

SLEEPING BAGS

The sleeping bag is no more than a special type of clothing to keep the camper comfortably warm when sleeping or otherwise necessary.

The ability of a sleeping bag to retain heat is a function of design and materials.

DESIGN - Look for a design that prevents drafts and provides sufficient loft.

< "LOFT" is simply a word for thickness of insulation (trapped dead air). The U.S. Army says the following loft is the minimum needed to keep the average, healthy sleeper reasonably warm inside a tent or shelter. Figures are for the total thickness of the bag (or combined bags and blankets) and assume that about 1/2 of the bag is above the sleeper and 1/2 underneath. For comfort, add 1" of top loft.

LOW TEMP. LOFT	LOW TEMP. LOFT	LOW TEMP. LOFT	LOW TEMP. LOFT
40 3.00"	20 4.00"	0 5.00"	-20 6.00"
30 3.50"	10 4.50"	-10 5.50"	-30 6.50"

< You heat the bag. A bag which fits closer to the body means less space to heat. A **hood** which can be drawn close around the head (or blankets to do the same) prevents loss of heat from the bag and insulates the head. **Double offset quilting** greatly increases insulating value for the same weight of filler. A **draft tube** full of insulation behind the zipper is important.

MATERIAL

< Fill - all fillers (stuffing) are not equal. Quallofil, Hollofil II, Kodofil, Loftguard and Polarguard are superior to Hollofil 808, which is superior to generic polyester, which is better than acrylic or "textile waste."

< Zippers - should be durable, preferably of nylon or similar plastic since these materials do not freeze and do not cut bag fabric if a run-on (snag) occurs. (As a design matters, a longer zipper allows more ventilation and extends the temperature range of the bag.)

< Covers and liners - should be of tightly woven nylon or polyester or blend of manmade fibers. AVOID COTTON !!!!! (Cold, stays wet when it gets wet, and wears out too fast.)

A BIG "AND"

< UNDER your sleeping bag MUST come some insulation which will not compress much under body weight. Closed-cell foam pads or foam-filled air mattresses are best. In a pinch, several layers of blankets, cardboard or many layers of newspaper will work if kept dry. DON'T IGNORE THIS POINT !!!!!