

Be Prepared.

for Philmont

Getting You and Your Crew
Ready for Philmont

Matt O'Brien



9 Jan 2022

The Philmont Experience

- Philmont enjoys a hallowed place in Boy Scout lore because it's a once-in-a-lifetime experience (no matter how many times you have been there)
- There are three parts to the Philmont experience:
 - The Preparation
 - The Trip
 - The Memories, Pictures and Stories
- Preparation is the foundation to build excitement and the skills for success—enjoy all three parts!



Physical Fitness Goals

Part 1: The Foundation

- **Strength** – Hike 8 – 10 miles with a full pack
- **Endurance** – Hike 8 – 10 miles a day with a full pack—
for 8 – 10 days
- **Resilience** – Remain “physically strong” and “mentally
awake” when that Irishman Murphy makes
an appearance

The best way to take care of soldiers was to build standards and procedures into a routine until predictable things worked smoothly. That gave leaders the ability to focus on the unpredictable as needed.

General Stanley McChrystal



Why Shakedown Hikes / Campouts?

- Shakedown hikes / campouts provide three key opportunities for the crew:
 - Mechanics: learn and master basic skills for Philmont (the Philmont Way) in the field
 - Melding: your crew for Philmont is often a mix of patrols—learn to work together as a team
 - Mileage: Scouts (and many adults) lack multi-day long mileage hiking with packs at altitude

Part 2: Putting It All Together



Mechanics: The Philmont Way

- Why the Philmont Way? Why not My Way?
 - Scale: 3,500 people in the backcountry at any one time
 - Safety: Isolated mountain wilderness ranging from 6,500' to 12,441' in elevation over trails that are steep and rocky, summer temperatures from 30° to 100°, with frequent (and sometimes severe) thunderstorms
 - Sustainability: For your children's children's children...
- Use shakedown in a safe-to-fail environment to practice: navigation, hiking etiquette, stream crossings, setting up camp, Bear-muda triangle, set-up dining fly, sump / clean-up, breaking camp
- Use shakedown to fulfill merit badge / conservation reqmts. (50-Miler Award)

Links to YouTube videos for many of these skills (think EDGE) are in the Philmont Shakedown Guide; or go to <https://www.philmontscoutranch.org/philmont-prep-seminars/>

Melding: Crew Leadership Positions

- Crew Leader (Youth)
 - Selected prior to first shakedown hike / campout
 - Leads by example: servant leadership
 - Key skills: positivity, ability to identify and resolve conflict
- Chaplain's Aide (Youth)
 - Daily devotional / Philmont grace
 - Roses, Thorns and Buds
 - Consider 12 points of Scout Law to discuss behavior (good and bad)
- Wilderness Pledge Guia (Guide) (Youth)
 - Philmont Wilderness Pledge and Leave No Trace
 - American Outdoor Code
- Lead Advisor (Adult)
 - Coach, mentor and support youth leaders
 - Safety and well-being of each crew member

Through good Scout camping, I pledge to preserve the beauty and splendor of the Philmont wilderness. I commit myself to:

1. An absence of litter and graffiti
2. Respect for wildlife
3. Conservation and proper use of water
4. Respect for trails and trail signs
5. Proper use of campsites



Crew Dynamics

- Forming, Storming, Norming and Performing model
- A compelling argument for shakedown: work out initial challenges at home, not Philmont
- Use Chaplain's Aide (working with Crew Leader) to guide crew through stages
 - Roses, Thorns and Buds
 - 12 points of Scout Law



Crew Duty Roster

- The duty roster assigns responsibilities prior to the shakedown hike / campout

		Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6
Cooking	Lead	Eric	Colin	Caleb	Matt	Jason	Katie
	Assistant	Colin	Caleb	Matt	Jason	Katie	Kyle
Cleaning	Lead	Caleb	Matt	Jason	Katie	Kyle	John
	Assistant	Matt	Jason	Katie	Kyle	John	Baden
Bear Bags	Lead	Jason	Katie	Kyle	John	Baden	Eric
	Assistant	Katie	Kyle	John	Baden	Eric	Colin
Water/Fire	Lead	Kyle	John	Baden	Eric	Colin	Caleb
	Assistant	John	Baden	Eric	Colin	Caleb	Matt
Navigator		Baden	Eric	Colin	Caleb	Matt	Jason

Tailor for 3-day backpacking shakedown campout



Mileage: Are We There Yet?

