



# The Geezer's Guide to Backpacking

*Russ Steffy*

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Have you always wanted to explore beyond the jungle of RV's, generators, and boom boxes of public campgrounds and experience the vastness and serenity of the wilderness beyond? Are you ready to trek for a few days with nothing apart from what you carry on your back? *The Geezer's Guide to Backpacking* is designed for those seeking a "springboard", or point of reference from which to begin to learn the sport. There are many compromises which should be considered before making an initial investment in equipment and provisions. For example, if you are planning your first adventure into the back country, what is your budget for purchasing new equipment and provisions? A thousand bucks or more will set you up nicely with the very latest in a high tech backpack, tent, sleeping bag, pad, clothing, footwear, titanium cookware, stove, and all the necessary pre-packaged freeze dried meals. If you are willing to make that investment, then you don't need most of what is in this guide. Otherwise, that's a fair chunk of change to put out for a sport which could turn out to be a onetime event.

The primary concern among all backpacking guides is "lightening the load". The equation is simple: the more \$\$\$ spent, the more grams and ounces you will save having to carry on your back. All too often though, most backpacking guides place zero emphasis on comfort because comfort comes at a price: weight. *The Geezer's Guide to Backpacking* offers suggestions for staying comfortable as well as alternatives to purchasing the most expensive gear if not just for your first outing. You might start out packing a few more pounds than your "ultra light" counterparts, but you can always upgrade your gear as you work towards achieving your own goals for wilderness adventures, safely and comfortably.

*The Geezer's Guide to Backpacking* is professionally edited in plain English offering over 20 color images and a host of descriptions of affordable camping gear. Every equipment recommendation, technique, and tip in *The Geezer's Guide to Backpacking* has been field proven by the author over decades of experience in a diversity of weather conditions and environments, and here are just a few examples of what you won't find in other backpacking guides:

- What happens if your GPS unit fails? *The Geezer's Guide to Backpacking* teaches you how to **navigate using a topographic map and compass** by setting a compass heading to your destination.
- What is the difference between **box stitching versus straight-through stitching** in sleeping bags and coats? This can be the make-or-break for any outing.
- What tent is right for you? Do you even need a tent? Are you willing to consider other options? *The Geezer's Guide to Backpacking* offers **alternatives to the traditional tent** configuration.
- Besides risking falling tree branches, what are the other reasons why **you don't want to pitch your tent or shelter directly under a tree?**
- **Learn three simple knots**, all easy to tie, easy to untie, and will take care of any situation requiring the use of cordage.

*The Geezer's Guide to Backpacking* also provides an excellent platform for those who wish to assemble a "Bug Out" bag. Properly equipped and provisioned backpacks for each member of the family can do "double duty" as a bug out bag. Maintaining a backpack is easy and relatively inexpensive whether you are exploring the wilderness for fun and adventure or simply storing - just in case.

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