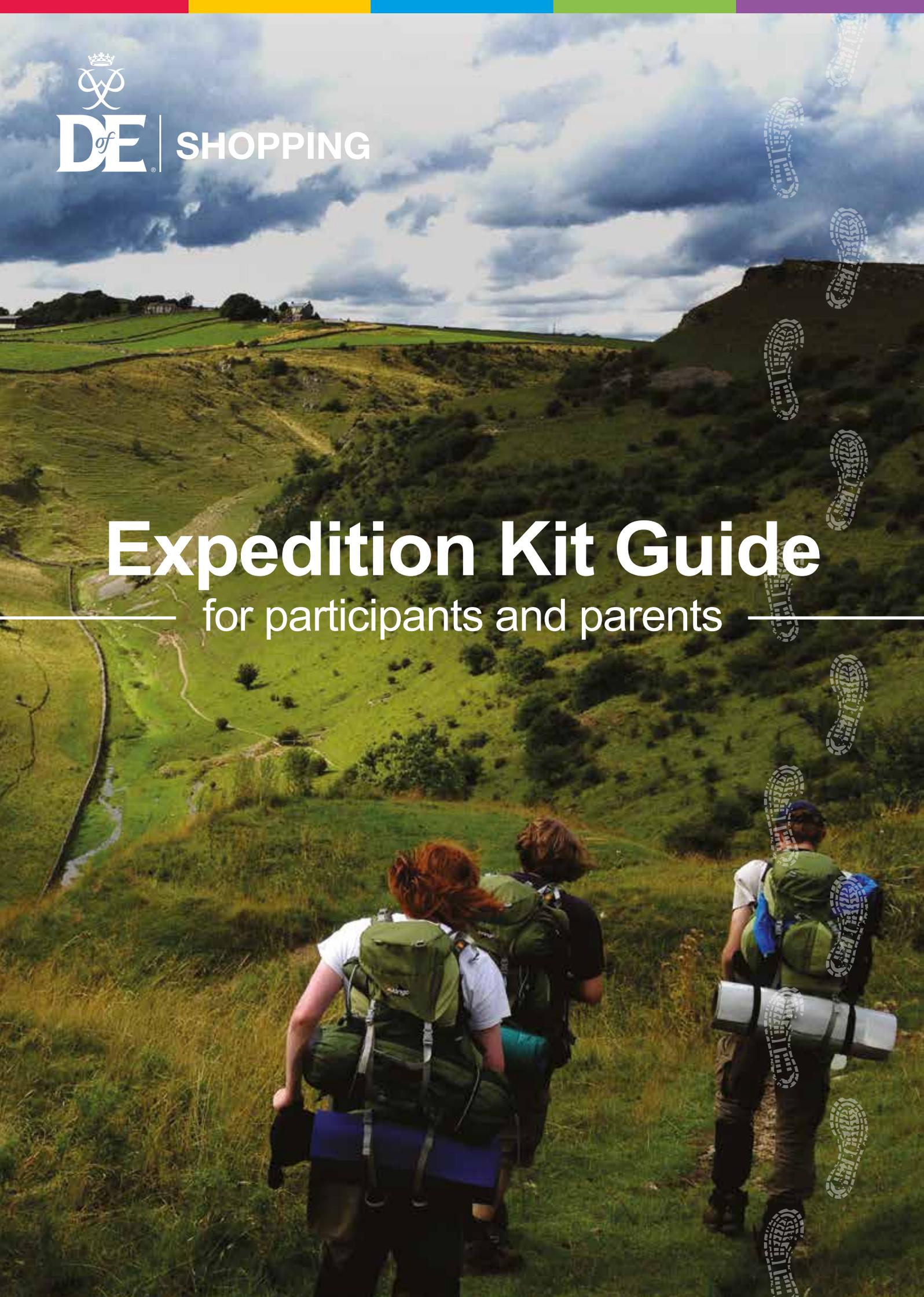


# Expedition Kit Guide

for participants and parents





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## Contents

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How to use this guide	4
Ten questions you should ask	5
Your DofE Card and Voucher	6
DofE expeditions – an overview	7
The DofE Kit List	8
How to save money on expedition kit	9
<b>Personal Kit</b>	<b>11</b>
Walking boots	12
Walking socks	13
Waterproof clothing	14
Rucksacks	15
Sleeping bags	16
Sleeping mats	17
Technical clothing and layers	18
Expedition food	19
Waterproofing	20
Packing tips and advice	21
<b>Group Kit</b>	<b>23</b>
Tents	24
Buying tents for DofE expeditions	25
Burners and fuel	26
Campcraft	27
Navigation	28
First aid	29
Making your kit last	30
Thank you	31



## How to use this guide

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The *Expedition Kit Guide* is aimed at helping participants and parents to choose and then find the right kit for their expeditions. Each category includes key information, expert tips and money saving ideas, as well as directions towards online resources packed with additional advice.

This guide is aimed at those undertaking UK expeditions on foot, but some information will still be useful across all methods of transportation.

Whether you are doing a Bronze, Silver or Gold DofE programme, this guide is just a summary; the best place you can get advice is from your DofE Expedition Supervisor, who will check your kit. For more expert advice, find your nearest DofE Recommended Retailer. GO Outdoors, Blacks, Millets, Ultimate Outdoors and Tiso are all outdoors specialists and their staff can answer all your expedition kit questions

## What does DofE Recommended Kit mean?

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The DofE has great relationships with expert expedition kit suppliers and manufacturers. We test and recommend their kit based on their design and suitability for the kinds of expeditions usually undertaken by DofE participants. We don't look for the most high end or expensive kit, but kit that is fit for purpose and good value for money. Remember, these are recommendations only and not kit that you must use. The DofE charity receives a royalty from all sales of Recommended Kit items, which helps to support our work with young people.

All equipment must be checked by the Expedition Supervisor (who is responsible for the safety and welfare of participants) before being used for any DofE activities.

Look out for this logo



All DofE Recommended Kit will feature this logo, so you can easily see if something is recommended by the DofE.

