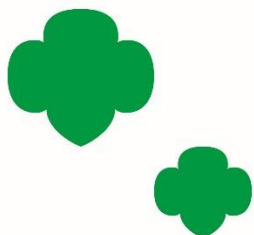




# Know Before You Go: State Parks





## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I WANT TO VISIT A STATE PARK?

First, review *A Girl Scout Guide to Pennsylvania State Parks*. It has lots of useful information about visiting and staying at state parks.

Next, research which park you want to go to! You can go online to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resource's [Find a Park resource](#) or use Girl Scouts of Western Pennsylvania's [state park map](#) to decide which park you want to visit.

Here's a list of all the state parks in western Pennsylvania:

- [Allegheny Islands State Park](#)
- [Clear Creek State Park](#)
- [Cook Forest State Park](#)
- [Erie Bluffs State Park](#)
- [Hillman State Park](#)
- [Jennings Environmental Education Center](#)
- [Keystone State Park](#)
- [Kooser State Park](#)
- [Laurel Hill State Park](#)
- [Laurel Mountain State Park](#)
- [Laurel Ridge State Park](#)  
([Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail](#))
- [Laurel Summit State Park](#)
- [Linn Run State Park](#)
- [Maurice K. Goddard State Park](#)
- [McConnells Mill State Park](#)
- [Moraine State Park](#)
- [Ohiopyle State Park](#)
- [Oil Creek State Park](#)
- [Point State Park](#)
- [Presque Isle State Park](#)
- [Pymatuning State Park](#)
- [Raccoon Creek State Park](#)
- [Ryerson Station State Park](#)
- [Yellow Creek State Park](#)

Here are a few things to keep in mind when planning your trip to a state park:

- Involve girls in the planning process! Maybe they want to go to a specific park or do a particular activity. Give them the freedom and input to plan as much of the trip as is appropriate.
- If you're spending the night, be sure to reserve a site ahead of time.
- Bring any required forms, both for DCNR and Girl Scouts. Remember, Pennsylvania state parks do not require insurance, but you still need trip and high risk forms from GSWPA.
- Get trained – at least one approved volunteer on the trip should have attended Outdoor Skills Training through GSWPA, and at least one approved volunteer should be CPR/First Aid trained.
- Review [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) for any activities you want to do.
- Keep ratio.



## WHERE TO STAY

There are three basic options for staying overnight in a state park:

- **Camping:** If you bring your shelter (tent, RV, trailer)

Types of campgrounds:

- full service (flush toilets, showers, sewer, water, electric, picnic table, fire ring)
- modern (flush toilets, showers, picnic table, fire ring)
- rustic (vault toilets, picnic table, fire ring)
- modern/rustic (modern in warmer months, rustic in colder months)
- multi-site (allows up to 15 people, only at Keystone and Ohio State Parks)
- walk-in (picnic table, fire ring, reached by a short walk)
- backpacking/adirondack shelters (only at Laurel Ridge, Ohio State Parks, Moraine, Oil Creek, and Raccoon Creek State Parks)
- river camping (only at Clear Creek State Park)
- equestrian camping (only at Kettle Creek and Promised Land State Parks)
- walled tents (pre-built platforms, electricity)



- **Lodging:** If state parks provides the shelter

Types of lodging:

- camping cottages (electric outlets, porch)
- deluxe cottages (stove, microwave, fridge, table, chairs, electric heat/outlets, fire ring, picnic table, adjacent water pump)
- yurts (stove, fridge, table, chairs, electric heat/outlets, fire ring, picnic table, nearby water pump)
- modern cabins (electric heat, restroom with shower, full kitchen, fire ring, picnic table)
- rustic cabins (fridge, fireplace/woodstove/gas heater, stove, outdoor restroom)
- unique houses (modern conveniences, varies between houses, only at certain locations)

- **Organized Group Tenting/Cabin Camps:** If you plan to bring an organized group (such as a large group of Girl Scouts)

Locations of group cabin camps:

- Laurel Hill (124-150 people)
- Raccoon Creek (30-130 people)
- Blue Knob (100 people)
- French Creek (68-135 people)
- Hickory Run (124-149 people)





## **RESERVATIONS**

Make an online reservation or call 888-PA-PARKS (888-727-2757), Monday to Saturday, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. except on the Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day holidays.

