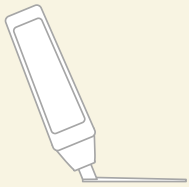
Extras

- Books
- Games (cards, Mad Libs, etc)
- Stationery, pre-addressed envelopes, stamps, writing utensils
- Flashlight
- Fan
- Laundry bag
- Sunglasses
- Family photos
- Camera (digital or disposable)

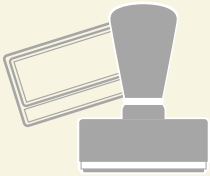
Labeling

This task can be overwhelming. We recommend doing a little labeling at a time to make it easier! Try labeling each item as you buy it.

Choose your favorite method:



Black permanent marker is a tried and true way to label. It works on just about anything. For dark clothing or items we recommend using a silver permanent marker.



Order a personalized rubber stamp. Be wary of type of ink as some will run in the wash.



Iron-on personalized labels are a preferred choice for many. They are a very durable choice but are the most time consuming. Many companies sell labels that you can stick on and then iron on which makes this a lot easier.

Communication

Because phones are not allowed, many parents get nervous about their child's well-being. But remember, most campers settle in smoother when there isn't as much phone contact from home.

Send Letters:

Write letters that are made up of quick stories of what is happening at home: Things you and your family did, someone you ran into, something silly a pet did, or something funny you saw. Try to avoid writing about vacations or fun activities that you are doing without them as it can make some children feel left out. Sometimes the letters your child writes may come off that they are upset but it is important to remember the following. Everyone has a bad day, and many children save their venting for their parents. By the time you have received this letter your child has most likely long forgotten that tiff that they got into with their bunkmate. If your child's letters seem incomplete or short don't fret! A short letter is generally a good sign: It means that they are having so much fun that they are too busy to write.

Send Packages:

Packages are a great way to send little surprises that let your camper know you are thinking of them. Make sure to check your camps guidelines before sending packages, you wouldn't want to send something that can't be used.

When to Call:

Emergencies: If your message truly cannot wait

If the emergency occurs in the middle of the night, use judgement as to whether to call immediately or wait until morning. If you are concerned for the well being of your child. If they have sent you multiple sad letters in a row, or you have reason to believe something is wrong, call. Just know that it may take time to receive a response as camps often have limited phone access.

Preparation

Camp is very different than going to school and coming home. It is all new friends, an all new routine and 24 hours a day away from home. It is important to discuss this prior to camp so that your child is prepared.

Do a Test Run:

Set up sleepovers with friends and family. Its a good way for your child to practice sleeping away from home. It shows your child that they can have a good time and survive without you (as much as we'd like them to need us forever).

Teach Independence:

Prior to heading off to camp, teach your child key skills that they will need to be independent at camp. Working on making their bed, brushing their hair and folding their clothes will help them feel confident when they dont need to ask for help.

Making Friends:

Prepare your child to make new friends, especially if it is their first year at camp. Talk with your child to gauge any concerns about making friends and reassure them of their strengths. Suggest that they pack items that they like to talk about or an easy activity for a group: coloring books, card games, frisbees, magazines, etc. This way, they not only have activities for downtime, but it can entice other children to join in on the fun.

Medical and Emotional:

If your child takes daily medication, prepare them and camp to receive it. Additionally, if your child only takes their medication during the school year and will be taking a break while at camp think about how this will affect them emotionally and communicate this transition with camp. If your child wets the bed, prepare them and camp for the possibility and how to handle it. Be prepared for homesickness, it is important to prepare your child and teach them that this emotion is normal and that you are sure that they can handle it. Be sure to remind them that camp staff is there to help.

Just Remember

While your child is away at camp, they will be having a great time and so should you! Take this opportunity to spend time doing what you enjoy and doing things for yourself. Go on date nights, visit a new museum, take a weekend trip, or see a movie with friends. If you have other children at home, spend quality one on one time with them. You'll be happy you did. Enjoy your summer and enjoy hearing all about camp on visiting and pick up day!

