



venture out



***Food & menu
planning advice***

Table of Contents

Planning your expedition food.....	3
What are the common mistakes?	3
Your expedition challenge:	4
What else might the want to see?	4
Other planning considerations.....	6
Trangia cooker system	7
Options:	8
Clearing up at night.....	8
Cleanliness & hygiene	8
Ready-made Trekking meals.....	9
DIY ready meals.....	9
Campsite Evening Meal	10
Soup for starter.....	10
Main Course	10
Puddings or Desserts.....	11
Breakfast.....	12
Porridge	12
Breakfast Bars.....	12
Lunch.....	13
Flat breads or flattened bread?	13
Expedition Snack foods to eat while walking.....	14
Menu Planning	15

Planning your expedition food



A common problem for participants on expeditions is knowing what to bring to eat and how much to bring. It seems simple - just bring:

lots of food that you'll find tasty enough to eat during and after a long day of exercise, even in bad weather.

Food that is easy to cook.

Surely that's not hard?

What are the common mistakes?

- bringing foods that take up too much space in your bags – avoid things in pots (pot noodle or pot porridge – bring sachets instead)
- Too much packaging (heavier and has air pockets that fill your bag e.g. crisp packets)
- Too difficult to cook on a camp stove – anything that needs to be stirred as it boils, or needs to be boiled for more than 5 minutes, is a bad idea.
- Thinking you will cook a lunch – not allowed
- Thinking it will be a picnic lunch in the sun – it's usually breezy and dull.
- Bringing food you have not tried to cook at home first: then finding out you don't even like the taste of it. Or don't know how much water to add to cook it.
- Bringing food you think you will like to eat when walking but then when you sit down for lunch or dinner, not feeling like eating it and throw it out.
- Bring food that gets quickly crushed in your bag (bread, baps, croissant, banana)
- Bringing food that goes off quickly if not kept in fridge.

You need to imagine the amount you normally eat on a school day then add at least 1/3 more to get enough calories for each day: essentially you need to eat 4 meals instead of 3. Participants normally eat 3 big meals and lots of snacks.

Long days of exercise, especially on hot days, can suppress your appetite and mean you want to eat less when you need to eat more. Or can leave you wanting to eat something else.

Don't imagine that your team will all be sitting in the sun helping each other to cut up veg and stir food as it fries or simmers. The truth is that you will want something that is quick and easy to heat up (not cook) and easy to wash up afterwards. Especially if it is cold or wet. Your teammates will cook in twos or threes and some will be doing different jobs, like putting up tents.

Planning is the Key to success!

The key to avoiding making all these mistakes is putting a lot of work into your preparation period between your Planning day and your Training Expedition. You can then review your Training Expedition and refine your food and menu choices for your Qualifier.

Your expedition challenge:

Your Qualifying Expedition Assessors check that your expedition meets 20 Conditions set by DofE, one of the conditions states that you must have one 'hot meal every day'. So, what they will be checking for is:

- Evening meals: 3 courses – soup, main meal then dessert.
- A 'packed lunch' with snack bars and trail mix of sweets/chocolates/nuts/dried fruit
- No cooked lunches – too slow to cook and there will be no water source nearby to clean pots. If you want a hot lunch or hot drink at lunchtime bring an *unbreakable* flask and get up earlier to make soup or hot chocolate before breakfast.
- Enough food(calories) for the number of days you are journeying plus some emergency food (snack bars)
- 2 litres of water. You must bring big enough containers and they must already have water in them when you arrive.



What else might the want to see?

On your Expeditions your Trainer or Assessor will sit with you at mealtimes to check your food and make sure you can cook safely. During your Expedition Review you will be asked questions about your food and so you can then improve each time. They will want to see:

- Teamwork: - sharing of jobs and people taking turns to prepare, cook, collect water, clean up, tidy up.
- Safe cooking practices
- Cleanliness and tidiness, food hygiene
- Your meals packed in meal-sized quantities (each person should bring their own even if they are going to cook together – this will mean you do not suffer if someone else forgets to buy or pack something for you)
- That you have tried to get a balance of food groups over the day.
- That your choices show that you are trying to save space and weight, reduce packaging and waste, and have food that is easy to cook and that you will happily eat a lot of.
- That you have not brought glass bottles or jars.
- That you have not brought food that will 'go off' and make you ill.
- That you are eating enough over the whole day – so if you don't like to eat 'big meals' expect to be asked about what else you have been eating during the day. They have to check that you are safe and will not collapse during a walk through remote areas.



