



Hello!

Welcome to the Gold Expedition Section of your Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Congratulations for signing up - you are going to have an amazing time! Off Grid Adventures will be running your qualifying expeditions and this guide will help you to prepare so that you have a fantastic experience in the outdoors. The expedition will enable you to experience some wonderful scenery as well help develop your team work, navigation and campcraft. The expedition is designed to be fun and enjoyable as well as enabling you to learn new skills along the way. We hope by the end of your qualifying expedition you will want to do more trekking in the future!

What's it all about?

For the Gold Expedition Section of your DofE Award you need to plan, train for and complete an unaccompanied, self-reliant expedition with an agreed aim (a project whilst on expedition). You may have already completed your Silver Award (well done!) and the Gold DofE Award is the next step up. The Gold Expedition Section is longer and tougher than Silver but is just as rewarding. Plus, you get to spend longer with your friends outdoors!

Similar to the Bronze and Silver, your Expedition Section will begin with training in your school which covers kit, rucksack packing, expedition food and route planning. You will then complete a practice expedition which covers first aid, emergency procedures, more in-depth navigation (the terrain will be more challenging to navigate) and camp craft skills. In fact, everything you need to know to prepare you for your qualifying expedition. Your team will also be asked to come up with an aim or project to do whilst on your qualifying expedition (your instructor will talk about this in your training), which you will have to present to your assessor on the last day. Finally, you will participate in a qualifying expedition with Off Grid Adventures where you will demonstrate to your assessor everything you have learned. The assessor will use the DofE 20 Conditions to ensure that you and your team have successfully passed your assessment. Have a read of them on the next page to know what you are expected to do. You can also find the DofE 20 Conditions at www.dofe.org/20conditions



The 20 Conditions of the Expedition section

DofE qualifying expedition conditions		
Planning the expedition	1	The team must plan and organise the expedition; all members of the team should be able to describe the role they have played in planning.
	2	The expedition must have an aim. The aim can be set by the Leader at Bronze level only.
	3	All participants must be within the qualifying age of the programme level and at the same Award level (i.e. not have completed the same or higher level of expedition).
	4	There must be between four and seven participants in a team (eight for modes of travel which have tandem)
	5	<div> <p>The expedition should take place in the recommended environment.</p> <div> <p>Bronze: Expeditions should be in normal rural countryside – familiar and local to groups.</p> <p>Silver: Expeditions should be in normal rural, open countryside or forest – unfamiliar to groups.</p> <p>Gold: Expeditions should be in wild country (remote from habitation) which is unfamiliar to groups.</p> </div> </div>
	6	Accommodation must be by camping or other simple self-catering accommodation (e.g. camping barns or bunkhouses).
	7	<div> <p>The expedition must be of the correct duration and meet the minimum hours of planned activity.</p> <div> <p>Bronze: A minimum of 2 days, 1 night; 6 hours planned activity each day.</p> <p>Silver: A minimum of 3 days, 2 nights; 7 hours planned activity each day.</p> <p>Gold: A minimum of 4 days, 3 nights; 8 hours planned activity each day.</p> </div> </div>
	8	All expeditions must be supervised by an adult (the Expedition Supervisor) who is able to accept responsibility for the safety of the team.
	9	Assessment must be by an accredited Assessor. At Bronze level only, the Assessor may also be the Expedition Supervisor.
	10	Expeditions will usually take place between the end of March and the end of October. They may take place outside this period, if so, non-camping accommodation options should be considered.
Training and practice	11	<div> <p>Participants must be adequately trained to safely undertake a remotely supervised expedition in the environment in which they will be operating.</p> <div> <p>Bronze: Teams must complete the required training.</p> <p>Silver: Teams must complete the required training and a practice expedition of a minimum 2 days, 2 nights.</p> <p>Gold: Teams must complete the required training and a practice expedition of a minimum 2 days, 2 nights</p> </div> </div>
	12	All expeditions must be by the participants' own physical effort, without motorised or outside assistance. Mobility aids may be used where appropriate to the needs of the participant.
During the expedition	13	All expeditions must be unaccompanied and self-sufficient. The team must be properly equipped, and supervision must be carried out remotely.
	14	Teams must possess the necessary physical fitness, first aid and expedition skills required to complete their expedition safely.
	15	Groups must adhere to a mobile phone use policy as agreed with their Expedition Supervisor and Assessor. This agreement should also include use of other electronic equipment.
	16	Participants must behave responsibly with respect for their team members, Leaders, the public and animals.
	17	Groups must understand and adhere to the Countryside /Scottish Outdoor Access, Highway and Water Sports Codes (as appropriate).
	18	Participants must plan an appropriate expedition menu, including cooking and eating a substantial hot meal on each day. This is optional on the final day.
Post expedition	19	Participants must actively participate in a debrief with their Assessor at the end of the expedition.
	20	At Silver and Gold level, a presentation must be prepared and delivered after the expedition.