# Ten questions a DofE participant should ask...

Answer these ten questions to help you get the kit you really need for your expedition.

## 1 Have I got my DofE Kit List?

From day one, the *Expedition Kit List* is the one thing that you must not forget. Download at [DofE.org/shopping/kitlist](https://www.dofe.org/shopping/kitlist), or access our *Interactive Kit List* for when you are out and about – it's a great checklist for shopping and packing.

## 2 What's already in my wardrobe?

Check what kit you already have that you could use (but avoid denim and cotton items).

## 3 What can I borrow?

Ask around and see what people have and would be happy to lend, particularly small items like hats, sun cream and water bottles.

## 4 Am I still growing?

If you are, you may want to spend less as you will quickly grow out of your clothing, boots and some kit.

## 5 What's the climate like?

Find out what the normal temperatures are, particularly at night, for the time of year.

## 6 What's the weather likely to be like?

You must have waterproofs but check the forecast. Will you need dry-bags and extra waterproofing? Or sun cream and sunglasses?

## 7 How long am I going for?

Making do with basic/alternative kit for two days is very different to three or four days.

## 8 What else would I use the kit for?

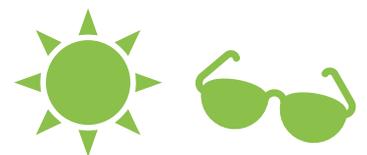
Would you use the boots every day walking the dog or take the rucksack on your gap year? It might be worth spending more if you'll get that value back over time.

## 9 What's my budget?

Think about what you can afford and what kit you have to get. Also, remember to use your DofE Card or Voucher to save at least 10% at GO Outdoors, Blacks, Millets, Ultimate Outdoors and Tiso (Scotland only).

## 10 Where can I get a professional boot fitting?

The range of expedition boots is vast because people's feet are so different. If you want a boot to last make sure you get a professional fitting to buy a pair that really fits you. The five DofE Recommended Retailers are GO Outdoors, Blacks, Millets, Ultimate Outdoors and Tiso and they all provide a free boot fitting service.



# Your DofE Voucher



**Save at least 10% on your expedition kit and more.**

Every young person involved with the DofE is able to save money on expedition purchases at five leading outdoor retailers. Claim your discount in **over 200 stores** and online with these five DofE Recommended Retailers of Expedition Kit.

 <p>GOoutdoors.co.uk</p> <p><b>Extra 10%</b> off the <b>GO Outdoors Discount Card price.</b></p> <p>Inspiring everyone to get outdoors, for less... and love it as much as we do.</p>	 <p>Blacks.co.uk</p> <p><b>10%</b> off the current selling price. Includes reduced price items.</p> <p>Proud to be a part of your outdoor life.</p>	 <p>Millets.co.uk</p> <p><b>10%</b> off the current selling price. Includes reduced price items.</p> <p>The destination for family adventure.</p>	 <p>Ultimateoutdoors.com</p> <p><b>10%</b> off the current selling price. Includes reduced price items.</p> <p>The number one destination for all things outdoors.</p>	 <p>Tiso.com</p> <p><b>15%</b> off the retail price.</p> <p>Scotland's leading specialist retailer for outdoor clothing, camping equipment and climbing gear.</p>
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**Save money on expedition purchases and everything you buy in store and online.**

**There are four ways you can claim your DofE participant discount at these retailers;**

<p>Download your voucher from eDofE</p> 	<p>Use your DofE voucher* from your Welcome Pack</p> 	<p>Use online discount code</p> <p><b>Online discount code: JDO-DOFE-PAR</b></p> <p>Enter the above code on these websites:</p> <p><b>GOOutdoors.co.uk</b> <b>Blacks.co.uk</b> <b>Millets.co.uk</b> <b>Ultimateoutdoors.com</b> <b>Tiso.com</b></p>	<p>Use your existing DofE Reward Card in store (expires 31 October 2018)</p>  <p>As many participants will already have a DofE Reward Card our new retailers will accept these for a limited time only.</p>
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Find your nearest store at [DofE.org/shopping/storefinder](http://DofE.org/shopping/storefinder)  
 Visit [DofE.org/shopping/T&Cs](http://DofE.org/shopping/T&Cs) for details. Every purchase made using a DofE voucher or card, whether it is expedition kit or else, generates a donation to the DofE Charity. Make sure you use yours to save money and support the DofE.

# DofE expeditions – an overview

Bronze, Silver and Gold DofE expeditions are very different undertakings to each other.

## BRONZE

Bronze expeditions, two days/one night, are all about young people enjoying the outdoors. Many Bronze expeditions are undertaken with kit which is older, borrowed and can be a lower cost than for Silver or Gold expeditions.

## SILVER

Silver expeditions are a step above Bronze. Participants may already have had an introduction at Bronze level, and now carry out a three days/two nights expedition. Your need to keep dry and comfortable becomes more important, and durable kit could help you have a more enjoyable experience.

## GOLD

Gold expeditions, four days/three nights, are a comprehensive challenge of teamwork, self-reliance, isolation and risk management. Lightweight, modern and durable kit will have much more value on these adventures. At Gold, always think lightweight and waterproof.



### Expeditions whatever the weather



Waterproofs need to work whatever level your expedition. However, at Silver and Gold, keeping dry becomes more important due to longer days and (usually) distance. Even in the summer, dew in the mornings on long grass can drench socks and trousers. Pack according to the weather. Do you need thermal gloves and a winter hat or sun cream, a sun hat and sunglasses?

# The DofE Expedition Kit List



The *DofE Expedition Kit List* is your essential checklist when preparing the kit needed for your DofE expedition. All DofE Recommended Kit is tried and tested, so you know it's fit for expeditions.

Participants can use it to be sure they haven't forgotten anything. It also tells you what kit the DofE recommends to help when shopping for items. Remember, the kit list is a guide – you should always check with the DofE Leader that your kit is suitable for your particular expedition.

You can download the kit list or use the *Interactive Kit List* online to plan and personalise your expedition kit list on the go.

