

CooperstownCottage.com

CooperstownCottage Survival Guide

These tips have been collected from previous CooperstownCottage guests and are provided "as-is" in the hopes that they may make your stay in the Cooperstown area more enjoyable. Hopefully these tips jog your memory in advance of leaving home and help you pack everything you need or in some other way prepare you to have the best possible stay here at CooperstownCottage. If you have additional ideas or comments, please let us know at comments@cooperstowncottage.com.

Cooperstown Packing List-Players

Mark all items with players names

- Uniforms – White pants, Navy and Red belts, cleats, Socks, Jerseys and Hats provided at the park- you may take extra socks if you want to**
- Baseball bags with all needed equipment**
- Sleeping bag**
- Pillow**
- Towels**
- Fitted sheet**
- Swimming trunks**
- Shower shoes (flip-flops or slides)**
- Toiletries in toiletry bag**
- Lock for personal foot locker**
- Gold Bond powder (or other foot powder or spray)**
- Diaper rash cream**
- Sunscreen**
- Chapstick**
- Bug spray**
- 2 cases bottled water**
- rolls of quarters or dollar bills for arcade and concession stand**
- Snacks to be kept in foot locker**
- Window fan if you have one**
- Ipods or handheld games, playing cards, pens and paper, etc. to keep busy in dorms.**
- All personal needs such as regular clothing, contact solution, and other individual needs**

1. **LAUNDRY – this is CRITICAL information**

- a. Every player and coach should purchase the laundry service; you cannot survive without it.
- b. You will be given big plastic bags and laundry ticket forms to fill out. You don't have to fill out the details like how many pants, how many socks, etc.
- c. Figure out a system for "dirty" clothes collection and "clean" clothes distribution. Try to reserve one unoccupied with the provided footlocker for dirty clothes, and one unoccupied bunk bed for returned clean clothes for distribution. Hopefully you don't have so many kids that you won't have any "spare" beds.
- d. It's easier if you keep the uniforms separated from the regular clothes; easier to distribute and organize. Coaches will have to do all the sorting and will need a place to do it.
- e. It helps if names are written on the clothes tags somewhere for easy distribution, as much as possible. You would think that the boys know their own stuff, but they don't.
- f. Forget about trying to keep uniform socks identified for each player. Just have them all laundered and hand them out at random; community sock supply.

Take several Sharpie pens (Fine point) of different colors. When you fill a bag with dirty laundry, you will include a laundry ticket. Write your team name and bunkhouse number on the form. This form will be included with the bag of clean clothes that are returned. MOST IMPORTANT: Draw some kind of colorful, big design/picture on the form that you will recognize. This is critical in making laundry pickup quick and easy. When you go to pick up laundry, there will be *hundreds* of bags lined up in a bunch of rows. As you walk through the rows, the special design/picture will help you pick out your stuff much quicker and easier.

2. **Players are required to wear white pants.** Each player should have *at least 2* pairs of pants.

- Some players on past teams only had one pair, and they either had to play in them filthy. Or be stressed that they would not be back from the laundry on time.

3. **Each person should bring at least 2-3 towels (or more) for bathing.**

- Often, wet towels were not taken care of properly, and the kids ended up having to dry off with a wet, gross towel, or no towel at all because they were at the laundry.
- Please stress to your player the importance of hanging towels to dry and making sure they are included in the laundry each night!!
- You need to write names on the towels. It is suggested that parents just go to Wal-Mart and buy several cheap, white bath towels to use for this trip.

4. **SHOWERING** : Kids have their own shower house, adults have their own, but can use the kids' within certain hours.