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DofE.org

This guide

This guide will give you information about what to bring, how to pack and what is the best expedition food. We also cover how your supervision will work when you are on expedition. Attached to this guide will be the dates for your qualifying expeditions as well as the start and finish. If you have any specific questions about the expeditions then please speak to your DofE Manager at school.

Image consent

Off Grid Adventures may on occasion take photographs or video footage of the expeditions in which you may feature. By agreeing to participate in the expedition you are agreeing to these photographs and videos possibly being used for our website or marketing purposes. If you or your parent/guardian do not want your image to be used, please inform us in writing (email address is below) before the expedition starts.

Medical information

It is important that the expedition team leader and instructors are aware of any medical needs you have that are relevant to the expedition. We ask the school to share this information with us on the morning of both expeditions to ensure we have full knowledge of any condition that may affect how you participate. We are usually able to make adaptations. If you take medication, we ask you to bring this and keep it in the top of your rucksack. If you use an auto-injector, the instructor will ask you to explain how it is used to them and the rest of your team in case of an emergency. If there is anything you feel the instructor should know that is not on your medical form, please inform them on the morning of the expedition. The school shares the medical information but we do not hold any medical information about you. Please see our privacy policy at offgridadventures.co.uk for more information about how we deal with personal records.

Communication and electronic devices

In order for your expedition to be self-reliant (Condition 13) we don't allow you to bring your phones on expedition. You have to rely on your navigation and each other instead! Phones are expensive and if they get broken or lost we are unable to look for them. As the expedition is all about being part of a team, we don't allow devices that play music (e.g. an ipod). If you want to take photos for your project, bring a traditional camera. You need to bring a watch on expedition but please don't bring a GPS compatible watch as this would mean you are not self-reliant. By the way, participants have told us that they have really enjoyed being away from their screens for this short time! We do give each team an emergency phone and teach you how to use it and when to

use it. If your parent/guardian needs to contact you in an emergency, they can contact the school's duty staff who will send a message to you.

Supervision

Being ready for the qualifying expedition means that your team is self-sufficient: they can navigate unaccompanied between checkpoints, put up and take down a tent, carry their own equipment and cook a meal. Your training prepares you for that. Following your in-school training sessions,, your instructor would have supported you and your team to make decisions about your expedition. The instructor would have shadowed you at first and then when they felt confident of your competency, they would enable you to walk further between checkpoints (where an instructor will meet you and check in with the team). At the end of the practice expedition, your instructor would have been confident that your team can complete their qualifying expedition. On the qualifying expedition there will be the team leader (supervisor), who is there to support you, and the assessor (who assesses whether you have met the DofE 20 Conditions). The assessor will offer guidance if necessary. The assessors and team leader will meet you at agreed checkpoints along your planned route and will be at your campsite to observe your campcraft. You will also be reminded how to use the emergency phone. The team leader and assessors will have a good idea of where the team is and how they are progressing. This is called 'remote supervision': it allows the team to get on with the expedition with minimal intervention.



What equipment do you need?

It is important to remember that everything you bring with you - you have to carry yourself for the whole expedition! Our comprehensive kit list identifies everything you need but you can save space with lightweight materials and packing carefully.