Get your DofE Kit List at [DofE.org/shopping/kitlist](https://DofE.org/shopping/kitlist)

updated 1 April 2018  
(replaces all previous versions)

## EXPEDITION KIT LIST

**About the kit list**  
This list is an illustration of the items you may need when undertaking a DofE expedition. This list is to be used as a GUIDE only and there is no obligation to buy the specific items we recommend. The DofE Charity receives a royalty from all sales of DofE Recommended Kit items from any shop, which helps to support our work with young people.

**DofE Vouchers and the DofE Card**  
Save at least 10% on your expedition kit at **GO Outdoors, Blacks, Millets, Ultimate Outdoors** and **Tesco**.  
Download your voucher from [dofe.org](https://dofe.org) or find a voucher in Welcome Packs.  
\*All active DofE adults are eligible for a new DofE Card from 1 April 2018.

**Participants and parents**  
– save at least 10%.  
**DofE Leaders and adult volunteers**  
– save at least 15%.  
Visit [DofE.org/shopping/kitlist](https://DofE.org/shopping/kitlist) for full details.

**Get expert kit advice**  
See the free DofE Expedition Kit Guide, full of essential advice and money saving tips. Visit [DofE.org/shopping/kitlist](https://DofE.org/shopping/kitlist)

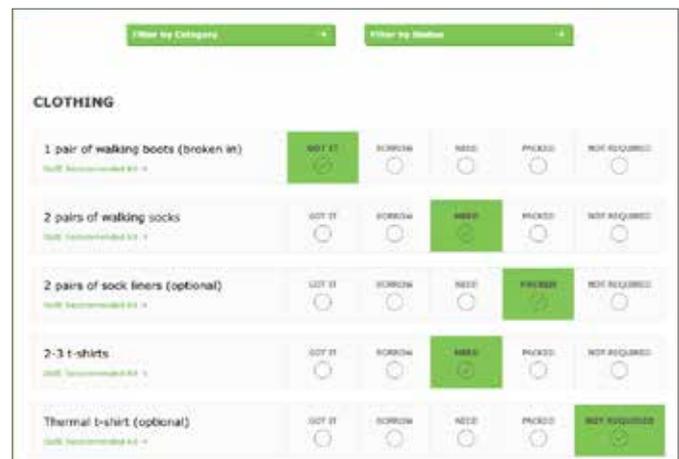
**See our five DofE Recommended Retailers of Expedition Kit all offer a DofE discount in store and online.**

CLOTHING		Item needed	Specific tested items we recommend
Get it	Packed it	1 pair of walking boots (broken in)	Berghaus: Explorer Trek and Explorer Ridge boots Vango: Vento, Ghibli and Gemini boots
		2 pairs of walking socks	Bridgdale: WoolFusion Trekker, WoolFusion Tekker women's, WoolFusion Trail, WoolFusion Trail women's
		2 pairs of sock liners (optional)	Bridgdale: Coolmax Liner, Coolmax Liner women's
		2-3 t-shirts	Craghoppers: Fusion T-shirt
		Thermal t-shirt (optional)	Craghoppers: Fleece: Vector Hooded Jackets and Hill Zip Tops
		2 fleece tops or similar	Craghoppers: Tensara Trousers
		2 walking trousers (warm, NOT jeans)	
		Underwear	
		Nightwear	
		Flipflop/trainers/sandals etc (optional for camp site use)	
		Warm hat &/or sunhat (as appropriate)	
		1 pair gloves (if appropriate)	
		1 pair shorts (if appropriate)	
		Waterproof over-trousers	Craghoppers: Ascent Overtrousers
		Jacked/loaf (waterproof & windproof)	Craghoppers: Waterproof Shell Apex Jackets
		1 pair gaiters (optional)	

PERSONAL KIT		Item needed	Specific tested items we recommend
		Rucksack	Vango: Contour, Sherpa, Piramide rucksacks
		Rucksack liner (or 2 strong plastic bags)	Lifeline: Dry Bags (5/10/15/20/40/70/100 litres) and Compression Sacks (5/10/15L)
		Sleeping bag	Vango: Nitestar, Lullshade, Venom, Ultralite Pro and
		Sleeping mat	Vango: Single Trek mats
		Waterproof bag	Lifeline: Dry Bags
		Sleeping bag liner (optional)	Lifeline: Cotton sleeping bag liners

\*The Dictionary discount is to be used in conjunction with any other offers or discounts. Please see [DofE.org/shopping/kitlist](https://DofE.org/shopping/kitlist) for full terms and conditions.





# How to save money on expedition kit

## What's in your wardrobe?

The best way to save money on expedition kit is to use what you already have or borrow kit from other people.

Most people will have some clothes they need, a torch, plastic plate and so on and it's amazing what kit people have if you ask around. Some kit, like boots and socks, you often cannot borrow.

## Hand it down

If you have a large family, you might want to buy kit in neutral colours so that younger siblings can use it when they are old enough.

A rucksack with an adjustable back system will also help with this.

## Get the full value

Remember to shop wisely and buy items you'll use again for other activities.

Walk the dog every day? Then get some good boots!

If you are going travelling, get a rucksack suitable for both activities.

Buy a waterproof jacket which can also be used as a coat too.

# Boot and rucksack fitting

THE DofE RECOMMENDED RETAILERS FOR EXPEDITION KIT ARE HERE TO HELP KIT YOU OUT FOR ALL YOUR DofE ADVENTURES



They offer a wide range of outdoor clothing and equipment for expeditions in over 200 stores nationwide and online.

All DofE participants are different, and expedition needs vary by Award level, time of year and location. As two essential kit purchases, it is important to get your walking boots and rucksack fitted to you. Speak with the staff in our DofE recommended retailers who can offer advice and a free fitting service.



## Boot fitting

Finding the right boot is an essential part of preparing for your expedition. Buy your walking boots early so you have time to break them in and for best comfort on your expedition.

Go in store to try out and test your new boots on the in store slopes and dips.