Most campsites in Pennsylvania state parks can be reserved 11 months in advance to noon of the day of arrival. To receive a confirmed reservation, full payment must be received within ten days of making the reservation.

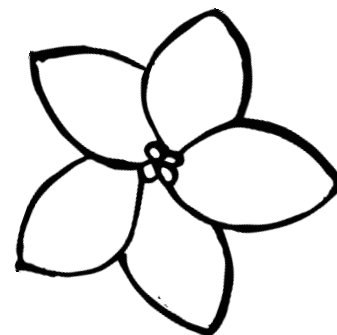
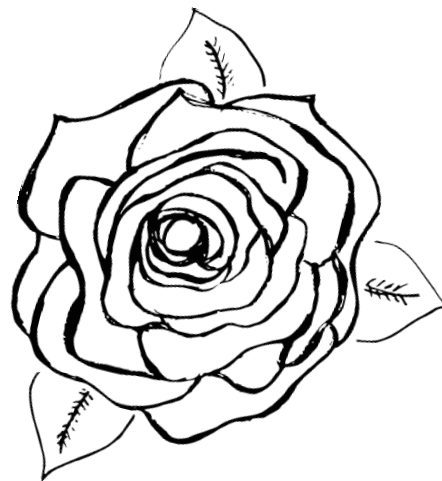
### ***Changes***

Changes to a reservation must be made by calling the Pennsylvania State Parks Reservation Call Center at 888-PA-PARKS (888-727-2757), Monday through Saturday, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. There is a \$10 fee assessed for all changes made to a reservation, except adding nights to the reservation.

### ***Cancellations***

Cancellations can be made via the call center or website. Cancellations made up to the close of business seven days prior to your scheduled arrival date will incur a \$10 cancellation fee per reservation. If you cancel six days or less prior to the arrival date, you will forfeit the first night's fee or \$75, whichever is the lesser amount.

Any cancellation or change on the day of arrival must be made through the state park.





## CAMPING SUPPLIES

When we asked park rangers what they wished every Girl Scout would know, they said knowing what to bring would be their top priority. They suggest you print this list then check-off each item as you pack it for your camping trip to a Pennsylvania State Park. You may want to bring more stuff or less stuff, but this is a pretty complete listing for a camping trip. **Remember, state parks aren't like Girl Scout camps - equipment isn't there waiting for you and isn't prepped for your use.** You're responsible for bringing everything you will need on your trip.

### Reservations

- Make reservations online or call toll free 888-PA-PARKS (888-727-2757) up to 11 months ahead of arrival date. To ensure that you get a campsite, reserve in advance.

### Packing

- backpack, daypack, fanny pack
- bags - tent bag, grocery bags, etc.
- boxes, if needed
- cooler and ice

### Lighting - Check batteries!

- flashlight/lantern
- spare batteries/bulbs/fuels

### Medical

- sunscreen
- insect repellent
- First Aid kit
- prescription medications

### Clothing

Dress for the season. Bring warm clothes in case the weather turns cold. Don't forget these items:

- hat and sunglasses to block the sun
- jacket
- rain gear/poncho
- shower shoes
- hiking boots
- swim suit

### Shelter/Bedding

- tent and extra tent stakes
- tent rain tarp
- plastic ground cloth for under the tent
- sleeping bag
- sleeping pad/mattress and inflator
- pillow and extra blanket

### Cleaning & Personal Items

- shampoo and bar soap (biodegradable)
- washcloth and towel
- toothbrush and toothpaste (biodegradable)
- comb or hair brush
- toilet paper
- case to carry above items to the shower

### Equipment

- ax (do not cut any living or standing trees)
- bow saw
- extension cord for campsites with electricity
- duct tape and/or electrical tape
- hammer for pounding in tent pegs
- rope
- clothesline and clothes pins
- whiskbroom to clean table and tent site
- pliers and screwdriver set
- pocket knife
- compass and area map