- Everyone needs flip-flops or slides for the showers and bathrooms.
- Kids need bathing suits to wear in the shower. I don't think any of the kids showered in the nude.
- You may want to take a little plastic bucket, or plastic hand basket carrier, or bag to tote your shower stuff back and forth, Soap, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrush, wash cloth, shaving stuff (for adults), etc: It's much easier to carry and keep organized in some kind of carrying device. One with holes in the bottom works well to allow excess water to drain out.
- Showering in a bathing suit presents a unique problem: Lack of good cleaning in the personal areas, which leads to rashes, severe in some cases. Tell the kids to try to clean themselves as well as possible "down there". SUGGESTED TIPS FROM PAST ATTENDEES: *First*, make

sure you take a clean pair of underwear and shorts to the shower with you, and hang them up, or put them somewhere dry. While in the shower, wash yourself “Down there” discreetly by putting your hands down your bathing suit and just doing it. Then rinse as well as possible. After drying off, get your clean underwear and shorts and go to a toilet stall and close the door. Remove your bathing suit while in private (behind the closed doors of the stall), and finish drying off the personal areas. Apply a little corn starch (YES, add It to the list of supplies) to polish off the drying process. Then put on your clean underwear and shorts. Now you are good to go. I know this seems silly, but it’s really the only way to avoid the rashes.

- DON’T FORGET TO TAKE A CLEAN, DRY TOWEL TO THE SHOWERS WHEN YOU GO- Please stress this to your players! You’ll be surprised how many kids make 2-3 trips back and forth because they forgot something, or just come back soaking wet.
- It works best to shower at night before bed time. It gets them settled down and comfortable. Plus it’s much less crowded. Mornings in the showers are packed, and you really risk being late for breakfast or the first game.

5. **Drinks** There are no sinks or water fountains in the bunkhouse or nearby the bunkhouse.

- Bring a couple of large coolers to store beverages in the bunkhouse.
- Purchase bottled water and keep the coolers stocked. Suggestion-have each player and coach bring 2 cases of water-it can be stored under beds etc. When that runs out, take turns buying more.
- You can buy cheap ice at the concession stand/arcade building during normal hours.
- Keep the coolers full of bottled water and ice, and you won’t die of thirst while you are there.
- The Park discourages the use of sodas, Gatorades, etc. because spills are very hard to clean up and will attract bugs and ants. On a related matter, the Park also discourages the use of candy, snacks, etc. in the bunkhouse because the crumbs attract critters. *Do not offer or store drinks other than water in the dorm-they are available outside the dorms.* Any snacks should be put into footlockers when you leave the dorm, and make sure to sweep up several times a day.

6. **MEDICINES:** The rules say no drugs of any kind in the bunkhouse; all medications have to be obtained from the medical center. Coaches in the past discreetly kept the standard, over the counter stuff in their footlocker for all to use. Advil, Tylenol, benadryl, sudafed, etc. This will be paramount if a kid needs it “now”.

- Make sure you have some corn starch, or Gold Bond powder.
- Make sure you have diaper rash cream-yes, somebody will need it.
- Bring sunscreen
- Bring chapstick for lips
- Bring bug spray like off-there are lots of flies sometimes

7. **WAGON:** Bring a wagon/cart (or two).

- You are going to need it desperately to make laundry runs, ice runs, carry equipment to the fields etc. Everything is very spread out so you should not assume your back will be able to carry 20-50 pounds of ice, 100 pounds of laundry, baseballs, catchers equipment, etc. for miles each day. Yes, miles. You may walk at least 3-4 miles each day.

8. **BROOM AND FAN:** Bring a broom or two and some window fans.

- Some bunkhouses already have them and some do not. If you get a bunkhouse that already has them, then just store them under your bed. Otherwise, you will be darn glad that you have one. Most of the bunkhouses have either 6 or 8 windows.