## Rucksack fitting

Making sure your rucksack fits properly is really important to avoid getting aches in your back and shoulders.

Expert staff can help you find the right rucksack for your height and build; and adjust it to the correct size so it is fitted correctly and comfortably on you.

Find your nearest store at [DofE.org/shopping/storefinder](https://www.dofe.org/shopping/storefinder)

# Personal Kit

Every member of the expedition team will need to carry their own personal camping equipment.





### Expert advice

- 1 Use additional padding like a foot bed to help to get the best possible fit.
- 2 There are several ways to lace boots, with each giving a slightly different fit, so get yours fitted professionally.
- 3 Take lightweight trainers or flip flops etc. to wear at the camp site to rest your feet.

## Walking boots

Your boots are the most important item of kit and one you will almost certainly need to buy.



### What to look for

Feet come in all shapes and sizes, so different boots may suit different kinds of feet.

Leather boots are soft, durable and waterproof and highly abrasion resistant, making them long lasting.

Fabric boots are lighter, cheaper and a good option if your feet are still growing.

We recommend:

 **Vango**

 **berghaus**

### Before you buy

- 1 Try on boots while wearing expedition socks and walk around in them.
- 2 The boots must have ankle support to protect you while walking with a heavy rucksack, and check there is a deep tread for grip.
- 3 Think about how often you'll use your boots and spend money appropriate to that use.

## MONEY SAVING TIP

Often you can get last season's boots in the sales and still get a professional fitting. If you decide the boots don't fit, some retailers will allow you to return boots if you have only worn them indoors.

Find out more about walking boots at [DofE.org/shopping/boots](https://DofE.org/shopping/boots)

## Expert advice

- 1 Always wash your socks inside out as the water reinvigorates the underfoot cushioning.
- 2 Avoid wearing your socks on carpet; they act like Velcro and create a bobbling effect.
- 3 You should never wear cotton socks on an expedition.



We recommend:

**bridgedale** 

## Before you buy

- 1 Good walking socks can be the key to an enjoyable expedition and help to avoid blisters.
- 2 If you wear a smooth liner sock, and then your hiking sock on top, it can help to reduce blisters – but try it first!
- 3 Choose your socks and wear them when trying on boots.

# Walking socks

Getting the right socks for your expedition can make a huge difference. Walking socks are designed to minimise blisters with padding and moisture protection fabric.



## Types of walking socks

A midweight sock is designed for year-round expedition use with leg and underfoot cushioning.

A lightweight sock is designed for expeditions during the spring and summer.

A liner sock is ultra-thin, worn under a walking sock to aid dryness and hygiene. They also help to prevent rubbing.

## MONEY SAVING TIP

If you need to, buy one outer sock pair and two liners. Liners can be easily washed and dried overnight, keeping fresh socks next to your skin.

Find out more about walking socks at [DofE.org/shopping/socks](https://DofE.org/shopping/socks)



### Expert advice

- 1 Check that your jacket is waterproof, not just water resistant.
- 2 Put your waterproofs on at the first sight of rain.
- 3 Make your waterproofs last much longer by using a waterproofing cleaning product after an expedition.

## Waterproof clothing

All DofE participants need a waterproof jacket and trousers. This outer (shell) clothing layer protects against rain, wind and cold.



### What to look for

Waterproof jackets are lightweight and designed to be both waterproof and breathable. Look for adjustable hems for a good fit and reflective detailing for safety.

Waterproof trousers are lightweight and designed to wear over technical trousers. Look for adjustable ankles and a pair that packs away small.

We recommend:



**CRAGHOPPERS**

### Before you buy

- 1 Talk to store staff about what activity you are doing and get a jacket designed for expeditions.
- 2 Use a jacket with a front zip rather than a pullover. It goes on faster and can be worn open.
- 3 Check that trousers are wide at the bottom or have zips/poppers to the knee to let them go over expedition boots.

## MONEY SAVING TIP

Choose a jacket that you'd wear for other outdoor activity or everyday use.

Find out more about waterproof clothing at  
[DofE.org/shopping/waterproof-clothing](https://www.dofe.org/shopping/waterproof-clothing)

## Expert advice

- 1 Look out for a load transferring, adjustable back system and ensure you are fitted to your rucksack.
- 2 Make sure your pack transfers the weight of your kit to your hips and not on your shoulders.
- 3 Line your rucksack with a rucksack liner or strong rubble sack to keep everything dry.

We recommend:

 **Vango**

## Before you buy

- 1 Rucksacks are measured by their litre capacity (internally and expansion). E.g. 60+10 means a total capacity of 70 litres.
- 2 Get the right size rucksack for your expedition. 60L should be fine for Bronze, but Gold will often need 70L.
- 3 Some rucksacks are designed for women and smaller men with narrow shoulder straps and back.



# Rucksacks

Modern rucksacks are made from lightweight fabric, with lots of padding and pockets. For a DofE expedition you'll want at least 60 litres.



## What to look for

Get a rucksack with a strong waist strap and wide well-padded shoulder straps.

It should have an attached high visibility waterproof cover and adjustable back system.

## MONEY SAVING TIP

If you are borrowing a rucksack, it may not have a waterproof cover so put a dry bag or a new thick garden waste bag into your bag before you put in your kit.

Find out more about rucksacks at [DofE.org/shopping/rucksacks](https://DofE.org/shopping/rucksacks)



### Expert advice

- 1 Invest in an outdoor designed bag with a compression stuff sack to reduce size.
- 2 Always pack your sleeping bag in your rucksack and in a waterproof plastic bag to keep it dry.
- 3 It is often worthwhile investing in a three season bag to see you through your Bronze, Silver and Gold DofE programmes and beyond.

## Sleeping bags

A good night's sleep always helps on expedition, so it's important to have a sleeping bag designed to give you comfort at the lowest minimum temperature. Most sleeping bags come in 'seasons'. 1 or 2 = summer, 3 = spring/autumn, and 4 = winter.



### What are your choices?

Synthetic: lower cost although bulkier and heavier than down, but retains better heat insulation when wet.

