

Title: 10 Tips for Staying Cool While You're Camping

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Social Media Blurb: Not only is camping more enjoyable when you don't feel like you're roasting all day and all night, being proactive about keeping as cool as possible in hot summer weather and warm climates also helps you avoid heat exhaustion and heat stroke, which can be deadly. Follow the tips below and you'll have a camping trip that's both safer and more fun.

Article Body:

This past weekend, I went camping with three of my sisters. The weather was hot, humid and kind of miserable - 90 degrees in the shade during the day with temperatures barely dropping into the low 70's at night. We had a battered old pop up camper and a campsite with no electricity and very little shade. Luckily we've been camping together for almost 20 years and we've come up with some pretty effective ways to beat the heat.

Not only is camping more enjoyable when you don't feel like you're roasting all day and all night, being proactive about keeping as cool as possible in hot summer weather also helps you avoid heat exhaustion and heat stroke, which can be deadly

(<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/heat-exhaustion/symptoms-causes/syc-20373250>). Follow the tips below and you'll have a camping trip that's both safer and more fun.

1. Choose Your Equipment Wisely

If you're purchasing your first tent or looking to replace an existing tent, look for a light colored tent that will reflect, rather than absorb, the sun's rays. Choose a tent with plenty of options, like a mostly mesh inner tent with a removable rain fly and plenty of screened windows that can be zipped open to catch a breeze.



<https://unsplash.com/photos/eDgUyGu93Yw>

My ancient pop up camper is off white with lots of screened windows that zip open, a screen door with a slide up window and a roof vent. We kept the windows and the vent open all weekend long to let in what little breeze there was and to let our built up body heat escape.

2. Location, Location, Location

If you know when you're planning your trip that it's likely to be hot, hot, hot while you're camping, choose a location near water, if at all possible. Wooded areas and campgrounds with nearby caves are also ideal places to camp in hot weather.

Lakes, rivers, streams and ponds are great places to cool off on hot days. Wooded areas provide shade for your tent and cooler temperatures than spaces that are wide open to the sun. Caves are often a temperate 50 to 70 degrees year round, depending on location, and can make an excellent place to spend a few hours exploring on a really hot day.



<https://unsplash.com/search/photos/cave>

3. Smart Set Up

If your campsite provides any shade at all, try to place your tent or camper where it will

be shaded in the morning and afternoon. This will help keep your inside space cool during the hottest part of the day.



<https://unsplash.com/photos/YgabhetF-O8>

4. BYO Shade

If lack of shade is an issue at your chosen camping site, providing your own is always an option. If you've got room, canopies or roofed screen tents provide portable shade that can be moved around your site as needed.

Don't have the packing space or money for a canopy? A tarp and some rope make a great DIY canopy. String one up over your picnic table, camping chairs or hammock for a cooler place to eat or relax.



<https://unsplash.com/photos/gef3XMPohpQ>

5. **BYO Breeze**

Even in the hottest weather, a breeze helps keep you cool. Unfortunately, Mother Nature doesn't always cooperate. If you don't have an electric camping site or an RV with a generator, you can always bring a battery operated or solar powered fan. These are especially useful if your tent is stifling at night.

6. **Ice, Ice Baby**



<https://unsplash.com/photos/3tgUAoUDhjM>

If at all possible, bring one or more coolers packed with plenty of ice. Keeping perishable food cold is essential to avoid food poisoning and eating and drinking cold things will help keep your body temperature down. Deli meat, sliced cheese and sausage, pasta salads and cut up fruit and vegetables help make excellent meals that don't require starting a fire in order to eat.

7. **Stay Hydrated**

It's essential to keep your body properly hydrated when you're in the heat for an

extended period of time. Make sure to drink plenty of water. If you're sweating a lot, you also need to replenish your electrolytes.

You can make your own electrolyte drink (<https://wellnessmama.com/2575/natural-sports-drink/>) or bring electrolyte packets that can be added to water, juice or iced tea. I brought several packets of Liquid IV this weekend, just in case, and we went through all but one of them trying to stay properly hydrated.

8. What To Wear

While "as little as possible" might sound like the right answer, it's essential to keep covered to avoid sunburn. Loose, lightweight clothing in light colors will keep you both covered and as cool as possible.

Although a hat or a bandana may make your head sweat, keeping the sun off your head, face and neck can really be helpful too. As an added bonus, wetting your hat or bandana with cold water before putting it on will definitely help keep you cool.



<https://images.unsplash.com/photo-1495544271064-3764df937987?ixlib=rb-1.2.1&ixid=eyJhcnBfaWQiOjE5MDd9&auto=format&fit=crop&w=500&q=60>

And of course, apply sunscreen as necessary. Sunburn isn't only a health hazard, it also

keeps your body temperature warmer than it needs to be.

9. Take It Easy

Don't try to do too much during the hottest part of the day. Save hikes and other high energy activities for early mornings and late evenings. If you're lucky enough to be camping near water, take full advantage. Wade, swim, boat or float all afternoon. There's more likely to be a breeze on the water and getting wet will help you cool off.



Photo Credit: Hannah Disch <https://hannahdisch.com/>

We were lucky enough to spend four hours cruising the lake on a pontoon boat this past Saturday afternoon and nothing could have felt better. We swam and floated near the boat and when we got tired of that, we took a tour of the lake at a fast enough speed to generate a stiff breeze. Heaven on a hot day!



Photo Credit: Hannah Disch <https://hannahdisch.com/>

No natural water feature nearby? An inflatable pool filled with cool water at your campsite is nothing to sneeze at when the temperature's in the 90's. Put it under your canopy or tarp and spend the afternoon lounging in the water with a nice cold drink in hand.

10. Sweet Dreams

Sleep can be hard to come by when you're hot and sweaty. If you've got access to a shower, take a nice cold one before bed. If not, a few ice cubes or a wet bandana on your pulse points (wrists, neck and armpits) can do the trick.

Snuggling up next to a partner can be nice and cozy for cool weather camping, but try to avoid it when it's hot out. Sleep on top of your sleeping bag rather than inside, and bring a sheet or a lightweight blanket if you're the type of person who can't sleep without any covers at all.

Got a hammock? Ditch the tent altogether, string your hammock up high enough to catch

a breeze and sleep there.



Photo Credit: Hannah Disch <https://hannahdisch.com/>

Although hot weather may not provide your ideal camping conditions, there's no reason to cancel your trip when there's so many great ways to keep cool even without the air conditioned comforts of home.