9. SLEEPING AND SLEEP SUPPLIES:

- The bunk beds come with a fitted sheet only. It has been suggested that everyone bring a decent fitted sheet from home to put on the bunk mattress. Again, you can just get a cheap set from Wal-Mart. NOTE: Folks in the past have said that the sheets provided were kind of icky. They may have been replaced, as some have reported theirs were fine.
- The weather is really weird up there depending on when you go. Some nights are cool (comfortable) and others are really cold. Everyone should bring a sleeping bag. This will provide means to bundle up on cold nights, or just sleep on top of it on warmer nights. Some who have gone before us needed an extra blanket on cold nights, so you may want to pack a blanket also.
- A hint: Adults need a bottom bunk. Some coaches have slept in a top bunk, and it made it very difficult getting in and out, especially in the middle of the night if a player needed something. Sleepwalkers should NEVER have a top bunk!
- The rules say that an adult must accompany a kid to the bathroom in the middle of the night. This could be a big pain in the butt in the middle of the night if they have to wake up the coaches. **MAKE SURE EVERYONE GOES TO THE BATHROOM BEFORE THEY GET IN BED FOR THE NIGHT!**
- It is suggested that you take 2 sets of sleep clothes-one for warm nights and one for cold nights. At least pack a pair of sweat pants just in case.
- Each person needs to bring their own pillow and pillowcase.
- Before bedding down, players should square away their zone. Get stuff put away and out of the aisles between beds and main aisle. After everything is stowed away, give the floor a clean sweep. This is necessary to avoid injury or unnecessary noise when someone gets up in the middle of the night and is trying to grope around in the dark to find the door.
- Avoid using the bunk that has the 'exit' sign over it. That sign is very bright and there is no way the person with that bed can get to sleep. It is suggested that those beds be used as laundry beds.
- Bring a little can of lubricating oil. The hinges and other parts on the bunkhouse door will squeak very loudly. This wakes people up in the middle of the night. If yours squeaks, put some oil on it.

10. FOOTLOCKERS: Each bunk bed has an accompanying footlocker on the floor.

- It's big enough to hold one persons stuff for the week, like clothes, uniforms, toiletries, shoes, towels, etc. Keeping things orderly should not a big problem.
- But there is not a lot of space, so with all the footlockers, coolers, bags of snacks, cleats, baseball equipment, etc., things can get very disorderly very quickly. Make sure that the players keep their areas as tidy as possibly.
- Bring a combination lock for the footlocker.

11. UMBRELLAS: Consider bringing some umbrellas.

- These will come in handy on cold nights at 2 AM when it's raining, and someone needs to go to the bathroom. Or when you walk to the dining pavilion for meals or walk to the medical center for special drugs (some kids will be taking something, and that must be registered and stored there), or walk to the arcade & snack bar.

12. **CASH:** Be prepared to supply cash (one dollar bills or rolls of quarters) for use at the arcade and snack bar.
- This cash supply should probably be managed every couple of days so the kids aren't carrying around and storing a lot of cash at one time. They will definitely want to go to the arcade during "free" time, and they surely want to eat some "concession stand" food during the free evenings.
 - In some cases, the snack bar food is the only meal they get in the evening due to the game schedule, or the fact that the dining pavilion dinner meal is the worst one of the day....mystery meat, mystery spaghetti, overcooked veggies...yuck.
 - We have been told that breakfast is the best meal, and that lunch is pretty good too.
 - Saturday morning is not included in your meal package, however, there is a breakfast that morning at a \$4.00 additional cost.

13. **COFFEE:**
- Coaches, if you drink coffee, it is suggested that you bring a travel mug or thermos with you. Coffee is available 24/7 at the dining pavilion, but the cups they supply are tiny.

14: BANNER :

- Don't forget your team banner for the marches.

15. **WORK SCHEDULE:**

- It has been found that it works well for coaches to have specific duties during the week. Example: Muggsie- Laundry, Queeg- Cleanup crew at night, Murray-ice and water pickup. (Sample names) Of course there will be some crossover, but for the most part it will be easier for everyone to have specific tasks, and the boys will get used to the "routine".

16. **CELL PHONES:**

- Bring your cell phone AND charger. This is the only means of communicating with your spouses and the kid's parents. You'll need to call them about schedule changes, supply requests, etc. The Park does an excellent job of communicating via the "family/parents" information pavilion at the ball park. Bring the cell phone anyway; you will need it.

