

Have a Good Weekend!

Advice for your first Woodcraft Folk trip



Welcome! It's great that you're ready to attend your first camp or residential trip as a Woodcraft Folk volunteer. We hope this guidance will give you an idea of what to expect when you go away with a Woodcraft Folk group.

What to expect

If you're heading off on a camp expect to be:

- sleeping in tents - you will need a sleeping bag and thermal mat
- cooking outdoors or under canvas, either on gas or over open fire
- eating meals together, either outside or in a marquee
- spending most of your time outside

For trips to residential centres, hostels or bunkhouses, expect:

- shared dormitories, usually with other adults
- sleeping in bunk beds - check if bedding is provided
- indoor kitchen and dining facilities

Organisers will provide detailed advice about what participants need to bring - but our [standard kit lists](#) will provide you with an indication of what is needed. At camp you may hear others using words or phrases that are new to you - Woodcraft Folk has unique names for roles and activities at camp that can be confusing at first. Check out [our glossary](#) to learn to tell your Merrymoot from your Wappenshaw - and don't be afraid to ask questions if you're unsure!

Clan duties

Tasks like preparing meals and washing up afterwards are shared at camp, with adults and children playing a part. To facilitate this, campers of all ages are split between a number of 'clan' or 'rota groups', which will take turns to complete chores. You'll often get to know the children in your clan particularly well, especially on a longer camp. Clans also help young people develop independence and leadership - delegating age-appropriate tasks can really help with this - though adults may need to step in to do more hazardous tasks such as draining pasta.

Mealtimes

Woodcraft Folk groups will prioritise eating together when away at camp - shared mealtimes are a great way to make more connections with others in your group, adults and children alike. It is often expected that everyone stays at the table or in

the dining area until everyone is finished eating. On larger camps, you may be called up to get food by age group or clan. KPs (who are in charge of planning menus and ordering food) will often have made provision for snacks if children get hungry between main mealtimes - but it's important to check with the KP to ensure that anything you might offer as a snack wasn't bought with another purpose in mind.

Programme activities

A good camp will have a range of activities for young people to participate in - sometimes, particularly at a longer camp, activities may be underpinned by a common theme. A trip away is also a good time to run activities that require more space, more time (or just more clearing up) than is possible at a group night. Typical activities might include:

- Wide games
- Parachute games
- Bushcraft activities (fire lighting, whittling, shelter building etc.)
- Crafts (e.g. tie dye, screenprinting)
- Walks & hikes
- Campfires (often with singing, skits or games)
- Co-operative challenges
- Discussion workshops or debates
- Adventurous activities (e.g. canoeing, rock climbing) - these must be led by qualified instructors with appropriate insurance cover

Downtime

Young people and adults alike will often have as much fun during unstructured free time as in the planned activities. However, even when there's no activity being delivered it's important that young people are appropriately supervised by volunteers.

While the focus of a camp is to support young people to have brilliant experiences, adults should have the chance for some downtime too - it's important to look after your own needs, and the needs of those around you.

There are often opportunities for volunteers to relax and socialise in the evenings. If volunteers consume alcohol in the evenings, it is essential that there are enough adults who haven't been drinking to respond in case of an emergency - this is often organised on a rota basis so the responsibility doesn't always fall to the same people. You should check with organisers about the local policy around consumption of alcohol and tobacco on camp, as practice varies from group to group.

On a longer camp, volunteers may be able to take a day or a half day off away from camp, which will be discussed as part of the planning for the event.

What is expected of me?

At Woodcraft Folk, we work to build a community when we're away, where all young people feel safe and valued; all volunteers are expected to share responsibility for the children and young people in our care. Adults also have an important part to play in modelling appropriate and respectful behaviour to young people. Even if your own child is on the trip, you need to work as part of the community to keep everyone safe and happy, abiding by group decisions and supporting the camp co-ordinator and other key volunteers.

All adults attending any overnight trip with Woodcraft Folk must complete our volunteer screening in advance of the trip. This will include obtaining a DBS or PVG check. While your local membership secretary can support you through the process, you are responsible for making sure this is completed.

You will need to ensure that you have familiarised yourself with the safeguarding arrangements for the trip before you set off. This will include reviewing the risk assessment for the activity, as well as the local or event safeguarding plan. If you are unsure of anything or need advice, please ask! Ensure that you know which volunteers to approach with a problem or query, especially:

- the camp or event co-ordinator
- the safeguarding lead for the event
- first aiders who can provide treatment if required

There may be information relating to specific children or young people that will be shared with you (e.g. additional needs, allergies or medical conditions) - this information is shared on a need-to-know basis, and should not be shared or discussed with others.

As with any Woodcraft Folk activity, you should always [share concerns](#) about a child or young person, or the behaviour of another volunteer, if you are at all worried - the best person to discuss this with is usually the safeguarding lead for the event.

How can I help?

If you get involved at the planning stage, it will be easier to find out where you can add value. Even on your first trip away, you could lead a clan group, help with meal planning, shopping, pre-trip admin or transporting kit to the site.

Once on site, if you're not sure what to do, then ask! If you want to gain confidence and skills so that you can play a bigger part in camp in future, you could shadow a more experienced volunteer to find out what their role involves.