

**Packing Your Son's Trunk**  
By Laura H. Ordway, Winona Director/Owner

The thing you should keep in mind when packing your child's camp trunk for the first (or tenth) time is: **do not panic**. I should heed my own advice because each summer, while packing two trunks for my children, I start to feel a little overwhelmed by the process. Then I think of one Winona parent who used to pack FIVE trunks each summer. Impressive, by any measure. I'm pretty sure she's not available for hire, so this article will hopefully emphasize to you what I find most helpful when packing my children's trunks: MINIMALIZATION. I'm going to keep this short, adding in only crucial details. When I Googled "how to pack a trunk for summer camp" I found a lot of novella-length articles. Some had good background information, but most just added to the overwhelming feeling of the situation. The purpose of this article is to actually get *the thing packed*. Helpful things to remember:

**You will save time by remembering that your goal is NOT to recreate your son's living environment at home.** If anything, here at Winona we want just the opposite. We want your son to discover in this new environment, without all of the amenities of home, how comfortable he can be. So, don't pack extra bedding (unless it's medically necessary) and allow him the chance to learn to wear extra layers to bed on cool nights. (We do allow one throw-sized fleece blanket from home, but that should be it.) Don't pack three bottles of shampoo. Pack one, and if he runs out he will learn how to ask a counselor for more (Winona resupplies toiletry items). No need to pack one of every item of outerwear from the catalog. Don't send him books *and* comics *and* mini games *and* playing cards for free time. Just one or two of the items will be fine. Do not send electronics. Allow him the chance to figure out solutions by not offering him an option for every possible weather/free-time situation he may encounter at camp.

**You will save time by packing used items from home, rather than making a long shopping list for new items.** At first my kids thought going to camp would be like the first day of school: "Yeah - new items!" They caught on quickly when they watched me launder, and then pack into their trunks the towels we use to dry off our dogs. If a towel has a hole in it, great! Send it to camp. Those Crocs about on their last few weeks, perfect! Off to camp they go. A pair of jeans with holes in the knees, fantastic! In the trunk they go so when they get saturated with bug repellent and marshmallows or used as a hammock I will feel just fine

about recycling them at the end of camp. Of course, things should "fit" at camp, so do take the time to ensure shorts, t-shirts and sweatshirts work, but overall save yourself time by packing clothes and toiletries you already have at home. *It's certainly okay to send brand new clothing to camp as long as you realize it has the possibility of being damaged.*

**Unpacking the trunk, also known as "Stand Back!"** We try to get your son's items cleaned and dried before closing his trunk to be sent home, but it's still very similar to opening a sealed sports locker in the gym. A Winona parent once informed me that the sandwich she had packed for her son in his carry-on luggage on Opening Day returned in his trunk 3½ weeks later (sorry about that Liz!). But what is the most important part of unpacking, in the midst of piles of pine needles and unidentified odors, is listening . . . ask for stories about what your son thought was the silliest part of the summer, ask what made him feel more confident, what was his biggest concern that he overcame. (And if you do have gently worn Winona t-shirts & shorts that he has outgrown, please consider mailing them to us here at camp so we can help our Campership boys get outfitted each summer.)

**Here are the basic trunk packing steps:**

1. Use the **WINONA TRUNK PACKING GUIDE** (back of this paper) and make a pile of all the items your son has at home which he can bring to camp (start putting his name on items)
2. Order trunk, uniforms and any items he does not have from AmeraSport (or vendor of your choice)
3. Prep toiletries and non-clothing personal items; shop for missing items
4. Name tag, name label, permanent marker, brand or use any other form of putting your son's name on all his items
5. Do a final packing at least two or three days before the trunk has to be shipped/transported to camp to allow for last minute items which may have been overlooked previously

**So, now you are ready to pack your son's trunk!  
Good luck and remember: LESS IS BETTER.**

(OVER)

WINONA TRUNK PACKING GUIDE: camper name: \_\_\_\_\_ unit/session/year: \_\_\_\_\_

Use this list, or the Clothing & Equipment list located in the center of your AmeraSport catalog, as a guide for trunk packing (quantities are the same for FULL, FIRST or SECOND session campers).

CLOTHING	EQUIPMENT & FOOTWEAR	PERSONAL ITEMS	OTHER
Winona ringer t-shirts:	1 hard-sided trunk	shower caddy	book or comic books
Junior Unit = 8	1 mesh laundry bag	bar soap or body wash	playing cards or MadLibs
Intermediate Unit = 7	1 sleeping bag	skin moisturizer/lotion	stationery, family addresses, family/friends photo
Senior Unit = 3	1 small "day" backpack	shampoo & conditioner	a few pens, color pencils, pencil sharpener, eraser
Winona shorts:	2 towels (bath/beach size)	comb/brush	*Summer 2022: 4 face masks and/or "buffs"
Junior Unit = 6	2 pair sneakers	sunscreen	Optional:
Intermediate Unit = 5	1 pair water shoes/Texas	insect repellent	1 fleece blanket (Winona supplies all bedding; do not send personal sheets and additional blankets)
Senior Unit = 2	1 pair sandals (shower)	lip balm	sheet music & instrument
8 pairs underwear	Optional: (if your son already has the below items, feel free to send them along; Winona provides shared athletic equipment.)	deodorant	Magic cards (2-3 decks max.)
10 pairs white socks		toothpaste/toothbrush/floss/cup	bathrobe
1 - 2 pairs hiking socks		nail clippers, wash cloth	disposable camera
2 pairs of pajamas	1 pair soccer cleats	1 flashlight/headlamp	stuffed animal
2 swim shorts	1 pair shin guards	1 water bottle	
2 pairs jeans/long pants	1 pair hiking boots	belt	
1 nylon windbreaker	1 large dry bag (canoe trips)	other: _____	
1 rain jacket	1 tennis racket	_____	
1 sweatshirt	1 lacrosse stick	_____	
1 fleece jacket/vest	1 baseball glove	_____	
1 baseball hat	fishing gear	_____	

- TO DO just before camp:**
- Confirm paperwork is submitted
  - Finalize arrival & departure times
  - Prep medications for Health Ctr.
  - If shipping trunk – set up account