Meal planning

You will plan all your own food. Each team gets 2 cookers that have 2 pots. You will cook with 2 or 3 others to each cooker. You will have to be careful of others who have food allergies, dietary preferences or religious observances.

Menu - Peak District Gold D of E Practice Expedition 2011 (example)

Name : _____

Meal	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
Breakfast	Bacon sandwich Nature valley cereal bars Cup of tea with 1 sugar Calories = 519	Porridge with raisins and sugar Nature valley cereal bars Cup of tea with 1 sugar Calories = 445	Porridge with choc chips and sugar Nature valley cereal bars Cup of tea with 1 sugar Calories = 445	Porridge with dried apricots Nature valley cereal bars Cup of tea with 1 sugar Calories = 445
Lunch	Pitta bread with jam and cheese pine nuts Snickers bar Calories = 812	Pitta bread with lemon/lime tuna salted peanuts double decker bar Calories = 923	Pitta bread with lemon/lime tuna cashew nuts Milky Way Calories = 740	digestive biscuits with jam and cheese salted peanuts, Galaxy Caramel Calories = 865
Dinner	Cup-a-soup Instant noodles, powdered sauce, tuna flapjack and sweet mix Hot chocolate Calories = 707	Cup-a-soup Chicken & vegetable curry and rice fruit & nut chocolate bar Hot chocolate Calories = 777	Cup-a-soup Pasta w spicy pepperoni & tomato sauce flapjack Hot chocolate Calories = 835	End of expedition, not needed
Snacks	Kendal mint cake high calorie cookie Snickers, Mars or Bounty dried fruit, nuts and chocolate chip mix Calories = 1396	Kendal mint cake high calorie cookie Snickers, Mars or Bounty dried fruit, nuts and chocolate chip mix Calories = 1396	Kendal mint cake high calorie cookie Snickers, Mars or Bounty dried fruit, nuts and chocolate chip mix Calories = 1396	Kendal mint cake high calorie cookie Snickers, Mars or Bounty dried fruit, nuts and chocolate chip mix Calories = 1396
Calorie intake	3434	3541	3416	2706
Emergency rations	Mars Bar, Kendal mint cake, cuppa soup, hot chocolate : Calories = 956			

Other planning considerations

Bowls & utensils

These can take up a lot of space in your bags we recommend:

Colourful plastic spoon / fork (Spork). Easier to see in grass.

0.75-1L Lunch box for a bowl & plate. And can be lunch box to pack your lunch. Square shapes pack better in your bag.

Medium sized mugs are large enough to make soup and porridge in. Plastic not metal: metal burns your lips when it contains hot liquids.



Water?

Bring water on first morning so you are ready to walk, there are no taps or toilets at the start. Bring:

2x 1L bottles. Clear plastic so you can monitor that you are drinking enough each day.

Or bring 2L drinking bladder for inside your rucksack. This has a drinks tube that come out and makes it easier to drink small amounts more regularly.

At the campsites there are drinking water taps. You will not be drinking water from streams or lakes as it has not been sterilised.



Trangia cooker system



You will be cooking on a Trangia cooking pot system during your expedition. You are shown one of these on the Planning Day at school to help you realise how difficult they are to cook with and allow you to make better decisions about what meal to plan.

Don't worry, your Trainer will show you how to use them safely on your Training Expedition. You will be checked again and helped on your Qualifier. Your trainer will examine the foods you have brought and discuss any improvements you could make before your Qualifier.

Trangia Points

- Put the strap around gas canister for safe keeping.
- Trangias are a soft aluminium and if it's in your rucksack don't sit on it as it will crush the pots.
- Trangia pots can be burnt through. **Always** put liquid in the pan before you put it on the stove.
- Lighting Trangia – take wind shield off first!!!!
- Using the frying pan as a lid will make your food heat faster. It goes on 'upside down' so that you can use the handle.
- Safe positioning
 - Your stove needs to be at least 3m from your tent when lit.
 - Never put it on a table and sit under – if it is knocked over it will scald your legs.

Cooking on a Trangia

Common problems on expeditions are:

- Group all decide to cook individually this takes too long.
- Over-filling pans with sauce that needs stirring – it bubbles over or is stirred over the sides and the pot has burnt food on the bottom and sides. Stirring with a metal spoon will not stop food sticking to bottom in the same way a wooden spoon/spatula can.

- Numerous boil in the bags can go in together, how to put the lid on properly ('upside down' with rim upwards – then stack another pot on top to start warming up.)
- Use sachets for porridge or soups that can be put in a mug and boiling water added.

Limitations of Trangias

You will get one stove between 3-4 people. (2 per team)

Each stove has 2 pots. You can't have more stoves as they won't fit in your bags and you need to keep weight down.