Group kit

Your team will be provided with tents and Trangia stoves for cooking. Your instructor should have trained you how to put up and take down your tents and how to use the stove safely. Off Grid Adventures also provides you with maps and compasses. You are welcome to bring your own compass too but show it to your assessor before using it.

Personal kit

The kit outlined below is recommended by the DofE. Please read through it carefully. You can use the kit list to check off each item. Off Grid Adventures does hire out rucksacks, roll mats and sleeping bags if you don't want to buy them (see your DofE manager for details). However, if you buy them you could get plenty of use out of them if you go camping in the future.

Rucksack

On expedition, you will be carrying your own kit plus all your food plus part of a tent or a cooking stove. Therefore, you have to make sure your rucksack is big enough to do this. We suggest a 60-70 litre rucksack. When everything is packed it shouldn't weigh more than a quarter of your own body weight. Therefore, if you weigh 50kg, your rucksack shouldn't weigh more than 12.5kg. You will be walking through woods, up hills and down and across muddy farmland. Try on your rucksack before you buy - the shop usually has weights that you can put in it to try it out for comfort. Many shops have gender-specific rucksacks. The Vango Contour 60:70 is popular with DofE participants because it weighs 2.4kg with quick adjusting back straps which you can alter to suit your size.



Sleeping mat

You can buy a mat that rolls up - these are light but bulky. Or buy a mat that self inflates - these are comfy and pack down small but they can be heavy. There are no air pumps so avoid the 'mattress' style sleeping mats. Avoid yoga mats as they won't last outside and are very thin.

Sleeping bag



A good night's sleep is essential on expeditions so make sure your sleeping bag is warm and comfortable. It also needs to pack down small. Think about the location of your expedition and the time of year - the label will tell you the right season (2-3 seasons) for that sleeping bag. You can buy a sleeping bag liner in case it does get colder. There are loads of options but the DofE recommends the mummy-shaped Vango Nitestar, Latitude, Ultralite Pro, Olympus Pro, and Zenith sleeping bags. You don't need a pillow - you can use your fleece!

Footwear

A good pair of **walking boots** will make any expedition more comfortable and enjoyable and they are an essential piece of kit for Gold Expeditions. Unlike trainers, walking boots provide ankle support which is great on rough terrain whilst carrying a rucksack. If you buy new boots then please get used to walking in them before the expedition. And make sure they are waterproof - wet boots = blisters! You can also bring trainers or sliders for when you are at the campsite but you

can't wear sliders while cooking for safety reasons. **Walking socks** are worn with boots and are designed to minimise blisters with padding and moisture protection fabric.

Waterproofs

Waterproof jackets and trousers protect you from the wind, rain and cold. They are essential.

- Make sure they ARE waterproof and not shower proof - check they are waterproofed with Gore-Tex or a polyurethane (PU) lining
- The jacket should have a hood
- Use waterproof trousers which have wide legs or zipped trousers which make them easier to put on/take off over boots

Clothes

Expedition clothing should be warm but lightweight. Layers are the key to a successful expedition. Thermal base layers and fleeces work well. Avoid cotton (including jeans) as it doesn't keep you warm, it gets heavy when wet and takes ages to dry. Walking trousers are preferable to leggings because they are lightweight and dry quickly. Participants always regret bringing thick hoodies because they are heavy and don't dry. Use our kit list to guide you. And remember - you are carrying it all! Hats are important - woolly in Spring and Autumn and a sun hat in the summer. You can also wear them in bed to keep warm.

Water carriers

You need to be drinking two litres of water per day on expedition. We recommend using two one litre bottles made of clear and hard-wearing plastic. You can pack them on the outside of your rucksack in each pocket. This makes them easily accessible and you can see how much water you have left. Some people prefer 'bladder water systems' but these are in your rucksack so you cannot see how much water you have drunk. They can also leak.



Eating utensils

Bring a plastic bowl for food and a mug for drinks. Bring a spork or a lightweight knife, fork and spoon set. If you need a knife to prepare your food, make sure you only use it at the campsite under your instructor's supervision.



