



# Wee Learn

Wee Experts  
(5 – 6 years):  
Plan a Fall Family  
Camping Trip



Camping is a fun and relatively inexpensive way to bring the whole family together to explore nature and learn about the world around you. But before you leave, here are some tips on how you can make your family adventure one they will never forget!

**1. Do your research.** Be prepared for your family adventure. Make sure you know the location and the amenities of your campsite. Create a camping supply list that includes food, equipment and clothing. Don't forget to check the weather forecast!

**2. Plan your meals.** Plan your meals ahead of time, ones that can be cooked in one pot such as stews, pasta or bacon and eggs. To make it easier to locate meals, package breakfast items together, lunch items together and so on.

**3. Snacks are also essential.** The best snacks are things that you can munch on but that won't get crushed such as goldfish crackers, trail mix and cheese and crackers.

Drink plenty of water. Regardless of the season, it's pretty easy to get dehydrated. Make sure that you have a water bottle with you at all times and drink water throughout the day. Remember when collecting water from lakes or streams you should boil, filter or treat the water before consumption.

**4. Practice makes perfect! It never hurts to practice.** Take a test run at setting up your tent. When you are done, rinse it with a hose. Watch for where it leaks and waterproof those areas. Staying dry is critical to making sure that you'll have a good time.

Take the time to cook your planned meals at home before you head out with only the ingredients you think you'll need. There is nothing worse than starting supper only to realize that you've forgotten a critical ingredient and the nearest supermarket is 45 minutes away.





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**5. Pack clothing for all weather.** Proper clothing is essential to enjoying the outdoors. Check the weather forecast in the area where you will be camping before you head out. You want to be prepared for everything: rain, snow and sun. This means your packing list should include a proper rain suit for you and your children and toques, mitts and warm sweaters for cool mountain evenings. And don't forget the sunscreen and hat for those sunny, hot days!

**6. Choose your campsite wisely.** When choosing a campsite, look for one that is on high and level ground. Look for signs that the area is dry. If you do not have a dining tent, try to find a site that will allow you to hang a dining fly (tarp) over a picnic table. That way, you'll have a dry place to read, cook and hang out if it rains.

**7. Select the right tent for your family.** Your tent is one of the most important pieces of equipment that you will buy. Look for one with a full fly that is big enough for your entire family, plus a few more people. That way, you'll have room for everyone, your gear and all the extras.

**8. Make yourself comfortable.** It can get pretty cold, so make sure that you have a quality sleeping bag and extra blankets for each family member. You will also need something comfortable to sleep on. This doesn't need to be complicated - blue foam pads and yoga mats can make a big difference in how well you sleep. Remember, a good night's sleep makes for a great next day!

**9. Organize outdoor activities.** Camping is not just about going out and sitting in the woods.

**Here are some ideas on how you can have fun and learn something at the same time**

a) Bring along field guides (you can download some great ones for your smart phone) and try to identify local animals and plant life. Draw pictures of them, play games identifying them and take photographs.





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- b) Try some stargazing. Organizing an activity like this takes a bit of planning and some time on the Internet, but it makes for a lasting memory.
- c) Have a campfire and sing songs around it. Pick some classic campfire songs and some family favourites.
- d) Pack a couple of your favourite family board games and books for the whole family. These are great activities to enjoy any time of day - especially if it rains!

**10. Don't forget to clean up.** Remember at the end of your family adventure, it is important to pack up all garbage and to leave your campsite even better than how you found it.

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