

Care of equipment by D of E students

The purpose of this sheet is to make explicit to students and parents the importance of caring for Duke of Edinburgh Award equipment owned by the school. This is especially important in an atmosphere of diminishing funding.

The space we have at school for storing D of E equipment is very limited and we have no room to dry tents etc. It is part of the expedition training for students to learn to care for equipment correctly. Therefore as a matter of course, following expeditions D of E students will routinely be required to take home equipment to clean, dry and air it. The member of staff in charge of the expedition will arrange a time and date to meet students with their clean and dry kit, packed and ready to put away. **It is essential that students turn up with their kit and meet staff as arranged.** If they do not, staff who have already given up much of their weekends and free time have to give up even more time to deal with this issue, and this is not fair or respectful to these dedicated staff.

Also the equipment is frequently required again shortly after the return of an expedition, therefore it is crucial that it is returned on time and in good order so that students do not adversely affect their peers expeditions by leaving them faulty, dirty and insufficient equipment.

Outlined below is the way that each piece of equipment should be cared for:

Waterproofs

- Sponge any mud and dirt off, if very dirty rinse in a washing machine, air dry thoroughly. **DO NOT USE DETERGENT OR FABRIC SOFTENER AND DO NOT TUMBLE DRY** – this ruins the waterproof fabric.

Sleeping bags

- Take out of the stuff sack, and open up the zip fully, turn inside out
- Hang over a door, lay out on a bed or hang on a washing line for at least six hours.
- If the outside is damp turn back the right way and dry as above.
- Replace the bag in the stuff sack – stuff it in – do not try to roll it
- **DO NOT TUMBLE DRY**
- **IF A LINER IS NOT USED STUDENTS WILL BE CHARGED £15 TO DRY CLEAN THE SLEEPING BAG.**

Sleeping bag liners

- For health and hygiene purposes, these **MUST** be used with any bag that is borrowed at all times.
- Machine wash and dry thoroughly. Replace the liner in the bag provided.

Sleeping Mat

- These will often appear dry but will often be damp due to condensation.
- Unroll, do not lose elastic, sponge off any dirt or mud with a damp cloth.
- Dry for about 2-3 hours. (If outside make sure the mat is weighted down so it doesn't blow away).
- Roll tightly and replace elastic bands.

Ruc sack

- Check all compartments and zip pockets are empty; shake out any dirt and litter. If spillages of food or toiletries have occurred wash out thoroughly.
- Hang out to dry for as long as necessary on a washing line on a sunny day or in a well ventilated room. Please note that ruc sack fabric and padding is thick and if the bag has become wet during the expedition it will need a few days to dry out.
- Check that all zips and buckles work and check that chest straps are not missing, ensure that the teacher in charge is informed of any problems.

Stove and Fuel

- Gas canisters should be labelled each time they are used to note the amount of fuel left. Bronze group canisters will be collected at the finish point for the expedition.
- Matches and lighters will also be collected at the finish point.
- Silver and gold candidates may well keep their gas canisters between expeditions. They are responsible for ensuring that they have sufficient gas for each expedition and replacing the canisters that they are initially issued during their first expedition.
- The stoves used are Trangias with **gas converters**. The gas converter needs to be sponged off to remove any burned on food residue. **DO NOT IMMERSER IN WATER.**
- **Pan handles** need to be cleaned thoroughly and dried.
- The **stove base** and **wind shield** need to be scoured and dried, they often contain residue where food has boiled over.
- There should be a **small and large saucepan**, these need to be cleaned and dried thoroughly.
- **The kettle** (if used/included) needs to be cleaned out and dried.
- The stove once clean and dry needs to be re-packed using the **strap** provided.
- **CHECK THAT THE STOVE KIT CONTAINS ALL OF THE EIGHT OR NINE ITEMS HIGHLIGHTED** (the optional item being a kettle).

Tent

- Take out of bag, check that nothing is missing, outer, inner, poles (right colour, number and size) and pegs (right number) and repair kit (if included). Many tents have a check list on the label, use this as a guide. Inform the member of D of E staff in charge of any missing items.
- Outer – dry thoroughly on a washing line, or in wet weather over four chairs in a well ventilated room. If drying indoors turn over to ensure both sides of the fabric are dry.
- Inner – Undo the door zips, and remove any litter, dirt etc. Sponge the groundsheet if it is very muddy or dirty. Dry the tent outer as above.
- Poles-remove from bag and lay out to air (do not assemble)
- Pegs – Remove from bag scrape off excess mud, straighten bent pegs and replace in bag.
- **NEVER PACK AWAY A WET TENT, IT WILL MOULD AND ROT AND COULD BE MADE UNUSABLE. IN THIS EVENT STUDENTS AND PARENTS/CARERS WILL BE CHARGED FOR REPLACEMENTS WHICH COST FROM £150 - £400.**
- **When drying tents outside, check that they will not become entangled in sharp fencing or thorn bushes to avoid them being torn.**