

SUMMER CAMPING GUIDE BACKPACKER

THE OUTDOORS AT YOUR DOORSTEP

Secret Trails of the Classic Parks

GRAND CANYON • SEQUOIA • GLACIER • OLYMPICS
YELLOWSTONE • TETONS • NORTH CASCADES • ZION

Plan the Perfect Trip

How to pack smarter, carry less,
eat better & nab choice permits

49 TRIPS
NEW HIKES
NEAR YOU
FREE MAPS

152 + SKILLS

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COMFORT
FIND NEW
TRAILS
PREDICT
DEADLY STORMS

Ultimate Wildlife Guide

121 tips, trips
& gear picks





THE PREDICAMENT

Trapped on a Peak

S T A R T

One May day, you and your buddies head out to climb 14,179-foot Mt. Shasta via the least technical route: Avalanche Gulch (11 miles round-trip, 7,282-foot vertical gain). As the sun's first rays blast the snowfields, glare forces you to squint, but your sunglasses are buried in your pack. Your move?

A) Dig out those shades pronto
B) Keep making tracks—your eyes feel fine

Hours later, your eyes feel itchy and full of sand due to blisters forming on the sunburned corneas. (Snow reflects about 80% of UV radiation.) Later, your red, teary, snowblinded eyes swell shut. Your friends try to guide you back down. Flip a coin to see if you'll trip on an unseen obstacle or safely stumble down.

A) Heads
B) Tails

Your eyes thank you—and you'll need them. Thick clouds swirl in, hiding landmarks, and snow blows over the tracks. How do you navigate?

A) Continue in the direction of your original compass bearing
B) Send one person about 100 yards ahead along the original compass bearing, then hike forward to join him—leapfrogging until landmarks appear
C) Retreat down the mountain

Lost, you wander obstinately until, exhausted, you lie down for that long, cold sleep. Three weeks later, Lunchbox the Cadaver Dog sniffs out your frozen corpse.

You glissade (slide on your butt) down the gulch to save time. Do you remove your crampons?

A) Yes
B) No

Your crampons catch on an ice patch, sending you into a wild tumble. Before glissading, did you make sure the runout had no cliffs or rocks?

A) Yes
B) No

Wet, tired, and cold, you make it to your car, and it takes three hot cocoas at Trinity Café, in the town of Mt. Shasta, before you feel human again.

Keeping a bearing is tough without landmarks to navigate by. Leapfrogging creates intermediate "landmarks" so you can self-correct your direction. You finally reach high camp at Lake Helen, but with little water. You start melting snow over your stove. How much white gas fuel did you bring per person per day?

A) 100 ml
B) 250 ml

You cartwheel down the icy slope into a crevasse too deep for rescue. Two years pass before the shifting ice disgorges your mangled body to be found by Lunchbox the Cadaver Dog.

You can't melt enough snow to continue. Better luck next time.

LAKE HELEN

Good call. Melting snow guzzles fuel, so bring about twice the summer hiking amount. You fill your water bottles for the next day. Where do you store them?

A) In your sleeping bag
B) In your tent vestibule

While incorrectly holding your axe (you want it planted for each step), you catch a crampon on your pant cuff and slide. Quick! How do you self-arrest?

A) Sit on your butt, so you can spot obstacles, and jam the pick into the slope
B) Grasp the shaft with one hand and the head with the other, roll onto your belly, and dig the pick into the snow—throwing your weight atop it while kicking your toes into the snow

In the toasty bag, your water doesn't freeze—good thing since you don't have enough time to thaw it or enough fuel to melt more. Setting out, you stow the bottles inside (not outside) your pack, so they don't freeze. Which begs the question: Where is your ice axe?

A) Strapped to your pack
B) Held like a cane in your uphill hand as you plant the spike into the snow with every second step
C) Grasped by both hands and ready to jam into the snow if you slip

At 13,200 feet, you start the final slog up Misery Hill, switchbacking up to conserve energy. (If you can't maintain a conversation, your approach is too steep.) Congrats! You at last summit Shasta and can upload your photos to Facebook.