

The word camping means very different things to different people. For some, it's a hiking bag with the very basics for survival and a few days out in the bushwalking different trails. For others, it's towing a giant 5th wheeler caravan behind their American dual cab with satellite TV, coffee machine, diesel heater and all of the rest of the camping luxuries many people have in their home.

Camping has changed a lot over the last couple of decades, and I firmly believe there is no reason why you should be roughing it. Yep, things might not be as easy and simple as when you are at home, but you shouldn't feel uncomfortable or like you are missing out.

It's funny when you mention camping to various people - some jump with enthusiasm and others look at you with a 'are you mad' look. For courses I say, some people love camping and others don't. The unfortunate thing though, is that often those who don't enjoy it have had a bad experience or roughed it in the past and have been put off.



We've refined our campsite setup over time to be comfortable and easy to use.

I'll make a bold statement here - if you have good quality gear, and you use it correctly when camping, there's no roughing it involved. I promise. Like everything, initially there's an adjustment period where you learn what gear to get and how to use it, but take your time and you'll have an enjoyable experience.

We live in a country where camping options are just about unlimited, and you can camp in some of the most incredible places in the world. There's a reason why so many tourists flock here, and many of them choose to travel around and camp.

There are so many different things today that can make your camping super comfortable, but let's break them down into the important factors.



The gear we use allows us to camp comfortably wherever we are.

What do you need to camp comfortably?

1. A good night's sleep

It doesn't matter where you are, a good night's sleep is a must for an enjoyable day. When camping, it's especially important, as you are often in bed for longer. A lot of people will go to bed early and get up early following the sun.

In order to get a good night's sleep, you need to be comfortable, warm and dry. That means a mattress and pillow that you enjoy laying on, the right bedding for the temperature and a tent, swag, camper trailer or caravan that is going to keep you dry. I've had some truly awful sleeps when camping in the past, and it all comes down to gear that just wasn't up to scratch.

If you are looking at making your camping more enjoyable and don't always get a good night's sleep, one of the best upgrades you can do is upgrade your sleeping equipment. The best upgrade I did was swapping out my camping mattress to a Blackwolf Mega Deluxe, followed closely by ditching the sleeping bag and moving into a camper trailer with a queen innerspring mattress, sheets and doona.



In our camper trailer, we sleep on a very comfy innerspring mattress.

2. A comfortable place to sit

Camping chairs have come in leaps and bounds. While some of the old fold out chairs worked, they weren't the most enjoyable things to use! Today though, you can get everything from recliners to moon chairs and even chairs that have inbuilt warmers. Seriously, Explore Planet Earth are selling their USB powered Lava Heated Chair. You can laugh all you want, but on a cold night when there is a fire ban you won't be laughing when you are the one with a heated chair!



It makes a huge difference to your comfort levels if you can sit on a quality chair.

3. Physical comfort and entertainment

Throughout the day, you've got to be comfortable, and have something to do. Australia has a lot of places that get extremely cold, or extremely hot. Having the right clothing and activities planned to match the temperature is a smart move. I've been camping when it's freezing and misjudged the clothing to bring, and it isn't much fun.

Likewise, hot weather can be extremely unpleasant if you don't have the ability to sit under some shade or cool off in a water source. Lucky for us, we have one of the biggest coastlines in the world and plenty of stunning freshwater bodies.

Before you head off, make sure you find out what is in the area that you can go and see, or do to stay entertained. A lazy day around camp is great from time to time, but you'll probably get bored of it after that!

It's great to camp near freshwater to cool off in - you'll stay comfy and entertained.

4. Ease of use

I mentioned earlier that camping can be a bit more awkward, and that's just the nature of it - you are going back to basics. You can't take everything with you that makes life easy at home.

Having hot water on demand might not be part of your setup (although it could be!), but being able to warm up water easily for dishes, or setting up your campsite for a night needs to be relatively easy. The moment you start struggling, it takes away from the enjoyment. When I head away camping, I always make a note of things that are difficult or awkward, and when I get back changes are made, or new gear is purchased to make it easier for next time. The more you camp, the better you become at it and the more comfortable/enjoyable it becomes.



Make sure your setup is easy to use, so everyday tasks aren't as difficult as they need to be.

5. The right gear

With all the amazing camping gear on the market today, I have a lot of respect for those who did it tough in the years gone by. Fridges, 12V lighting, diesel heaters, electric blankets, inverters, super-fast gas burners and quick pitch tents make camping insanely easy today.


Whilst it can be expensive to set up, it practically guarantees an easy and amazing camping trip!


Quality 12V lighting is an investment, but very worthwhile.

6. Great food

I'll let you in on a little secret... food when camping always tastes better. If you make a meal that would be tasty at home, you'll love it when away. Cooking on a fire is one of the best things you'll ever do, with some truly delicious food.

Not only do you want it to taste good though, but it should have some nutritional value too. Packet Mee Goreng might taste okay every now and again, but it's not the healthiest thing for you over and over, and you'll soon get tired of it. Keep it simple, healthy (relatively!) quick to make and limit the number of dishes you need to cook it.


Who's roughing it when you eat a meal of freshly caught Crayfish?

7. Good hygiene

Don't go camping without ensuring you are going to be hygienic. This means a way to cook, wash your dishes, drink clean water and go to the toilet without spreading bugs around while you do it.

This is usually as simple as taking quality drinking water with you, having the ability to boil water, knowing how to go to the toilet in the bush and taking soap or hand disinfectant that's easy to access.

You can get very ill from poor hygienic practices, and if this happens when camping it's not the nicest place to be.


There are lots of campgrounds that have toilets now, which makes hygiene easier.

8. Camper trailers and caravans - the most comfortable camping you'll do

A lot of people new to the camping game start off with a tent or swag. Don't get me wrong, you can be incredibly comfortable in both with the right setup, but there is a reason so many people are buying camper trailers and caravans. They have everything you need, all packed into one unit.

Obviously, these come with some compromises too, like size, weight and cost, but in terms of comfortable camping, it's about as good as it gets.


Despite the extra weight and size, a caravan or camper trailer has everything you need.



9. The right location and weather

It's hugely important to pick the right camping destination and ensure it suits the weather. Australia's coastline can be absolutely magnificent, or it can be blowing a gale, raining and miserable. Aim to be prepared for the weather you are going to, or pick a location that ensures the weather is going to be mild.

If there's a way to make your camping trip unenjoyable, it's staying somewhere unprepared for the weather that comes your way.



Choose your spot based on the weather conditions to ensure a comfy stay.

10. Being able to relax

Camping is all about getting away from the hustle and bustle and taking some time to relax. There's no better place to do it than the thousands of camping locations within Australia. Sit back with a drink, soak up the views and enjoy the company of your friends and family.

The fact that you aren't busy running around trying to get things done at home is going to make your camping trip far more enjoyable right from day dot.



Take the time to relax and enjoy the experience.

My comfortable camping setup

Like many people, I started off with a cheap swag and not much else, then slowly upgraded. I now head away with the family in a well setup 4WD and camper trailer.

Compared to many out there it's a fairly simple setup, but it allows us to camp easily and in comfort, even with a 2-year-old boy. It's taken many years to refine and set up this way, but I love it.

Who's got their camping setup nailed, so you can head away easily and comfortably?