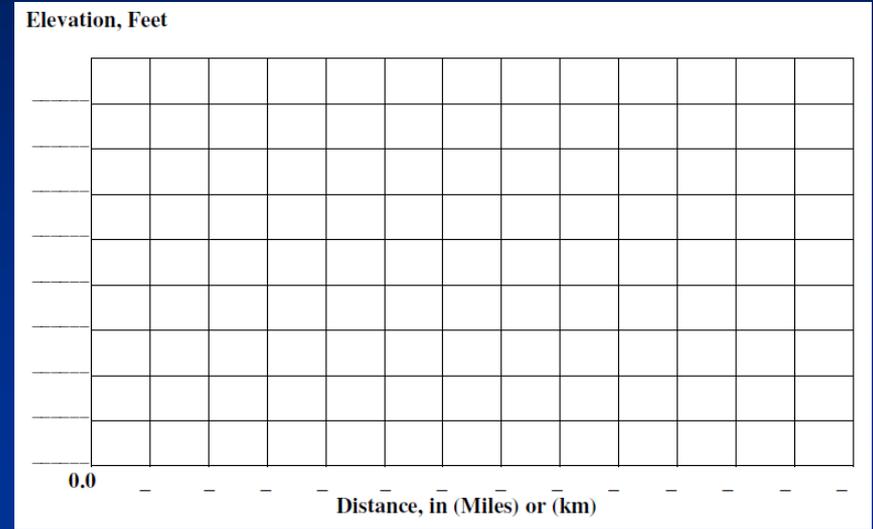
- How long will it take to hike to your next campsite?
 - Your crew's hiking pace will depend on their physical conditioning, the weight of their packs, and the terrain you are hiking—and the crew's slowest member
 - A Time Control Plan* teaches map-reading skills, route planning, and orients your crew to the terrain you will hike
 - Typically, a crew can hike 2 miles per hour (including rest breaks) on level terrain
 - For every 1,000 feet you ascend / descend, add another hour to your travel time
 - Add time for lunch, especially if a cooked meal is planned

* From the *NOLS Wilderness Guide*; taught in NCAC's Backcountry Outdoor Leader Skills (BCOLS) course

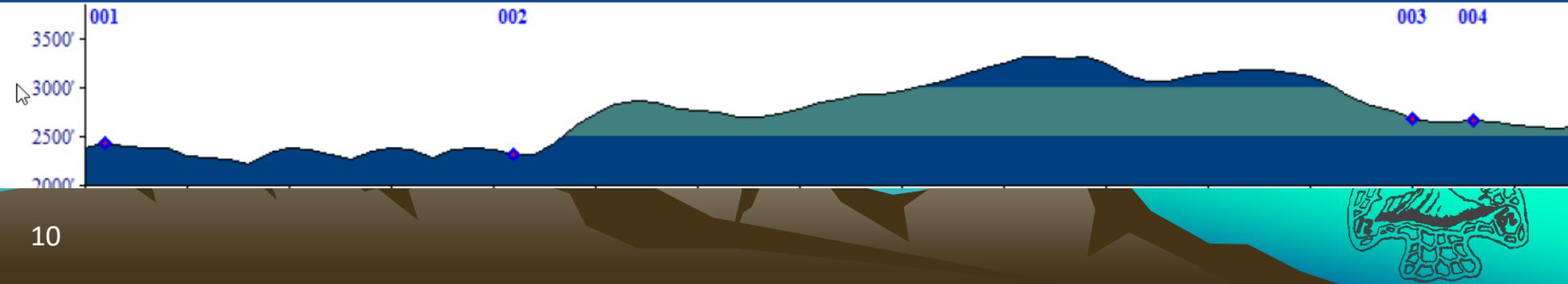


Calculating Elevation Change (+/-)

Old School



New School



Calculating Hiking Time

Travel Time Plan



Hiking Time

Travel Time Plan -
BCOLS

Trail time equals:

2 mph + 1 hr/1000 ft elevation gain or loss
+ 1 hour for unexpected delays. (Murphy time)

_____ Mile / 2 = ___ hrs ___ min

Elev. Gain _____ X 1 = ___ hrs ___ min
+ 1 hr (+ lunch)

Total Trail Time = ___ hrs ___ min

Break camp time equals the time from
reveille to packs on.



Calculating Hiking Time: V3 Hike - Signal Knob Example

Trail time equals:

2 mph + 1 hr/1000 ft elevation gain or loss
+ 1 hour for unexpected delays (Murphy time), + lunch



Signal Knob Topo
Map

9 Miles / 2 = 4.5 hrs

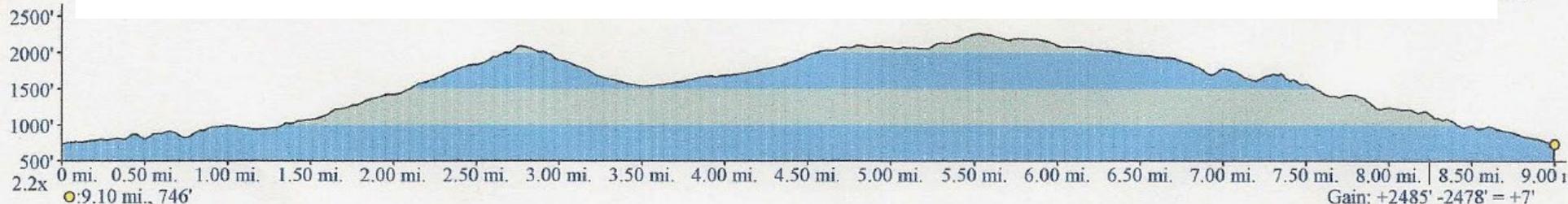
Elev. Gain/Loss: 4300' X 1 = 4 hrs 20 min

