

# HOW TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR BAG

Although down can have a long life, the slightest abuse may damage it. Like human hair and animal fur, down is made of protein and lanolin. It is surprisingly tough, and a down sleeping bag will give many years of reliable service—if treated properly. Here are some tips:

**Keep your bag dry.** It is critical to the life of the down to keep it dry. If your bag gets wet, dry it as soon as possible. (A combination of drying in the sun—with frequent turning—and machine drying on a low setting is best.) When a down particle remains wet for any length of time, the clinging tendrils of the down plumule begin to deteriorate, reducing the lofting power. The best thing you can do for your bag is machine-dry it every time you come back from a trip.

**Wash your bag.** Oils from the body—given off in perspiration or from simple bodily contact with the sleeping bag fabric—are easily absorbed by the down. These oils attract dirt, which reduces the loft. To keep these oils to a minimum, the down sleeping bag should be washed or cleaned—but only with special care. Too much washing could inhibit the loft of the down as well

as cause it to “leak” through the fabric. Even if you use your bag fairly often, a once-a-year wash is probably enough. (For more information on washing and drying bags, see page 12.)

**Don't leave it in the sun.** Direct sunlight can damage the down, too. If the rays of the sun are allowed to heat the surface of the bag for an extended period, the oils of the down closest to the surface may be burned away, thus destroying the individual down plumules. This, of course, would decrease the loft.

**Store it loosely.** Down is naturally resilient. Do not strain its power of resiliency by compressing it for long periods. In storing, do so loosely, preferably letting it lie flat so that it will loft.

**Stuff it properly.** Stuff your sleeping bag into the stuff sack foot-first. This allows the air to be pushed out the top of the bag. Try to get at least half the bag into the bottom half of the stuff sack. Never roll your sleeping bag—this compresses the down unnaturally.

**Don't yank it out.** Be careful when you unstuff your bag. Pull it out of the stuff sack gently. Pulling too hard can rip out the baffles.

## DOWN FILL/WIND CHILL FACTOR

Thickness of Down Insulation (in inches)  
needed to maintain comfort when sleeping

Temperature

Wind Speed, MPH

(°F)	0	10	20	30	40
40°	1½"	1¾"	2"	2"	2¼"
30°	1¾"	2"	2½"	2½"	3"
20°	2"	2½"	2¾"	3"	3¼"
10°	2¼"	2¾"	3"	3¼"	3½"
0°	2½"	3"	3½"	3¾"	3¾"
-10°	2¾"	3¼"	3¾"	4"	4¼"
-20°	3"	3¾"	4"	4½"	4½"