Trangias are given to you clean and we check them at the end to make you give them back clean. You do not go home until they are clean.

- Food easily burns – this happens when: burner is too hot / food is not watery.
- Anything that has to be stirred will stick to the bottom of the pan and burn.
- They are difficult to clean
- They are best if you only plan to boil water and then add the boiling water to your food.
- They boil over if they are too full or you put hot chocolate powder in them.
- No marshmallows on cooker – they fall onto the burner and are impossible to clean off.
- Making hot chocolate – in the mug not the pot as it boils over.

Options:

- Watery foods – pasta/noodle/rice then pour sauce on and turn off.
- Boil in the bag meal pouches
- Dehydrated meal pouches
- Food in a cup then add water – porridge / soups / hot choc / cous cous.



Clearing up at night

All pots, plates and food must be cleaned and put inside the porch of your tent at night. Bring food inside tent. Rubbish bags come inside tent or taken to bin. This is because it attracts animals at night that will come and tear into packaging, make a mess, eat your food and take things away.

We've had badgers trying to get into tents at night, squirrels eating their way into tents and eating snacks. We've even had a badger steal away a jacket that had trail mix in the pocket. The jacket had been left outside at night and couldn't be found in the morning.

Cleanliness & hygiene

Pots are cleaned and checked before leaving each morning – this is to stop bacteria growing on them during the day. The pots should then be washed again before you cook in them, just to be safer.

Ready-made Trekking meals

2 types Boil in the Bag and Dehydrated meals:

1. Boil in the Bag are pouches of wet food that is already cooked. The pouch is just simmered in boiling water to heat it.
2. Dehydrated meals are cooked food that is then dried to a powder and sealed in a pouch. You boil water, add it to the pouch, stir it and leave it to soak up the water.

Both of these can be expensive (£6-9 per pouch). The Boil in the bag are cheaper because there is less steps to make it and there is actually less food (calories) in them.

The Dehydrated pouches are a little lighter than the wet pouches that contain a lot of water. So when you rehydrate the dehydrated pouches you get a more satisfying amount of food and calories. The Dehydrated meals can be chosen in different levels of calories

Both of these types of pouches have breakfasts, main meals and desert options.

Wet pouches are OK if you are only doing one night, maybe two nights but are too heavy to be using for Gold or longer.

It is a common mistake for participants to bring a meal they have not tried at home only to find that they think it is disgusting when they first try it on expedition. Please try different ones before you come to find one you like. Some are really tasty and some are less so, or are more spicy than you might have imagined.



DIY ready meals

It is cheaper to make your own 'ready made' meal from common items in supermarkets. You will also get more food (calories) that way.

E.g. Rice in microwave pouch with sauce pouch and some protein (tuna, spiced sausage, vegetarian sausage, chick pea or lentil dahl)

Many supermarkets now do sauce pouches with chickpeas or lentils already in the sauce – these are more filling and give you more protein.



Campsite Evening Meal

This should provide 50% of your day's calorie requirement.

This meal must be cooked as part of your assessment. Here are just **some** ideas....

Soup for starter – you need to drink lots of fluids after a day out. It will help you sleep better, recover better and feel better the next day.

My favourite are Ainsley Harriet range of spicy cup soups.

Cup soups can be drunk whilst you are preparing the next course.



Main Course

When buying rice or pasta for your expedition check the cooking time on the back of the packet. Quick cook rice in sachets & the 3 minute pastas are the most economical when camping.

Microwave rice in a pouch can be heated in a pot of water then opened.

Dried pasta meals, rice meals, Super Noodles perhaps add frankfurters or sliced pepperoni sausage...



Puddings or Desserts

Hot chocolate and bars are OK be careful with hot chocolate – only mix in mug not pan – it boils over and burns on the outside of the pot.

The easiest pudding to take on an expedition is the instant mix type. Birds Instant custard or Birds Semolina. Other makes available just add boiling water to the mix and stir. Simple and filling.

Cake bars and custard...



And finally, what about a **BED-TIME DRINK?**

Drinking chocolate sachets to be made with hot water.



Breakfast

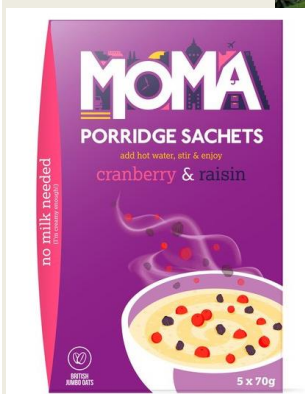
One of the 20 Conditions of Qualifying Expeditions is that you have a hot meal each day. So on the last day you will need to have a hot breakfast. You may not want to plan a hot breakfast on the other days but most students appreciate at least a hot drink. Mornings can be very cold even in Summer (as cold as your fridge).