17. **TEAM PINS:**

- This is a very big deal and very popular at Cooperstown. EVERYBODY does it, a lot. Each player should have about 100 pins and a pin towel. We are told that most of the pin trading takes place the first day or two; after that, no one has much time, with games, meals, and other stuff. Upon check in, let the pin trading begin!

18. **COACHES:**

- All coaches **MUST** attend a safety training session. They are held Friday at 8:00 and 10:00 PM and Saturday at 11:30 AM. Failure for all coaches to attend and sign in will result in a one game

suspension by the tournament director. Coaches should review their coach's kit very thoroughly, as there is a lot of pertinent information contained inside!

19. **PARENTS AND FAMILY:**

- Parents and family members may enter the Baseball Village on Friday night between 6:00 PM and 11:00 PM and Saturday morning between 8:30 and 11:00 AM to help unload players and equipment. This will be the only time vehicles will be allowed to enter. **YOU HAVE 5 (FIVE) MINUTES TO UNLOAD YOUR VEHICLE AND IMMEDIATELY MOVE IT TO THE PARKING LOT.** Please drive safely as there will be lots of people running around. You can then walk back to the dorms to get your child settled in. Parents and family members **must exit the Baseball Village by 11:00 AM Saturday.**

20. **BBQ DINNER:**

- All parents and family members are invited to attend the chicken BBQ dinner-nominal fee- held in the Parents Pavilion (field side) between 11:30 and 4:30 PM on Saturday AND between 11:30 and 6:00 PM on Thursday. All parents and family are encouraged to attend the family orientation, opening ceremony, and skills competition held at field #3 at 4:30 PM on Saturday. Many teams chose to wear bright colored shirts-all the same-as the TV and camera crews go around, and it's cool when everyone on the team is dressed the same. You can even make signs and banners to hold up for the team and your player.

21. **PHOTOS:**

- Be sure to sign up for pictures during check in. If you do this, you get one free team picture and a free sheet of the "trading card" pictures. Also, consider assigning at least one person to take photos-they are free when using a digital camera, so take lots! We are told that the pictures are quite expensive there!

22. **MAYHEM:**

- Assume that the first night with the kids will be WILD. It's like a giant sleep over with no Moms to control the chaos. The kids will be wide awake because they slept in the car on the way to New York, or on the plane. Rest assured, they will eventually settle down and go to sleep, around midnight. After that, they will be very tired every evening, and they will be begging for you to turn out the lights.

23. **SIGNING IN AND OUT:**

- The kids are allowed to leave the park with their parents ONLY if they have a signed form. These special forms are provided by the Park. Parents are required to get the forms (available at the Parents Pavilion) and get them completely filled out. Then you can just bring the form top a coach for a quick signature and take your player with you.
- You will be asked to show the form when you exit the park.
- Upon returning, you can just drop the player off at the entrance to the Baseball Village. This is the entrance that separates the ball fields park from the living quarters area.

- Most of the time, the Park officials allow the kids to walk from this entrance back to the bunkhouse. Sometimes, though, the Park officials make them call a coach to meet them and escort them back. It's a good thing idea for you to call the coaches cell phone to let them know that you are dropping off your player.

24. **KID RULES:**

- The Park officials will stress that the kids **MUST** be accompanied by an adult at all times. You will find that this is impossible. They all want to do different things at different times at different places. You will also find that **NOBODY** obeys this rule; kids are running around loose all over the place. They are 12. They can handle it. Set some ground rules:
 - Before leaving to go anywhere, kids **MUST** inform an adult.
 - Give them a limited amount of time and make them check in when they return-no exceptions or excuses.
 - Changing the plan is not allowed without prior adult consent. In other words, if they say that they are going to trade pins over by the shower house, then they **MUST** do that, not change their minds and go to the arcade.
 - Do not let anyone to go alone-always use the buddy system.
 - Go with them if it is at all possible.