

BPE DofE Expedition Bitesize 03: Sleeping Bag & Roll Mat

What sleeping bag to take on an expedition? Consider the following key points:

Consider temperature

- Range: This provides the maximum and minimum temperatures that the sleeping bag is designed for.
- Comfort: This is the optimum temperature level that you will be warm and able to sleep in.

There is no point taking a sleeping bag suitable for arctic expeditions if it is going to be warm and mild. Likewise, temperatures can still be chilly at night so thin sleeping bags made for indoor use or very hot weather are unlikely to be suitable. Think about how high you are going: if you are wild camping on a Gold expedition in the mountains, temperature will be substantially lower than on lower ground. Typically, a 2 or 3 season sleeping bag is probably the best choice, keeping you comfortable on mild to cold nights.

Consider weight

You will be carrying all your equipment so make sure your sleeping bag is lightweight too. Look for a lightweight sleeping bag with a weight of 1000-1100g.

Consider what it is made from

Down sleeping bags are made from feathers, whereas Synthetic sleeping bags are made using polyfibres. Do **NOT** use Down Sleeping Bags as they will not keep you warm if they get wet. Instead, we recommend Synthetic sleeping bags as these are cheaper and are more appropriate for DofE Expeditions.

Consider size

You will need to pack your sleeping bag into your rucksack and still have space for all your other gear. Ensure it packs down as small as possible, and use a stuff sack or compression bag with straps that tighten to reduce the size even further.

Consider comfort

If you know you tend to get cold, consider a model with extra insulation, and if you like to move around in your sleep, think about buying a design to maximise foot room. Consider taking an inner sheet bag, which will act as extra insulation and protect your sleeping bag.

Cushion your sleep

A roll mat will help to insulate you from the ground, providing a degree of extra comfort and warmth. Self-insulating mats are also available although tend to be more expensive.