First Aid Kit

Your own personal, small first aid kit is really useful. Buy a basic kit or create one yourself. We suggest you include the following: blister plasters, ordinary plasters, cleansing wipes, bandage, sterile dressing, small scissors and plastic gloves. Always bring your personal medication too.

Washbag

This should contain essentials such as soap, toothbrush and toothpaste, deodorant and sanitary towels or tampons. Nothing else is needed.






Other stuff

A **watch** is really important because it is a navigation aid for working out your route timings and checkpoints. Borrow a watch if you don't have one - remember that you won't have your phone. Bring a **torch** - preferably a head torch but any is fine, just remember to check the batteries! Most new rucksacks include a **whistle** to attract attention in an emergency. If yours doesn't have one, bring one with you. **Sun cream** is essential. You will be out all day and you never know when the sun is going to come out. **Insect repellent** is also useful but not essential.



Shop discounts!

Every young person who is planning to do their DofE Expedition can save money on expedition stuff at most outdoor shops (see below) both in store and online. Just tell them you are doing DofE and they will usually give you a discount.

 GOoutdoors.co.uk Extra 10% off the GO Outdoors Discount Card price. Inspiring everyone to get outdoors, for less... and love it as much as we do.	 Blacks.co.uk 15% off the current selling price. Includes reduced price items. Proud to be a part of your outdoor life.	 Milletts.co.uk 15% off the current selling price. Includes reduced price items. The destination for family adventure.	 Ultimateoutdoors.com 15% off the current selling price. Includes reduced price items. The number one destination for all things outdoors.	 Tiso.com 15% off the retail price. Scotland's leading specialist retailer for outdoor clothing, camping equipment and climbing gear.
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Always show your DofE Card or Voucher.
You'll get the best savings and help support young people to do their DofE.

Rucksack packing

The way you pack your rucksack is important. You will get training on this at school or on the practice but it is good to know in advance. Remember to leave room for part of the tent or stove on expedition. You WILL be carrying one of these items - unless you have an exemption for medical reasons. Pack clothing and food in separate dry bags or thick plastic bags. This will keep your stuff dry and help you find things. Pack essential items such as lunch, water, snacks, personal meds, first aid kit and waterproofs somewhere accessible such as side pockets or the top of your rucksack. Items such as dinner, sleeping bag and spare clothes - can be packed lower down. Below is the DofE's guide to packing your rucksack.



HOW TO PACK YOUR DofE RUCKSACK

GET MORE TIPS AT WWW.DofESHOPPING.ORG/EXPEDITION-KIT

• LINER

- Line your rucksack with a rucksack liner or strong ruble sack to keep everything dry. LIFESYSTEMS DRISTORE ROLL TOP BAGS



• LUNCH/FOOD

- Bag each meal separately so you ration your food properly and pack your lunch for the day at the top to get at it quickly in case it is raining. BEYOND THE BEATEN TRACK MAIN MEAL



• WATERPROOFS, HAT & GLOVES

- Pack your bag in the order you will want your kit. Remember to put in first out CRAGHOPPERS REACTION LIFE JACKET



• TOP COMPARTMENT

- Put in all the small items of kit you'll need during the day.



• WASH KIT

- Group and pack all kit into separate dry bags so you can find what you need quickly. LIFESYSTEMS WASH HOLDALL



• TRANGIA

- Clean and thoroughly dry, then place close to your back to maintain your centre of gravity. TRANGIA 25-10L STOVE



• SURVIVAL BAG

- Use up any gaps to help keep kit stable in the bag. LIFESYSTEMS SURVIVAL BAG



• FUEL

- Store fuel and water vertically and double bag fuel canisters. TRANGIA FUEL BOTTLE 1L



• FLASK

- Ensure you have enough water to stay hydrated. Must be easy to get to. LIFESYSTEMS TITAN FLASK 1L



• SLEEPING/ROLL MAT

- Try to get all your kit inside your bag. If you have a large roll mat, make sure it is securely tied to the outside of your bag. VANGO TREK COMPACT SELF INFLATING SLEEPING MAT



• TENT

- Ensure the heaviest kit is close to your back and balanced on each side. VANGO PULSAR 300



