



Sleeping Bag Buying Tips

One)

Your first choice with a sleeping bag is whether to go for a 'synthetic' or a 'down' filling? Down is very expensive, and really only needed for extreme trekking. It also does not perform well once wet and is difficult to clean and maintain. Some synthetic fibres can now outperform down for both warmth and compactness, they will dry out quickly and continue to perform even when wet. These days synthetic bags can be used around the home *or* up the mountain.

Two)

The next thing to consider is what the temperature will generally be at night when you're using the sleeping bag. Bags are comfort rated in degrees Celcius. You can interpret this in the following way; if you have a 3°C sleeping bag and the temperature drops to 3°C outside, your body will be at an optimal comfort level inside the bag (it's generally agreed that this is 38°C). However, once the temperature outside drops below 3°C your body temperature will start to dramatically cool down causing discomfort.

Three)

It is important to remember that different people have different metabolisms, which will effect how comfortable they are in bags of a given temperature rating. Most women, for example, feel the cold a lot more than men, and therefore it is recommended that they buy a sleeping bad at least 3°C lower than the temperature rating they require.

Four)

Bags come in different shapes and sizes, some designed for a snug fit, for extra warmth, keeping air trapped in and close to your body; 'mummy shaped'. Some are designed to be spacious and roomy for a more bed-like feel; 'rectangular'. Then there is a hybrid version commonly referred to as 'semi-rectangular'.

Handy Care Tip)

When packing your sleeping bag up, don't roll it up neatly; always stuff it into the carry bag. It is better for the loft of the fibres. Also if you are going to store your sleeping bag for a long period of time, it is advisable to take the sleeping bag out of the carry sack and store it hanging in your cupboard.



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