Down: the best insulation, lightweight, easily compressed, very warm and long lasting but more expensive and must be kept dry.

A two or three season synthetic bag should be sufficient for most DofE expeditions, but consider where you are going and the likely temperatures

We recommend:



### Before you buy

- 1 A mummy-shaped sleeping bag helps keep the warm air inside your bag and close to your body, which can keep you warmer.
- 2 Be sure of what season bag you need. Having a four season for the summer is extra weight and uncomfortable, but using a two season in March or October may not keep you warm. Find temperature and season ratings on the inside of the zip on most sleeping bags.

## MONEY SAVING TIP

Find out more about sleeping bags at [DofE.org/shopping/sleeping-bags](https://www.dofe.org/shopping/sleeping-bags)

## Expert advice

- 1 Store self-inflating roll mats rolled out with the valve open.
- 2 Keep the elastic straps that came with the mat, or other elastic – don't use string to tie it up.
- 3 If your mat is outside your bag, don't risk keeping tent poles in the middle. If you choose to store spare clothes in it, ensure they cannot fall out or get wet

We recommend:



## Before you buy

- 1 Think about how tall you are. A  $\frac{3}{4}$  length mat might be all you need and saves weight/bulk.
- 2 Use a sleeping mat designed for outdoor use – yoga/roll mats do not have the same durability or insulation.
- 3 If you know you need a good night's sleep to be motivated the next day, a good quality self-inflating mat is a wise investment.



# Sleeping mats

Sleeping mats are a DofE essential, giving you extra insulation and comfort for a good night's sleep.



## What to look for

Traditional closed-cell foam mats are low cost, lightweight, durable and give enough insulation. However, they often tend to be bulky and not very comfortable.

Self-inflating air mats cost more but insulate better and are much more comfortable.

## MONEY SAVING TIP

Foam roll mats last very well so it's usually easy to find one to borrow.

Find out more about sleeping mats at [DofE.org/shopping/sleeping-mats](https://DofE.org/shopping/sleeping-mats)



### Expert advice

- 1 At Silver and Gold level, have a separate set of clothing for use at camp. You can air or dry your day kit.
- 2 Don't wear cotton. It's okay when dry, but if it gets wet it holds moisture and takes a long time to dry. If moisture is held next to the skin, it is unpleasant and can contribute to a drop in body temperature.

# Technical clothing and layers

Under your outer waterproof layer you'll need lightweight, fast drying inner and middle layer clothing. Expedition clothing is specially designed to be close fitting and breathable. This helps you keep dry and be more comfortable with the rucksack.

We recommend:



## CRAGHOPPERS



### Before you buy

- 1 Use multiple layers not one expensive item. Layers allow flexibility to regulate body temperature and stay dry.
- 2 Try to use breathable fabrics that move sweat away from your skin.
- 3 Think about what other clothes you'll need for your expedition, such as gloves or nightwear. You'll probably own these already.

## What to look for

Your base layer will be breathable and tight fitting to absorb moisture away from the body. Look for wicking fabric.

Your mid layer should be warm and insulating, like a fleece. Look for a full length zip to easily add or remove layers.

It is usually better to wear lightweight trousers rather than shorts to protect your skin.

# MONEY SAVING TIP

See what you already have – you can substitute technical clothing for loose-fitting long sleeve tops or long lightweight trousers. Avoid jeans, hoodies and tracksuit bottoms as they are heavy when wet.

Find out more about technical clothing and layers at [DofE.org/shopping/technical-clothing](https://DofE.org/shopping/technical-clothing)

## Expert advice

- 1 Pack plenty of snacks to graze on.
- 2 Ready-to-eat meals are designed to be high energy, low weight, easy to cook and easy to fit in your rucksack.
- 3 Save food from other trips such as your practice expedition. It might come in handy again.



# Expedition food

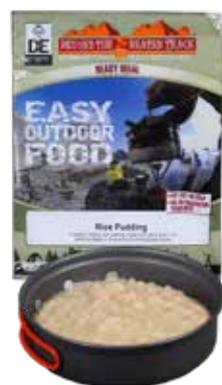
Getting the right food will help you enjoy your expedition. It's a chance to be creative, and to understand more about rationing and outdoor survival.

## What makes a great expedition meal?

Your DofE diet should be compact and easy to carry. It needs to be high in slow-release energy.

To meet your expedition aim you need to plan, prepare and cook a meal as a group but ration packs are great for breakfast or when journeying.

Get creative with cooking to have the most fun possible.



## MONEY SAVING TIP

Some meals you will need to cook from scratch, and try to plan meals your whole team can share. Split the ingredients, cost, packing and effort between the team.

To download the DofE meal planner and find out more about expedition food, go to [DofE.org/shopping/food](https://DofE.org/shopping/food)

## Before you buy

- 1 Pack as many calories into the least weight/volume as possible while still having a balanced diet. You'll need 3,000 – 5,000 calories a day.
- 2 Choose food you like to eat, that will keep and is quick and easy to cook.
- 3 'Waterproof' food (Ziploc bags work well) and ensure it can withstand being squashed.



### Expert advice

- 1 Practise putting up and taking down your tent so you can do it very quickly if it is raining.
- 2 You can improve the water resistance of your rucksack and tent by treating them with waterproofing products and letting them dry naturally.

# Waterproofing

Keeping your kit dry is a must during a DofE expedition.



## How to keep your kit dry

Wash and treat your waterproof clothes without damage using a specialist waterproofing solution.

When packing, it's worth taking precautions to waterproof your kit, so it doesn't weigh you down when it's wet.

If the weather is going to be very wet it's a good idea to invest in some dry bags for spare clothes and your sleeping bag to ensure they stay dry.

We recommend:



### Before you buy

- 1 Group and pack kit into separate dry bags to keep everything dry and organised.
- 2 Check what fabric your clothing/kit is before buying waterproofing solution, as some products are designed specifically for certain fabrics e.g. down wash.
- 3 Use a bin bag or garden waste bag as a cheap alternative to dry bags.