• SLEEPING BAG

- Always put your sleeping bag inside another waterproof bag, so all you can keep your sleeping bag dry. VANGO STRATOS



• CLOTHES

- Push spare clothes to the bottom front of the rucksack to fill the space available. CRAGHOPPERS VITALISE BASE T-SHIRT



• SOCKS

- BRIDGEDALE WOOLFUSION TREKKER



• COOKING/CAMP/CRAFT KIT

- The total weight of your bag should not be more than 25% of your body weight. LIFESYSTEMS TITAN MUG & BOWL



USE YOUR DofE REWARD CARD FOR **15% DISCOUNT** AT COTSWOLD OUTDOOR

IN STORE OR ONLINE | 20% OFF FOR DofE LEADERS | DofESHOPPING.ORG/EXPEDITION-KIT

MORE ADVICE ON HOW TO SAVE WEIGHT AND WATERPROOF YOUR KIT AS WELL AS THE OFFICIAL DofE KIT LIST CAN BE FOUND AT DofESHOPPING.ORG/EXPEDITION-KIT



FIND EVERYTHING FOR YOUR NEXT EXPEDITION AT COTSWOLDOUTDOOR.COM OR VISIT ONE OF THEIR STORES NATIONWIDE. KIT ITEMS SHOWN ARE EXAMPLES ONLY. ALWAYS FOLLOW THE ADVICE AND TRAINING OF YOUR DofE EXPEDITION SUPERVISOR.

What food should you bring?

Bringing the right amount and type of food on your expedition is key to making it successful and enjoyable. The table below shows you what meals you need to pack.

Gold Qualifying Expedition			
Day 1	n/a	Lunch	Dinner
Day 2	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Day 3	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Day 4	Breakfast	Lunch	n/a

Working as a team is part of meeting the DofE's 20 conditions and this can include menu planning. Once you are in your team, talk about what meals you could prepare together. This way, each of you could bring part of a meal rather than everyone bringing a big pack of pasta for example. Preparing a meal as part of a team is really enjoyable and it also means less waste and less packaging. By the way, this team didn't carry their own table and chairs - they found them!

Expedition food

Expedition food should be high in slow-release energy. You need about 2500 calories each day as a minimum. The days are long, your brain is working hard and so are your feet! Below are some ideas for expedition food but check out the DofE website too.



Please don't bring nuts or nut-based food. Nuts can have serious implications for those around you. We are unable to guarantee a nut-free expedition as so many products say 'traces of nuts' but we ask you to avoid bringing the obvious such as peanut butter, Nutella, pesto, nut-based energy bars and nuts! If you have any food allergies, make sure this is evident on your medical form and let us know about your medication.

Breakfast

Breakfast is essential because it gives you the energy you need to get going. Breakfast high in calories is important. Porridge oats are our top tip because oats are high in slow-release energy. After a night of camping, porridge warms you up too. Add dried fruits and seeds for an energy boost. Alternative breakfast options are chocolate-filled crepes or high-energy breakfast bars - but these only provide a short energy boost. Hot chocolate also provides warmth and



calories to start your day. Bacon and sausages are not advisable because they can go off in hot weather.

Lunch

Sandwiches, rolls or wraps are great for lunch. Fill them with a protein such as hummus, salami, chicken or cheese and salad. They are easy to carry and low waste. Bean or chickpea salad in a small tupperware provides protein and carbohydrates to fill you up. Tasty soup in a flask is always a popular choice.



Dinner

You must have one hot meal a day and this is always dinner on our expeditions. Planning a meal with your team is enjoyable and enables you to share the weight of ingredients and cost.

Groups options include:

- Dried pasta, sauce and cheese. There are many types of pasta and they all take different lengths of time to cook. Check out the label and agree to buy the same type. Also check if someone needs gluten free. You need about 100g per person. There are lots of pasta sauces - avoid pesto because it contains nuts! Grate cheese at home and bring it with you. Or bring some dried sausage like chorizo or pepperami to add to the pot - it has a high calorie count.
- Pre-cooked lentils and a sauce work well.
- Boil in the bag rice and a sauce with cheese or dried sausage.
- Tortellini and ravioli with a sauce and cheese is another option.

