



If you're reading this you may be new to camping, and as you've never camped before, you're probably feeling daunted over where to start.

But you've bitten the bullet and decided to give it a go! Well done – you won't regret it, and you've come to the right place.

We want to help you get started, so let's look at five camping essentials:

1. Tent

Narrow your choice firstly by how many people will be sleeping in it.

From there you can work out which features you require and match it to your budget.

Practice setting your tent up in the backyard, that way you'll know nothing is missing, and be better prepared to set it up in the campsite.

4 – 6 person tents are popular family options. They come in all price ranges, are relatively easy to set up and fit into most vehicles.

Family tents offer tonnes of living space and are ideal for longer stays (1 week+), but they are bulky when packed and harder to set up.



Make sure the tent you choose will suit you and your family's needs.

2. Sleeping gear

An air mattress is a cost effective sleep solution. They come in a wide range of sizes and you can get electric pumps that make inflation easy.

Alternatively, there are self-inflating mats that (mostly) inflate themselves. These aren't as high as an air mattress but offer better insulation.

Try both before you buy, and make up your own mind. Check out Dave's blog 'Fantastic Sleep Options Explained for the Restless Camper' for more info

You'll also need a sleeping bag.

Look for something designed for general camping, and if you're buying for kids allow room for growth.

Temperature ratings can be confusing, but as a general rule, for spring/summer camping a 5 degree plus bag will be more than adequate, whilst during winter you should consider something rated to 0 degrees and below.

Check out this article for more advice on choosing a sleeping bag.

3. Food & Drink

You'll need something to keep food fresh, and drinks cool.

Most people have an esky in the shed, and with block ice, this will probably keep your food cold for a couple of days.

An icebox has better insulating properties, and with block ice, you can keep food and drinks cold for up to a week.

The key points here are to use block ice, keep the ice box out of the sun, and only open it when you need to.

Check out tips for keeping ice for longer in your icebox for more detail on this.

4. Eating

Some say eating is the best part of the trip, especially when combined with drinking. If you're going to have an open fire where you're camping then check out our articles on [camp oven cooking](#), and also our [camp cooking desserts](#) that the kids will love.

Gas stoves come in a range of price and sizes.

They come with the hoses required, you'll just need a compatible gas bottle and gas.

Don't forget pots, pans, utensils, plates, bowls etc. Often you can take some old things from home, just make sure it is unbreakable (leave the china at home).

Check out Snowys range of [camp kitchen equipment](#) if you need to stock up.



Planning and preparing your meals in advance will give you more time relaxing with friends and family.

5. Relaxing

Definitely the most important part of camping.

Whether you're fishing, surfing or relaxing with a good book, you'll probably need somewhere to sit and relax the end of the day.

So you'll need a [table and some chairs](#). It's all personal choice here and often comes down to budget, what will fit in your car.

Now go camping!

That's the basics, apart from personal effects. With this gear your well on your way to a fully equipped camp set-up.

When you're in your camp, keep a running list of the extras you want to bring next time, there is some space on the [Snowys checklist](#) for this.

It will make packing even easier next time.

If you're still feeling confused, give us a call 1300 914 007 and we'd love to help you get set up.

This article has been updated and digitally remastered from its original form in 2012.