## MONEY SAVING TIP

Don't wash your waterproofs with normal washing powders – they'll damage them and won't be as effective. Use a specialist waterproofing solution such as Nikwax Tech Wash.

To find out more about waterproofing, go to [DofE.org/shopping/waterproofing](https://www.dofe.org/shopping/waterproofing)

# Packing tips and advice

Follow some basic tips and you'll find your expedition easier and drier.



## MONEY SAVING TIP

Use any method to keep kit dry. Bin bags with elastic bands, carrier bags and freezer bags are all useful. Be thorough and plan ahead for rain.

For more advice on how to pack your rucksack, visit

[DofE.org/shopping/how-to-pack](https://DofE.org/shopping/how-to-pack)

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# TREK PRO RANGE

## NEW FOR 2018

### FEATURES

- + Weather tested beyond EU standards
- + Fabrics exceed EU fire standards

### UPGRADED WITH

- + Ripstop fly - extra durable
- + 68D light, 5000mm waterproof fabric
- + Eco Alloy poles - light & strong



**SAM SYKES**

"Vango is my go to brand for our DofE Expeditions. Each year they lead the way for DofE Recommended Kit in design, price and function."

**Vango**  
THE SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE



Proud to be supporting DofE Leaders

**NIKWAX**  
WATERPROOFING



**NIKWAX HELPS YOU STAY COMFORTABLE ON EXPEDITION**

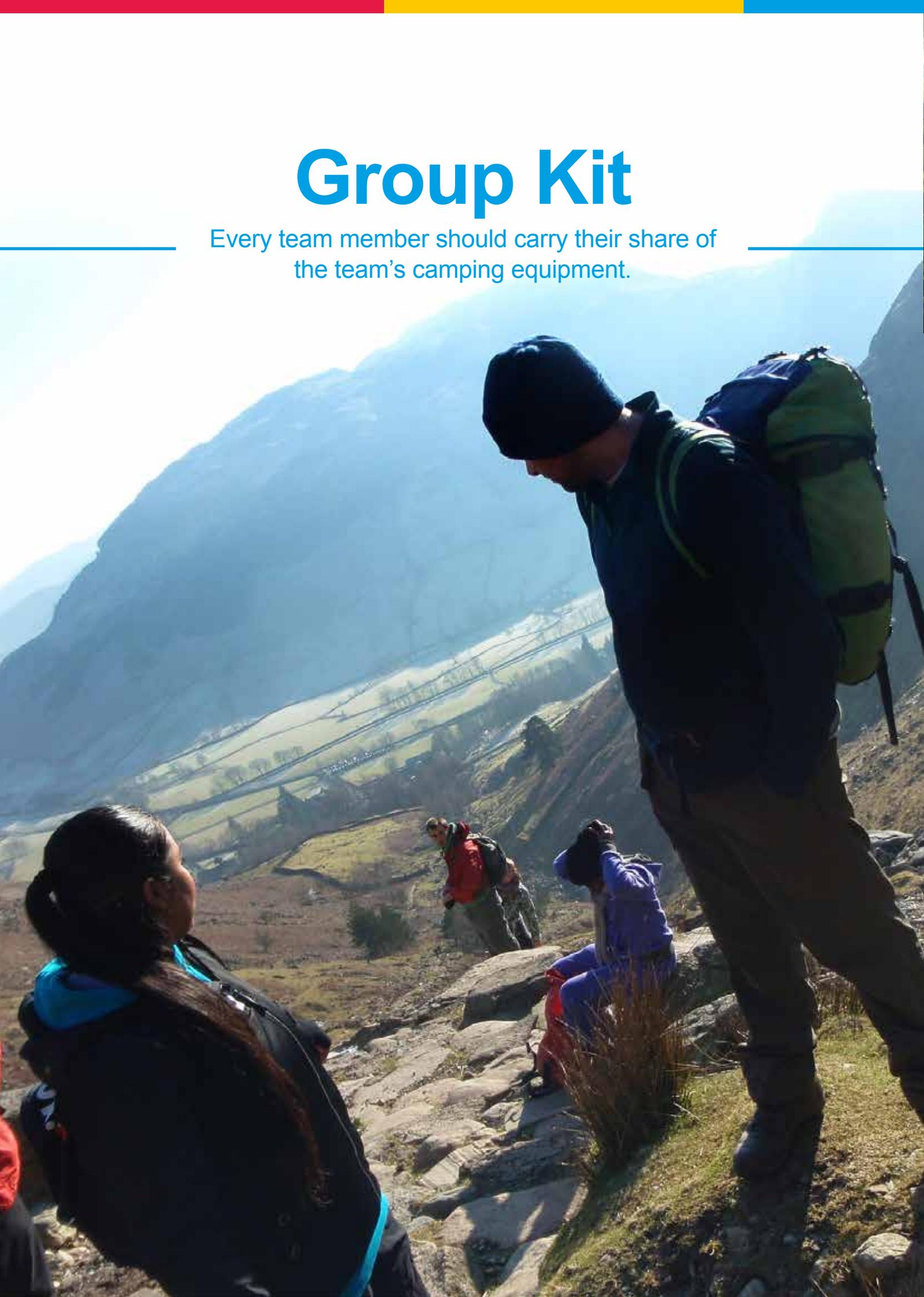
Everything you need to care for your clothing and equipment to stay dry and warm

Use your DofE Card or voucher to save at least 10% on the whole Nikwax range at the new DofE Recommended Retailers of Expedition Kit, GO Outdoors, Blacks, Millets, Ultimate Outdoors and Tiso  
[GOoutdoors.co.uk](http://GOoutdoors.co.uk) · [Blacks.co.uk](http://Blacks.co.uk) · [Millets.co.uk](http://Millets.co.uk) · [Ultimateoutdoors.com](http://Ultimateoutdoors.com) · [Tiso.com](http://Tiso.com)

EASIER | SAFER | DRIER

# Group Kit

Every team member should carry their share of the team's camping equipment.





