



Post-camping checklist

1. Packing up

There are two broad approaches to packing up the campsite.

- A. Clean, dry and organise everything as much as possible to make life easier at back at home.
- B. Stuff everything back into bags and the car to worry about when you get home.

Obviously (A) is the better option, but it's not always practical. If the last day of camping is wet, most of us get out as quickly as possible. Often most of us have better things to do on the last day of a camping trip than 'housework'. Most of us aim for (A), but end up somewhere between (A) & (B).

Aim for the following in order of priority:

- Put all dirty or wet clothes in one bag (or several bags) separate from clean stuff. You'll be able to toss those bags in the laundry as soon as you get home. Hopefully throughout the camping trip you've been putting dirty things together, so this should be easy.
- Put any dirty eating and cooking items in a single spot, ready to quickly offload into a dishwasher or whatever when you get home.
- Pack up clothes vaguely in to bags that correspond to their storage place at home.
- Make a note of anything that needs fixing or special cleaning as you go along.
- Sweep out the tent before folding it up. If the tent is damp when packing up, just get it in the bag in whatever way is easiest, as you'll have to dry it out at home. If it's dry, shake it off and fold it properly, checking the number of pegs etc.
- Put any perishable food in one spot, preferably a cool box, so it's easy to offload into the fridge at home. Hopefully there's not too much left by the end of the trip.
- Carefully check around the campsite before you drive off to make sure nothing has been left behind.

2. Everyone fed, watered and (relatively) clean

Plan for dinner on the night you get home:

- Pre-prepare food that can be heated up: or
- Buy dinner on the way home

Look after people before stuff:

- People/kids fed
- Kids washed/bathed

3. Unpack the car

Unless you're travelling with small children, and you arrive back home in reasonable time, you'll probably unpack the car and possibly some of step 4 before step 2, with everyone pitching in to help.



4. Sort everything out, preferably ready to pack & go next time

Start at the top and work your way down the list. Stop & go to bed when you've had enough.

a. Avoid a public health hazard

- Unpack the cool box and any perishable food. If the safety of the food is in doubt, throw it out.
- Clean the cool box. Leave the lid off so it can dry properly.
- Put any rubbish in the outside bin.
- Clean any dirty eating/cooking equipment. Your camping stove may need a scrub.
- Throw dirty tea towels and cleaning clothes in a laundry basket

b. Avoid long term damage to expensive camping equipment

- Air out sleeping bags by turning them inside out in an open area for a while.
- Hopefully you swept out the inside of you tent before you packed up, but if not, shake it out now (an outside job).
- Set up or hang the tent to ensure it's dry before packing away. If it needs cleaning, give it a wipe. Check for and follow up any needed repairs.
- Check the tent still has a decent number of tent pegs. Straighten any tent pegs as needed.
- Completely empty out backpacks and let them air/ dry. Trust us, you don't want to find old food there the next time you pack for a trip.
- If you have wet or muddy walking boots or gaiters, wash them and put them somewhere suitable to dry. If the boots are leather, polish and wax them to keep the leather in good nick. Check the shoelaces and any gaiter straps. If they are worn, make a note to replace them now. It's easier than having to deal with them half way through your next hike.
- Throw all dirty clothes, in with the dirty tea-towels etc. Start washing either the most essential, the dirtiest/wettest or the most valuable first.
- If items are wet but not dirty, hang them out to dry & air.

c. Get ready for the next time

- Once things are clean and dry, pack them away, preferably in one or a few locations ready to grab & go next time if you can.
- Anything you forgot or didn't have this time that you needed? Follow it up now while the memory is still fresh. Maybe store whatever it is with your other camping items for next time.
- Check you have the right number and range of eating and cooking implements and pack them ready for next time. Remember to check there's a box of matches with enough matches.
- What needs to be replaced in your first aid/emergency kit? Restock as needed, and check the expiry on antiseptic, headache and any other medications. It's usually band aids that disappear first.
- Make notes for yourself for things to remember next time.
- Tidy up any remaining stuff in the area you dumped all your camping gear when you arrived home.