

for Philmont, Part 2

# Be Prepared.

## Getting You and Your Crew ~~Physically~~ Ready for Philmont

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# The Philmont Experience

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- 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!



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# 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



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# Why Shakedown Hikes / Campouts?

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- 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



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# Mechanics: The Philmont Way

- Why the Philmont Way? Why not “my way”?
  - Scale: 4,500 people in the backcountry at any one time
  - Safety: Isolated mountain wilderness ranging from 6,700’ to 12,441’ in elevation over trails that are steep and rocky, summer temperatures from sub-30° to 100+ °, with frequent (and sometimes severe) thunderstorms, hail
  - Sustainability: For your children’s children’s children . . .
- Use shakedown in a safe-to-fail environment to practice: “getting use to each other’s personality quirks,” 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 rqmts. (50-Miler Award)

Links to YouTube videos for many of these skills are in the Philmont Shakedown Guide; or go to <https://www.youtube.com/user/philmontscoutranch>

# Melding: Crew Leadership Positions

- Crew Leader (Youth)
  - Selected prior to first shakedown hike / campout
  - Leads by example: servant leadership (*and they participate to the max*)
  - Key skills: positivity, ability to identify and resolve conflict
- Chaplain's Aide (Youth)
  - Grace before every meal (Philmont is just fine but being an individual is really cool)
  - Roses, Thorns and Buds
  - Consider 12 points of Scout Law to discuss behavior (good and bad)
  - Duty to God patch requires three devotionals during the trek
- Wilderness Pledge Guia (Guide) (Youth)
  - Philmont Wilderness Pledge and Leave No Trace—and *shinrin-yoku*
- Lead Advisor (Adult) & the other Adult Advisors
  - Coach, mentor and support youth leaders
  - Safety and well-being of each crew member
  - Lead Advisor is responsible for other logistics (medical forms, travel, etc.)

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



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# Crew Dynamics

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- 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



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# 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

Of course, tailor this for your shakedown campout length





# 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 *two mph* (including rest breaks) on level terrain
    - For every 1,000 feet you ascend add another hour to your travel time (descending tends to be quicker because of gravity! Go slow)
    - Add time for lunch, especially if a cooked meal is planned (i.e., when your next campsite is dry)



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# 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, bear bags)

- Saturday

- Cook breakfast (or eat while hiking)
- Clean-up / Break camp
- Hike 8-10 miles
  - Lunch on trail
- Set-up camp
- Cook dinner
- Clean-up

- Sunday

- Cook breakfast (or eat while hiking)
- Clean-up / Break camp
- Hike 8 - 10 miles
  - Lunch on trail

**2x set-up camp / break camp**

**1-3x clean-up**

**16-20 miles of backcountry hiking**



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At Least  
2x

# Example Backpacking Shakedown Campout

Ideally  
3-4x

- 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) (at least not yet!)  
• 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 (jacket and pants; no poncho), hydration (altitude and availability of water), and safety (lightning storms, trekking poles)
- Navigation <https://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/geomag/calculators/magcalc.shtml>
  - Philmont uses UTM coordinates on trail signs; Philmont’s maps use UTM grids
  - What is the magnetic declination at Philmont?\* At your shakedown location?
- Hygiene
  - Don’t underestimate its importance: blisters, jock Itch, sweat-salts build-up, etc.
  - Consider small pkg. (~15 ct.) of Sea-to-Summit Wilderness wipes per hiker



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\* Cimarron, NM is Positive (East) 7 degrees, 25 seconds (about 7.42 East) (as of 2022)

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# Is Anyone Not Ready?

- Set-up camp in less than half-an-hour (using unconscious mastery; not timed) (this is really important when the weather is bad or coming!)
- Calculate your hiking time, and hike start time
- Carry a full backpack (25 percent of your weight) for 10 miles on roads or trails, in less than 5½ hours
- Clean-up/break camp in less than an hour (oh, yeah, right)
- ... **AND THEN DO IT AGAIN TOMORROW & THE NEXT NINE DAYS!**



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# Reminder: Advisor Hikes

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- Mandatory hike for all Adult Advisors using an NCAC HAC Philmont slot (and any other AAs who want more practice backpacking) to evaluate your ability to hike 10 miles at a representative pace with elevation gain/loss—and a minimum 35 lb. pack (we go rain or snow and, sometimes, perfect weather!)
- We start at the Catoctin Mountain NP Visitor Center, MD:
  - Sunday 12 March @ 8AM (early is on-time; on-time is late,
  - Saturday 18 March @ 8AM and late is a solo hike!)
- RSVP to the calendar invite for one (or both!) of these dates (and include Craig Dubishar at [wcdubi@gmail.com](mailto:wcdubi@gmail.com))



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Wisdom at Villa Philmonte (by Waite Phillips):

“Those who dream the most, do the most”

“Maintain your integrity as a sacred thing”

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

~ Henry Ford ~

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

~ Henry Ford. ~

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

~ Henry Ford ~



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