

## Title:

Budget Backpacking

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## Summary:

One of the least expensive, yet most fulfilling, types of vacations is the camping and backpacking trip. Hiking through the back country at one of the nation's magnificent national parks, or just wandering around the wilderness of a state park closer to home, can be a great way to commune with nature, and a wonderful way for families to get away and enjoy being together.

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## Article Body:

One of the least expensive, yet most fulfilling, types of vacations is the camping and backpacking trip. Hiking through the back country at one of the nation's magnificent national parks, or just wandering around the wilderness of a state park closer to home, can be a great way to commune with nature, and a wonderful way for families to get away and enjoy being together.

One of the things that makes backpacking so attractive to budget minded trailers is the low cost it takes to get started. Little is needed other than a good quality backpack, a top quality tent and maybe a camp stove or similar appliance. Other than that, the main thing to pack is your sense of spirit and adventure. This article provides some valuable tips for the first time backpacker on a budget.

Invest in a good quality hiking map or guide and get to know the area you will be traveling to. Pay careful attention to the notes and precautions and try your best to match the terrain to your level of ability and experience. When estimating the time it will take to hike to your destination, always overestimate.

Be sure to obtain all necessary permits, and reserve the campsite you want, in advance of your trip. It is not unusual for campsites to sell out, particularly

in popular national park destinations.

Always check local regulations regarding campfires, smoking, cleanup, etc. to avoid paying fines.

Research the weather patterns of the area and always be prepared for the worst weather. Always pack some sort of rain gear.

Dress appropriately, in layered clothing, no matter what time of year. Be sure to pack clothing that will allow you to be prepared for sudden changes in temperature or weather. It is best to wear breathable materials, such as polypropylene or wool, to allow perspiration and moisture to be wicked away quickly.

Learn how to operate your equipment before you hit the trail. It is important, for instance, to set up your tent at least once or twice at home. Get familiar with how everything goes together. Learn how to operate your camp stove before you leave home.

Determine how much weight you can comfortably carry, and pack appropriately. Many first time backpackers try to take too much gear, and end up unable to carry that gear during the trip. The weight of the backpack should be no more than one quarter of your weight, and it is best to take only what you need.

Pack more food than you think you will need. Hikers and backpackers burn far more calories than the average person, so be sure to eat sufficient amounts of high quality foods while on your journey. The best foods to pack are those that are high in carbohydrates, proteins and fats. These high quality backpacking foods include peanut butter, instant oatmeal, trail mix, pasta and dried fruit.

Learn where the water sources are on the trail and be sure to keep your water bottles filled in case the next source of water is farther away than anticipated. It is important to drink plenty of water when backpacking, even when the weather is cool.

Always cook your evening meal before it gets too dark. Extra food should always be stored in a bag and hung from a tree limb at night to protect it from local wildlife. Raccoons, skunks and bears have learned to look at backpackers, hikers and campers as easy sources of free meals.

Always pack a first aid kit and be prepared with some basic first aid training. Carry a GPS system or satellite phone if you will be traveling far into the back country, and leave a schedule with the local trail ranger and with friends at

home .