### **Miscellaneous**

- cell phone and portable/car charger
- camera and batteries/charger
- money, credit card, ID
- books, radio, cards, games, toys, etc.
- sports equipment
- fishing pole and gear (+ license & bait!)
- beach/camping chairs
- citronella candles
- binoculars
- field guides for identifying wildlife/plants

### **Cooking**

- stove with fuel or charcoal
- matches (preferably water proof)
- newspapers and/or fire starters
- firewood
- frying pan with lid
- pot or sauce pan with lid
- cooking skewers (for hot dogs, marshmallows, etc.)
- can opener
- coffee maker & filters
- pot holders/oven mitts

### **Dishes**

- plates, mugs, cups
- knives, forks, spoons
- kitchen knife and cutting board
- mixing bowls and spoons
- spatula, tongs, serving utensils
- scrub pad
- basins for washing dishes
- water jug
- 2 water bottles per person to take hiking

### **Consumables**

- paper towels, napkins
- trash bags, plastic bags
- aluminum foil
- dish soap (biodegradable)

### **Food & Drink**

Bring whatever food you wish, but remember that you will have limited space for food that needs to be refrigerated.

Make sure that you have adequate cooking dishes and utensils to prepare what food you bring.

Outdoor appetites are usually large, so be prepared.

Be sure to store food in a safe location to keep animals from your food. Keep food in a car trunk, or hang your food between two trees.

Don't forget condiments!

In addition to these items recommended by DCNR, GSWPA wants to remind you to bring and/or complete the following:

- Health History Forms
- Permission Slips
- Trip and High Risk Forms

**Have a safe and enjoyable camping experience!**

## RULES AND REGULATIONS



- Unless otherwise posted, state parks are open to the public daily from sunrise until sunset.
- Obey all posted placards, signs, and instructions from DCNR employees.
- Do not damage DCNR signs, structures, facilities, or equipment.
- If you forget anything in the state park for more than 24 hours, it may get collected by DCNR and placed in storage. Property may be subject to disposal.
- Obey all posted speed limits. Where there is none, drive no faster than 25 miles per hour.
- If your car is parked outside of a designated parking area, you may get ticketed.
- Do not damage or remove natural resources (including living or dead plants, rocks, minerals, natural objects, and natural materials) or historical/archeological objects in any way or plant anything in the park.
- You can gather reasonable amounts of edible fruits, nuts, berries, and fungi, as well as dead or down wood, but only for use within the park.
- Only start fires in designated fire areas such as fireplaces, grills, stoves, or fire rings. Only dispose of charcoal in designated areas. *Never leave a fire unattended.*
- Do not hold any kind of organized event (such as an exhibition or competition), fundraise, or distribute printed materials without pre-approval from DCNR.
- Only camp in designated camping areas. Wilderness camping is not permitted.
- Only dispose of trash in designated receptacles. Do not litter.
- Firecrackers, explosives, and chainsaw usage are not allowed.
- Do not feed wildlife. Do not release animals into the wild.
- Do not store or leave food in a manner that is likely to attract wildlife. Store your food responsibly.
- Do not bring, sell, or consume alcoholic beverages.
- Do not cause noise that may annoy or disturb others.
- Do not use drinking fountains, springs, lakes, or waterways for washing purposes.
- Never swim outside of a designated swimming area or outside of its posted hours.
- Underwater breathing apparatuses and snorkels are not allowed.
- Glass or anything breakable are not allowed at designated swimming areas.
- Running-entry diving, diving from someone's shoulders, and diving head-first where the water is 5 feet deep or less is not allowed.
- Using buoyant devices (other than U.S. Coast Guard approved PFDs) or engaging in water-based sports are not allowed unless posted otherwise or approved by an on-duty lifeguard.
- Use of non-watercraft devices (e.g. inner tubes, body boards) is permitted. A US Coast Guard approved PFD must be worn by children under 12 in streams and rivers and by all persons in boating areas.

**Individual parks may have more rules regarding park-specific activities or facilities.**