### Expert advice

- 1 If possible dry your tent before packing it away during the expedition, it saves weight and stops it getting mouldy and smelly.
- 2 On hot days, ventilate your tent by opening the doors and vents to prevent condensation building up. Leave vents open at night.

## Tents

It's best to use two to four person size tents for DofE expeditions which allow for two or three tents per expedition team and flexibility for mixed gender teams.



### What to look for

Tents with porches to store rucksacks might allow for an extra participant inside the tent and save weight.

Colour coded poles make the tent intuitive to put up, saving you time.

Tent bags with oversized openings offer easy packing, and compression straps control pack size.

We recommend:



### Before you buy

- 1 Similar tents can have different prices. You pay for double stitching for strength, covered stitching for waterproofing, lighter material, stronger/pre-bent poles and better tensioning.
- 2 Check the tent elements can be split so several people can carry it.
- 3 If the tent is only for backpacking, focus on it being lightweight. If it might also be used for general camping, focus on the size/space. If you're camping in exposed areas, go for strength, water resistance and insulation.

## MONEY SAVING TIP

Tents are usually supplied by your DofE Leader – make sure you check in advance to see what you can borrow.

For more information of tents, visit [DofE.org/shopping/tents](https://DofE.org/shopping/tents)



# Buying tents for DofE expeditions

The amount of features and differences between tents can seem daunting.

## Tent jargon busting

### SEMI-GEODESIC:

Uses a minimum of three crossover poles which ensure a free standing, rigid structure. Good for exposed areas.

### HYDROSTATIC HEAD:

This is a standard measure of water resistance. It tells you how many mm of water can be applied before it permeates the material. DofE recommended tents have 5,000mm HH.

### TUNNEL TENT:

Three similar height arched poles to create long and spacious tents, great for lots of kit.



### GEODESIC:

Fully geodesic tents have a minimum of five interlocking poles. Very strong mountain tent ideal for Gold expeditions. The extra pole and strength does add weight.

## What size to choose

100, 200 or 300? Vango tents come in different sizes. 100 means it will fit one person, 200 means a two person tent and 300 means a three person tent.

## MONEY SAVING TIP

Snapped cords in the tent poles are easily replaced. Tie a knot in the new cord, thread through all the poles and pull to add tension, but not so it is tight, and then tie another knot.

Find spares for your tent at [DofE.org/shopping/spares-repairs](https://www.dofe.org/shopping/spares-repairs)



### Expert advice

- 1 Keep your Trangia burner in the yellow plastic bag provided to stop meths tarnishing and corroding your stove.
- 2 Leave your stove to cool before packing it away.
- 3 Remember to adjust your lower windshield to allow the optimum flow of air to get to the burner.
- 4 Always use a purpose made fuel bottle with a safety valve to carry your meths in.

## Burners and fuel

You'll need to cook a hot meal during your expedition, and show you can use a cooking stove effectively in the open. Your stove will use gas, bio-gel or methylated spirits (meths) as fuel.



We recommend:

 **trangia**<sup>®</sup>

### Before you buy

- 1 Many DofE centres provide stoves and fuel, so remember to check with your Leader first.
- 2 Like all specialist kit, buy what you will use. The more regularly you use it, the more it might be worth spending.
- 3 Make sure you get expert advice on how to transport and store fuel. You must have the right fuel container.

### What to look for

The Trangia is the classic DofE stove. Compact, lightweight, easy to clean and cheap to run.

DofE groups use them as they last for many seasons and can be used by a whole team.

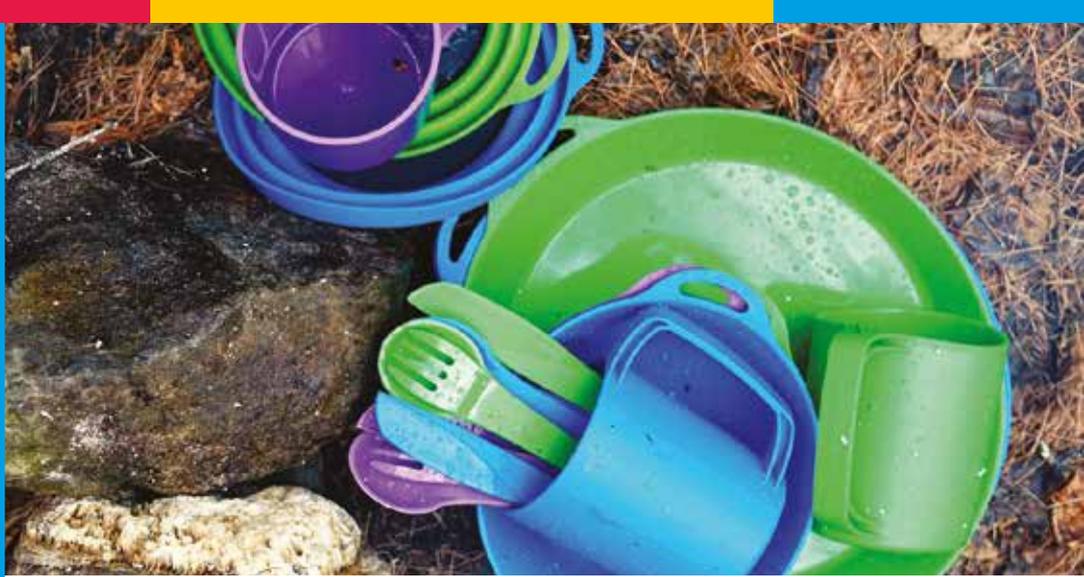
Trangias can use both gas and methylated spirits. Whichever you have, you must be trained before you use one on your own.

## STAYING SAFE

For more information about stoves and fuel, and to download the DofE stove safety instructions, go to [DofE.org/shopping/stoves](https://DofE.org/shopping/stoves)

## Expert advice

- 1 Don't wait until you are thirsty to drink. By then it is too late.
- 2 'Tank up' with fluid before leaving the camp site each morning and drink as much as possible as soon as you arrive at the camp site in the evening.



