

Mess Kit Pitch-In

This recipe is great for backpack camping, when you want the flavor and variety of Dutch oven cooking, but just can't bear to carry the weight. Each member of the Patrol cooks a piece of the meal in his mess kit. Then each Scout fills his bowl with a bit from each mess kit until he has a tasty meal. When estimating quantities, each person must keep in mind that he is cooking for the whole Patrol, and the amount of food cooked in his mess kit is the amount he can expect to end up with.

Quantities below are estimated based on 6 Scouts cooking for 8 people.

Scout #1 Meat

Choose a meat for the meal based on preference and whether refrigeration is available. If no refrigeration is available, choose a pre-cooked, packaged meat such as foil-packed chicken breast or SPAM. Prepare about 1/5 pound meat per patrol member by heating and browning the meat in mess kit pan. Stir frequently to avoid sticking and burning.

Scout #4 Potatoes (and Carrots)

Cut 5-6 medium sized raw potatoes into ½ inch cubes. Wash the potatoes first, but there is no need to peel them. Place 2 tablespoons of oil in mess kit cooking pan, add potatoes, and fry until soft. If necessary, cook part of the potatoes, remove from pan onto a piece of foil, and cook the next batch until all are cooked. Add salt and pepper to taste. If you would like to add carrots to the meal, they should be cooked with the potatoes, as the cooking time until tender is about the same as potatoes.

Scout #2 Peppers and Onions (& Garlic if popular with the group)

Dice two large onions and two large green peppers. Place 1 tablespoon of oil in mess kit, and sauté onions and peppers until soft and caramelized. Three cloves of garlic can be added if your group likes garlic.

Scout #3 Beans and Corn

Cut the corn from 2 ears of fresh sweet corn. Snips the ends from a handful of fresh green beans and cut the beans into pieces no longer than 1 inch. Place 3 tablespoons of water in mess kit, and steam vegetables until al dente.

Scout #5 Sauce

Prepare a sauce for the meal by combining two packets of McCormick's chicken gravy mix or brown gravy mix with two cups of water. Don't worry about whether you use brown gravy mix with chicken or chicken gravy mix with SPAM. You will develop a preference for one combination or the other, but both are flavorful sauces, regardless of which meat your meal is based on.

Scout #6 Biscuits

Before leaving home, pre-mix Bisquick powder and the appropriate proportion of dry powdered milk. Once you arrive at camp, you will only need to add water to finish the mixture. Prepare the biscuit dough by adding water to the correct proportion (found on the Bisquick box). You will be making 'drop biscuits' so you will want the dough slightly wet rather than kneadable. Using a spoon or your clean hand, divide the dough into 8 pieces, and cook in your mess kit by allowing to brown on one side and then turning over. You will want to use indirect heat to avoid burning while you wait for the inside of the biscuits to get done.