



Waldo County 4-H Program  
992 Waterville Rd, Waldo, ME 04915  
(207) 342-5971 Ext  
(800) 287-1426 toll free in Maine  
(800) 287-8957 TDD  
sadee.mehuren@maine.edu  
joyce.weaver@maine.edu

*Putting knowledge to work with the people of Maine*

## **Backyard Camping**

**Purpose:** The purpose of the backyard camping activity is to provide an educational, nature experience for youth and their families. Backyard camping is also a great way to prepare for sleeping away from home or for a larger camping experience.

### **Equipment**

- Tent
- Bedding
- Warm clothes: pajamas, sweatshirt or coat, hat
- Flashlight
- Books to read or materials for activities
- Optional: Air mattress or Camp Pad
- Optional: Telescope

### **Instructions:** *Set Up Your Tent*

1. To start your backyard camping experience, you will need to check the local weather forecast and select a date for your camping experience that will be relatively warm and free of rain. If you are unable to camp outside due to inclement weather, this activity can be conducted in your home.
2. After you have selected the date for your backyard camping experience, gather the materials listed above.
3. When you are ready to start camping, start by setting up “pitching” your tent in a dry and level spot in your yard. If your tent has instructions, refer to them for information on how to set up your tent. Tents come in a variety of shapes and sizes and will all have slightly different assembly instructions. Generic tent assembly instructions are listed below.
4. To start setting up your tent, make sure that you have all of the supplies. Most tents come with tent stakes, tent poles, a rain cover, and a ground cloth.
5. Start by laying down the ground cloth or a tarp in the location that you want your tent.
6. Lay down your tent on top of the ground cloth and pull it tight to remove any creases. Stake down each corner of the tent using the ground stakes.
7. Next, run the tent poles through the tent. Most tents have a sleeve or clips to connect the poles to the tent. Some tent poles come in sections and will need to be put together prior to using them. The poles should support the tent and keep it upright.
8. After your tent is assembled, decide where each person will sleep in your tent and prepare their beds by rolling out your sleeping bags or laying out your blankets. If you have one, it is a good idea to use an air mattress or camp pad to sleep on.



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9. Before going to your tent to go to sleep, make sure that you have all of the supplies that you will need for the night and that you are dressed in warm clothes.

### **Backyard Camping Activities**

Before you head to bed for the night, you may want to engage in some fun camping activities. If you are outside, try stargazing or [having a campfire](#). Before starting your campfire, be sure that you have adult supervision and have reviewed fire safety.

If you are camping inside, you can still enjoy fun camping activities. With the help of an adult, some of your favorite campfire foods can be made inside. You may also participate in indoor stargazing by making your own constellations with a [constellation jar](#).

### **Instructions: Take Down Your Tent**

1. Roll up your sleeping bags or put away your blankets. If you have an air mattress let the air out and roll it up.
2. Pack up all your personal items and remove all items from the tent.
3. Prior to collapsing your tent, sweep out the tent floor to remove any debris that was brought in.
4. Collapse your tent and store it where it will remain clean and dry. You may need to refer to your tent's manual for instructions on how to properly take down your tent.