

## Selecting a campsite for annual camp

This resource will help you with:

- **Stage 4** - I know the best place to pitch our tent and I can explain why.
- **Stage 5** - I can select suitable locations for a standing or lightweight camp.
- **Stage 6** - I can source local knowledge with regard to a campsite and surrounding area.

Each year as we plan and organise annual camp with our sections there are a number of considerations that must be taken into account when choosing a campsite. These considerations are more or less the same whether you are looking towards a national or international annual camp.

Below are some points and considerations that should be taken into account when selecting your site, many of which are also relevant to shorter camps too.

Depending on your section and their involvement in the planning of camp there are 2 ways in which a site can be selected for an annual camp.

1. Select a site suitable to the programme desired or sought by the section e.g. water based, hillwalking, campcraft etc.
2. Select a campsite and build a programme around it.



3 essential features for an annual camp:

1. Location - Transport and Facilities
2. Camping Ground - Strong durable ground
3. Activities - Avoid a boring camp



## Location and getting there

It is important to be able to get to your chosen site with relative ease whilst keeping the costs to a minimum. Many sites can easily be accessed through a bus hire but public transport should not be ruled out as an option, particularly for international camps and older youth members who will have a smaller budget. The following points should be considered.

### Access:

- Where is your campsite located? Is it near any main roads?
- Is it near any public transport routes?
- Can public transport facilitate the number of people on the camp?
- Is it possible to get your camp gear to the site or is it possible to rent or borrow bulkier gear on site?

### Campsite itself and suitability, facilities

Once a site has been selected it is worth looking at the on site facilities as you will be spending a number of days and nights there. Look at the following:

- Water supply
- Toilets
- Showers area
- Firewood supply
- Camp shop

Suitable ground is important for pitching tents and setting up a working campsite. Through years of use and maintenance Scouting Ireland has built up a strong network of SI campsites which have good grounds for pitching a group campsite on strong grounds and are well maintained. However conditions should still be inspected before setting up your site. Look for evidence of recent usage.



Try to minimise environmental impact and select good durable ground sites. Remember, LEAVE NO TRACE.

Look for sheltered locations, flat durable ground, breezey but not too windy for ventilation of tents and cooling on warm days and good drainage.

Avoid:

- Slopes
- Avoid pitching directly under trees where possible
  - in the late Spring to early autumn produce sap which may fall on tents causing them to become sticky
  - Single trees in the open may also provide a site for lightning strikes and should be avoided
- Known flood areas
- Exposed ground
- Can natural cover be used to reduced this e.g. tree line on edge of a wood
- If in a hilly location does the wind flow through the site? If so can you set up behind tree cover.

Along with the sites facilities what surrounds your campsite should play an important role in the camp program and possible activities.

- Is there a supermarket nearby for shopping?  
This is important on international trips as the luxury of a Scouters car may not be available.
- Is a day trip to a local town or city possible on foot or by transport
- Are there any local attractions? e.g. Castles, historic sites, places of interest.

### **Other considerations:**

Between June to August the biting insect midges appear near water and wooded areas. Please prepare accordingly if you want to avoid an itchy camp! Take note of any similar occurrence that may occur on your chosen campsite.

Annual camps which do not take place in summer will often have their own considerations to be looked most notable weather. Please plan accordingly.

Examples of Scouting Ireland campsites: Larch Hill (Dublin), Lough Dan (Wicklow), Mt. Melleray (Waterford), Killaloe (Limerick), Castle Saunderson (Cavan), Lough Keel (Roscommon)

[www.scouts.ie/Scout-Centres/Camp-Site-Locator/](http://www.scouts.ie/Scout-Centres/Camp-Site-Locator/)