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# *A Texas Nature Kayaking Guide*

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## **Kayak Camping – Nourishment Gear**

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The gear needed to store, prepare, and consume your food is determined by the choices you make in your menu. If you are only going to be eating sandwiches and chips, there is no need for a Dutch oven. A large ice chest may be important; but if it is too large, it may be difficult to pack on a kayak and too heavy to move around. A 28-Quart Cooler seems like a good size. If a few rod holders are attached, it serves more than one function. A small cooler with ice keeps drinking water cool and reduces the number of times per day the big cooler needs to be opened.

Raccoons can be a major problem around camps. A 5-gallon bucket with a screw lid is one answer to protect food and gear. Others use a Rubbermaid container that seals. Still others use an Igloo ice chest with a latch on the lid. Wrapping a strap around the ice chest gives additional protection. Another way is to suspend the food from a limb. A friend reports that a sit-on-top kayak provides complete protection while still allowing easy access. Most hatches are impossible for even the cleverest raccoons to open, and the hatch seals to keep the scents from leaking out. I wonder if a kayak is bear-resistant.

Food preparation may need heat. On the minimalist side is the Jetboil backpacking stove. On the more luxurious side is a two-burner propane stove with propane bottle. Coleman makes a thin-line stove that doesn't take much room. There are various stoves in between. If a campfire is going to be built, one needs to bring matches or lighters, and you often need to bring your own wood. Check it out before you finalize your plans. A small folding grill comes in handy around a campfire. Many parks require a fire pan. This can be as simple as an old metal garbage can lid or it may be a device with three-inch legs to keep the heat of the fire from sterilizing the soil. If you are going where a fire pan is required, find out the specifications for the fire pan.

Cooking gear can include coffee pot & cup, small skillet, & stainless pot, up to and including a Dutch oven. If you know how to use a Dutch oven, it is well worth the weight and space it takes up. If you are going to drive to the camping area, the Dutch oven is a necessity.

Look at your menus and then decide what to pack. A multitool or filet knife comes in really handy. <http://www.seatosummit.com/products/display/67> offers an assortment of dishes. A good-quality, 3-quart stainless steel pot with lid is very versatile. A small anodized nesting pot kit with a deep, small frying pan and two lidded pots that will easily hold a can of vegetables without boiling over or spilling easily are readily available. Always pack a can opener. Someone will show up in camp needing a can opened.

Eating utensils can be selected from paper plates, Frisbees (multipurpose plates), aluminum plates, and plastic or metal utensils. If you plan on reusing plastic utensils and some of the group is disposing of them, you may find you need to dig through the trash before the trip is over. After the meal is over, is a

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dishpan needed? Were dish detergent and a dishrag included in the list, or did you plan on washing the dishes with river water and sand? Try to figure out how you can get double duty out of the different items.

A few tools may be needed, including a small hand saw and a folding shovel.

A camp hatchet with a hammer face, such as the Gerber camp ax, is regularly recommended. A very good argument against carrying an ax in the backcountry is when you have an accident with an ax, the trauma requires major, urgent care. A good bow saw should be sufficient to take care of any wood cutting needs. Some people like a machete for whacking down weeds and prepping a camping area. While not as hazardous as an ax, if one is taken, it should be used with care.