# Campcraft and cooking

## We recommend:



Using specially-designed camping utensils can really cut down on weight and space. It's also more robust than regular cookware, which is useful on longer Gold expeditions.

## Before you buy

- 1 Plan meals you can cook and eat as a team. Save a treat as part of your emergency rations.
- 2 Don't use the same utensils or containers for raw and cooked food.
- 3 To help you cook, mugs can be converted into handy measures by scratching lines in the right places on the inside.



## What to look for

Weight can quickly build up so using plastic or titanium camping gear can help.

Each participant should be able to carry at least two litres of water, so get large water bottles or a bladder.

## MONEY SAVING TIP

Save money on camp kit by using lightweight household/disposable items like plates or cutlery.

For more information about campcraft and cooking, visit

[DofE.org/shopping/campcraft](https://DofE.org/shopping/campcraft)



### Expert advice

- 1 Do not store compasses near anything magnetic.
- 2 Before setting out, check your compass has not become depolarised (points S not N) – you can do this by comparing it to which direction in your home is north.
- 3 Polarised compasses can be fixed by running a strong 'south' magnet along the 'north' length of the needle.

# Navigation

Learning to use an Ordnance Survey (OS) map is a central part of your expedition. A compass is essential, and it's important that you can trust it to guide you on unfamiliar ground.



## What to look for

Most teams traveling on foot use a 1:25000 scale map, but cyclists may prefer a 1:50000 scale one.

Always try to use a map case, even if using laminated maps and route cards. It keeps everything together and provides the best protection against rain.

If your expedition runs over two maps, you can have a custom one made by Ordnance Survey

[DofE.org/shopping/os-custom-maps](https://www.dofe.org/shopping/os-custom-maps)



We recommend:

**SILVA**



### Before you buy

- 1 Many DofE centres provide maps, map cases and compasses so talk to your Leader before buying.
- 2 UK walking expeditions need to use OS maps, usually 1:25000. You can get laminated water resistant 'active' maps which are durable.
- 3 Compass work is inevitable so try to have one each, three per team is probably the minimum.

## MONEY SAVING TIP

Tie your compass to your pack or jacket to avoid losing it – this string can also be used to measure distances.

For more information about navigation, visit [DofE.org/shopping/navigation](https://www.dofe.org/shopping/navigation)

## Expert advice

- 1 LED head torches are great for use at camp sites as they leave your hands free for cooking, tent pitching etc.
- 2 Take a blister kit. Prevention is better than cure so put some plasters on where you have had blisters before to protect your feet from the start.



### We recommend:



## Before you buy

- 1 Talk to your Leader and find out how much first aid kit you need. Gold expeditions will need more than Bronze ones.
- 2 Ensure that your personal first aid kit allows for allergies, conditions or medication you have or need.
- 3 Borrow handy tools where you can. Have your family ever been camping?

# First aid and tools

Every DofE participant needs to have some kind of first aid kit, a whistle, emergency rations and a survival bag.



## What to look for

Check that the first aid kit has plenty of plasters, blister plasters and disposable gloves; they are what get used the most.

Check the weather forecast and make sure you have sun cream and after-sun if it is needed.

A torch is essential for finding your way at night, whether it is putting boots on, opening your tent or finding kit in your bag.

## MONEY SAVING TIP

Visit your local DofE centre to borrow safety gear like survival bags.

For more information on first aid and tools, visit  
[DofE.org/shopping/first-aid](https://www.dofe.org/shopping/first-aid)



### Expert advice

- 1 Most rips and tears can be professionally fixed for much less than buying a new product.
- 2 For ad-hoc DIY repairs use a product like Tear Aid rather than duct tape as it won't damage the tent if removed for a more permanent repair.

## Making your kit last

Follow some simple tips to look after your kit before and after your expedition.

- Don't store sleeping bags in their stuff sacks, it crushes the filling and reduces insulation. Store hanging up or in a bin bag.
- Clean your boots (and rucksack) immediately after use to prevent acidic materials from damaging them.
- Use a material enhancer (like Nikwax Tech, Tent or Direct washes) on boots, waterproofs, tents and rucksacks to maintain water resistance and material integrity.
- Don't use normal washing powders on your waterproofs.
- Dry and air tents (and dry bags) completely before storing.
- Don't machine wash tents. Store all parts together. Count pegs after the expedition and replace damaged ones.
- Re-wash stoves and cooking equipment when you get home to make sure they are completely clean.
- Fully clean and dry any drinking pouches and store in a freezer to stop mould growing.
- Keep small items together in a Ziploc bag in the top of your rucksack so you know where they are for next time.
- Keep your compass in a case to prevent scratches and cracks.

## MONEY SAVING TIP

Take care of your kit. Clean and dry it after use and store it in a dry location. Thoroughly check your camp site before departing so nothing is left behind and have a checklist for valuables.

For kit spares and repairs, visit [DofE.org/shopping/spares-repairs](https://DofE.org/shopping/spares-repairs)

Having the right kit can make or break an expedition, particularly in wild country. This guide should be used for all participants preparing for their expedition to ensure that being in the hills and mountains is a safe and enjoyable experience.

**Helen Barnard**

Plas y Brenin Course Director/Instructor

Having good kit can make the difference between a successful and enjoyable expedition and one that is remembered for all the wrong reasons. This guide will help participants and parents choose kit that is right for them.

**Alasdair Offin**

Assessor Network Co-ordinator, Lowther Hills, and former DofE Manager

This guide is a 'must have' for parents – or indeed anyone purchasing expedition equipment for the first time! A common sense approach and full of good advice.

**Mary Harper**

DofE Manager, Dorset

The *Expedition Kit Guide* has been an outstanding success. The information and advice in it is excellent for participants and parents. It has proved to be an excellent resource when training participants and especially useful when training new Leaders, Supervisors and Assessors.

**Norry Barber**

DofE Manager, Kent

## Thank you

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is grateful to our partners below for their support of the publication of this *Expedition Kit Guide*:



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Geared up for the outdoors

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