“Sight” calculation from elevation map: (750' to 2100' = **1350'** gain) + (2100' to 1500' = **600'** loss) + (1500' to 2300' = **800'** gain) + (2300' to 750' = **1550'** loss) = **4300'** total elev. change

Note: Calculated elevation change on elevation map is: 2485' gain + 2478' loss = 4963'
+ **1 hr** (Murphy time), + **1/2 hr** lunch

Total estimated trail time = 10 hrs 20 min

Actual trail time = 7 hrs 0 min



Calculating Hike Start Time

Travel Time Plan



Travel Time Plan
Exercise - BCOLS

Start Time

Sunset _____ P.M.
- 1 hr for camp set-up
= Destination arrival time _____
- trail time _____
= departure time _____
- break camp time _____
= reveille _____ A.M.
- 15 minutes
= Crew Leader reveille _____



Example Backpacking Shakedown Campout

- Friday Night

- Start with a ½ to 1-mile hike to campsite (maybe it's dark and/or raining too)
- Set-up camp (dining fly, Bear-muda triangle)

- Saturday

- Cook breakfast
- Clean-up / Break camp
- Hike 8-10 miles
 - Lunch on trail
- Set-up camp
- Cook dinner
- Clean-up

- Sunday

- Cook breakfast
- Clean-up / Break camp
- Hike 5 miles
 - Lunch on trail

2x Set-up camp / break camp

3x Clean-up

15 Miles of backcountry hiking



At Least
2x

Example Backpacking Shakedown Campout

Ideally
3x

- Friday Night

- Start with a ½ to 1-mile hike to campsite (maybe it's dark and/or raining too)
- Set-up camp (dining fly, Bear-muda triangle)

- Saturday

- Cook breakfast
- Clean-up / Break camp
- Hike 8-10 miles
 - Lunch on trail

- Sunday

- Cook breakfast
- Clean-up / Break camp
- Hike 5 miles
 - Lunch on trail

- Do not time (not a race)
- Observe and facilitate progress (Socratic method)

Goals:

- Develop 'unconscious mastery' of key backpacking skills
- Meld crew into harmonious, high-performing team
- Ensure sufficient time for Program at Philmont



Additional Backpacking Skills

- First Aid Topics
 - Dehydration, blisters, heat-related illness, acute mtn. sickness, ankle & knee injury
 - “Prevent, Recognize, Treat” approach
- Weather
 - Five life zones: high desert plains, foothills, montane, sub-alpine, and alpine
 - Key considerations: layers, rain gear, hydration (altitude and availability of water), and safety (lightning storms)
- Navigation <https://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/geomag/calculators/magcalc.shtml>
 - Philmont uses UTM coordinates on trail signs
 - What is the magnetic declination at Philmont? At your shakedown location?
- Hygiene
 - Don't underestimate its Importance: blisters, jock Itch, etc.
 - Consider small pkg. (~15 ct.) of antiseptic (“baby”) wipes (smellable) for each Scout



Is Anyone Not Ready?

- Set-up camp in less than half-an-hour (using unconscious mastery; not timed)
- Calculate your hiking time, and hike start time (a Time Control Plan)
- Carry a full backpack (25% of your weight) for 10 miles on roads or trails, in less than 4 ½ hours
- Clean-up / Break camp in less than an hour
- ... AND THEN DO IT AGAIN TOMORROW & THE NEXT NINE DAYS!



Reminder: Advisor Hikes

- Mandatory hike for the High Adventure Committee to evaluate your ability to hike 10 miles at a representative pace with elevation gain/loss— and a minimum 35 lbs pack (we go rain or snow)
- Conducted at Catoctin Mountain Park in MD on
 - Sunday 13 March @ 8AM (early is on-time; on-time is late; and late is selfish)
 - Saturday 19 March @ 8AM
- RSVP to the calendar invite for one of these dates



Prepared. For Philmont.

The key to success, in any line of endeavor, lies in service. Those who seek fame or fortune by any other route are always disappointed.

~ Henry Ford. ~

Wisdom at Villa Philmonte

Failure is simply the opportunity to begin again, this time more intelligently.

~ Henry Ford ~

Whether you believe you can do a thing or not, you're right.

~ Henry Ford ~



National Capital Area Council High Adventure Committee

Yi-HA!
Questions?
(Yours in High Adventure)