Solo options

If you prefer to just bring a meal for yourself you could choose:

- Wayfayrer style, or equivalent, survival meals provide you with all the energy you need. Choose ones where you put the bag in hot water to heat rather than those where you have to add boiling water to the bag which can be tricky and could risk burning your hands.
- Pasta and sauce in one. They are cheap but not very nutritious. Also, check the label - it often says add milk - participants said they don't taste great without it!
- Pot noodles - these have changed! Opt for the pot noodles with bags of flavour and a high calorie count. They are no match for Wayfayrers but are better than they used to be. The Japanese inspired pot noodles often have the highest calorie count.



Snacks

Snacks to graze on are a great way to keep your energy levels high. Great snacks to bring are energy bars, malt loaf, dried fruits and seeds and chocolate bars (except on a hot day!). Crisps take up room! Don't forget your sweets - a good pick-me-up but not to be relied on for the whole expedition!



Washing up



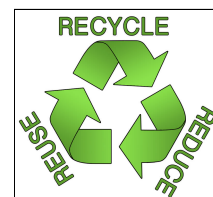
After breakfast and dinner you will be expected to scrub your own bowls and utensils as well as the stoves and pans. Pads that contain soap such as Brillo pads are the best way to do this and they take up little room. A tea-towel for drying up is handy. Arrange with your team who could bring these items.

Reducing waste

We are committed to reducing waste on our expeditions and so are the campsites we use. Many of these are run by volunteer Scouts and Guides. As a result, they usually don't have bins because there are no staff to put them out for collection regularly. As a result, the campsites expect you to take your rubbish home with you. This also helps people to think about packaging if they know they have to bring it home. It also takes up precious room in your rucksack. To reduce waste, try our top tips:

- Test food at home before the expedition. If you don't like it, you can bring something else. There are no bins to leave leftover food so plan your food and portions carefully.
- Bring fruit with a skin on - cut up fruit in a plastic box takes up room and you have to bring the box home.
- Bring lunch in a tupperware box (it is reusable - you could use it as your bowl for dinner!), plastic bags (you can reuse) or tinfoil. Avoid shop bought sandwiches with lots of packaging.
- Agree dinner as a team and share out the ingredients, this avoids everyone bringing a bag of pasta and then having to bring the extra home.
- Choose Wayfayrer-style meals over pot noodles because they take up less room.
- Choose recyclable pots and packaging that you can bring home and put in your home recycling bin.
- Choose snacks that can pack down such as energy bars.

REMEMBER, YOU WILL BE BRINGING HOME YOUR PACKAGING!





Gold Expedition Kit List

Item	I've got it...	It's packed...
Anti-bacterial hand gel		
Personal medication		
Rucksack (60-70 litre)		
Rucksack liner (or 2 thick plastic bags to keep clothes dry)		
1 pair of walking boots		
4 pairs of walking socks		
3-4 t-shirts		
1 fleece top or similar (no hoodies)		
2-3 pairs of walking trousers (NOT jeans)		
Underwear		
Nightwear (teddy optional)		
Flip-flops/trainers/sliders etc. (optional for campsite use after cooking)		
Warm hat or sun hat depending on date of expedition		
Gloves (optional)		
Waterproof jacket		
Waterproof over-trousers		
Sleeping bag		
Sleeping mat		
Whistle (sometimes these are built into the rucksack chest strap)		
Torch (hand held or head torch) and spare batteries		
Basic First Aid kit		
Expedition food (including snacks)		
Two water bottles (enough for 2 litres)		
Knife, fork, spoon or Spork		
Bowl and mug		
Box of matches (in waterproof bag) - avoid storm matches		
Wash kit/personal hygiene items, small towel		
Small quantity of money (e.g. £5)		
Notebook and pen/pencil for your aim/project		
Watch (not GPS compatible)		
Sunglasses		
Sun Cream		
Insect repellent (optional)		
Spare laces for your boots or trainers (optional)		