You also sweat out at least 1L of fluid over-night so you definitely need to drink at breakfast time to help you digest and absorb your food and to help you feel better when you start to walk. It is common for participants to wake up with a headache due to dehydration during the night.

Breakfast should provide around 20% of your day's calorie requirement. Here are just **some** ideas....

Croissants, brioche buns, crepes (all are high in energy and are still nice if squashed)

Boil in the bag beans or full breakfast (heavy but good for a savoury breakfast)



Porridge (sachets are better than pots to save space)

My favourite are Moma porridge sachets as they already contain dried milk and so can just be made in a mug. This means I don't have to dirty a pot in the morning (or clean it).

I love that these are sachets, not pots as pots are mainly empty and take up too much space in my bag. I stuff the sachets inside my mug when I'm packing my bag.

I need 2 sachets each morning. Tesco sell these or you can buy them on Amazon.

Breakfast Bars

There are many types of breakfast bars sold in supermarkets, often in the same aisle as breakfast cereals, or maybe near biscuit aisle. I prefer ones high in oats as they release energy more slowly and don't give me a sugar spike (which would make me hungry quickly afterwards when my insulin peaks). But some people just need to find the one that they find they can eat in the morning when they are cold, hungry and groggy. Best to have a coffee or tea with. If you buy a box then you can have the others for snacks later.

Lunch

You cannot plan to cook or use the Trangia to heat water for lunch – it takes too long, it may be raining and windy, and there may not be anywhere to clean the pots.

This should provide around 30% of your day's calorie requirement.

We recommend that you bring a packed lunch on your first day. Then on the other day(s) here are just **some** ideas....

Pitta bread /tortilla wraps with cheese or banana or tuna in a sachet or peanut butter

Sandwiches can be made in the morning but need to have lunch box.



malt loaf and other fruited breads ...



Ready-to-eat meals with crackers or oat cakes.....



Flat breads or flattened bread?

Flat breads don't get squashed and destroyed in your rucksack. They also stay fresh longer.



Expedition Snack foods to eat while walking

Small tube of hand sanitiser is useful to be kept with your lunch/snacks. Use this before you touch food and put it in your mouth, especially after you go to the toilet.

Snacks are good while doing the expedition, they help to keep energy levels high, especially when you are carrying a heavy pack over rough terrain. Trail mixes containing nuts, raisins and dried fruits provide a quick energy boost.

Don't forget to drink plenty of water, if you become dehydrated this will make you feel tired. You should normally drink 1½ liters of water a day but when walking you should drink more.

Chocolate bars are a good source of energy

Tracker bars or muesli type bars are good

Nuts and dried fruits are also a good source of energy

Nuts, raisins, chocolate, breakfast bars etc.



Trail mixes containing nuts, raisins & dried fruits provide a quick energy boost.



Menu Planning

There are a few things to consider when menu planning. As usual some of these factors conflict with each other so it's up to you to consider what is best for you and your team.

Weight.

You have to carry everything you eat. It's obviously in your best interests to make it as light as possible.

Don't carry tins or glass jars.

Boil in the bag is heavier than dehydrated food.

Think about removing excess packaging but be careful not to removing cooking instructions that you might need later.

Speed and ease of preparation.

If the weather is nice you may want to spend a bit of time relaxing at the campsite and cooking. If, however, it has been raining all day the last thing you are going to want to do is sit outside in the rain the cook complicated recipes.

Boil in the bag may be heavier than dried food but its faster to cook and easy to prepare. And easier/quicker to clean the pots.

If you are buying pasta choose quick cook varieties, it will save you time and fuel.

Practise what you are going to cook at home on the hob.

Tastiness and variety.

You need your diet to be as varied as possible as eating the same thing everyday can become really dull. Try and get some fresh food in on day one. E.g. bring fruit for day 1.

Durability and longevity.

You need food that will not be ruined or taste bad if they are squashed and won't leak out of any containers. If you have perishables make sure you plan to eat them early and that you have non-perishables for later on in the expedition.

Calorific intake.

On expedition you will burn more calories than usual. You should be aiming to eat something in the region of 3500 calories per day.

When you get to the campsite.

When you get to the campsite you want to eat as soon as possible. Have a snack as soon as you stop. Energy is replenished in the muscles much more effectively straight after exercise. Your aim should be, snack, tent up, dinner.

Emergency rations.

Don't eat all your food on the last day. You need to keep some back in case of an emergency.