



With the festival season drawing nearer, the thought of hopping on a plane or piling into the car with a bunch of mates and spending a couple of nights listening to music under the stars becomes more and more exciting.

For those of you lucky enough to score tickets for the biggest events of the year, we've put together our best tips for camping at a festival.

1. Choosing the right tent

Now camping at a festival is a little different from your usual outdoor escape. There's a little less serenity and solitude, and a whole lot more noise and activity going on.

If you're a camping pro, you probably don't want to take your \$1k canvas touring tent considering there will be that many intoxicated punters around. Instead, you might want to choose something a little less valuable but still reliable for a weekend away.

If you go for a really budget-friendly or beginner shelter, make sure you're not one of those people that ditch your tent at the site. Not only is that a huge waste, it's extra rubbish for the clean-up crew to remove. If you're planning on buying a tent just for the one trip, donate it to charity or give it to a mate – that way it doesn't end up going to landfill.

Pop up tents are always a popular choice as they're easy to set up. But they can take a bit of practice to get them back into the bag smoothly. Practise beforehand a couple of times, as you don't want to end up snapping the poles or struggling with it while nursing a cheeky hangover.



*Choose your shelter wisely, you want to be comfy but you don't want to risk your fave tent.
Image: iStock*

2. Securing your gear and marking your shelter

Finding a way to make your tent distinctive is going to be super helpful, especially when you're stumbling back in the dark after the last set. It could be a flag, fluorescent guy ropes, or some cheap glow in the dark stickers (so that they peel off easily) to help your tent stick out from the crowd.

It might also be worth snapping a photo of your campsite so that if you blank and can't find your tent, you've got a picture to jog your memory. There should be lockers available on site, but you should still add locks to your tent doors to keep your gear safe and deter thieves.



Lights or glowing guy ropes are a great way to make your shelter stand out. Photo: Coleman

3. Getting a good night's rest

You might be ready to turn in for the night at 11 pm after a long day, but for others – they might be *just* getting started. Instead of being woken up every hour by singing, shrieking, shouting, and the worst – late night agony aunt sessions outside your tent – bring along a set of earplugs for your own sanity. That way you'll be as fresh as a daisy for the next day.

While festivals can be quite warm during the day, the same doesn't always apply at night. Make sure that you have a versatile sleeping bag that's at least 5 degrees lower than the



lowest expected temperature so that you can sleep comfortably.

It also might be worth throwing a sleeping bag liner into the mix, to keep your bag nice and clean.



You won't be having thorough showers, so a sleeping bag liner is probably a good idea.

Photo: Sea to Summit

4. Eating and staying hydrated

You're going to be losing a lot of fluids, so if you're allowed to take in an empty drink bottle then make sure you do, so that you can fill it up at the water stations.

If you're planning on saving a bit of cash by bringing some snacks and food in, just keep in mind there may be cooking restrictions in place. You might have to make do with bringing food that doesn't involve heat to prepare, so make sure to check the rules before you go.

5. Keeping as clean as possible

Depending on how determined you are to brave the lines for the public showers, it's likely you're going to have to make do with another solution. An absorbent, compact and fast drying towel is an absolute must – as baby wipes will only get you so far after a day or so. Plus you never know what kind of mess you will have to clean up. Take with you some biodegradable soap so you can do any washing outside at the taps.

Take a sealable rubbish bag to keep in your tent, as you don't want to wake up with crunchy bits and food wrappers in your sleeping bag. Plus you won't have to waste energy getting up to chuck rubbish out in the bins.



Keep a couple of fast-drying towels handy if you can't get to the showers. Photo: Sea to

Summit

6. Keeping yourself and others safe

Check where all the important areas are of the festival when you first arrive. Make a mental note of where the first aid area is as well as the toilets, security, and information. That way if you do have to get help quickly, you'll know exactly where to go.

Take your phone and wallet with you at all times, and if you have anything really valuable check it into a locker. Get to know your tent neighbours. Not only is it good to make new friends, you can also keep an eye out on each other's gear when you're not around.



A waterproof case will protect your phone from rain... and beer spills. Photo: Sea to Summit

7. Protecting and charging your devices

Accept the fact early on that you're not going to be dry for pretty much the entire time that you're there. Between bad weather, being sprayed with water in the crowd, having drinks spilt on you, and other people's sweat mingling with your own – your phone and other



valuables are going to need a waterproof case or dry bag.

Also, keep a portable recharger handy so you can give your phone that extra juice to text your mates and snap plenty of images to remember the festival by.



A keychain-sized lantern will help you navigate in the dark. Photo: Goal Zero

8. Illuminating your path at night

Don't rely on the torchlight on your phone – you don't want to waste precious battery. And with so much going on, you might trip in the dark and drop your phone in the mud. Keep a lantern in your tent, and a smaller light with you at all times. Something that can easily attach to your keys is a good choice or a head torch as that won't take up much space.



A hands-free bag that fits your money, ID and phone is all you need. Photo: Eagle Creek.

9. Carrying your gear

Crossbody or waist style bags (i.e., the quintessentially elegant and stylish bum bag) are the best choices. It's a lot easier to keep track of your valuables if you can feel your bag on you at all times. Plus, bags over a certain size may not be allowed in some areas of the festival, which limits your options.

In terms of the majority of your gear, a water-resistant duffle bag or backpack is the best way to go as you'll want to leave anything wheeled at home. Choose something durable and with a multi-function strap. This will make hauling your gear to and from the bus/car/airport to your site easy so you don't do your back in.



*Pack everything back in your vehicle when it's time to leave – don't leave anything behind!
Photo: Eagle Creek*

10. Leaving no trace

Music festivals are the perfect time to let loose (not *too* loose though) and enjoy yourself. But don't forget that when you leave – the area isn't just going to magically clean itself up. When it's time to pack everything back in your car and hit the road – keep in mind the usual leave no trace principles.

If you can do your bit to take it out with you, then I'm sure that the environment (and the cleanup crew) will thank you for it.

Did we leave anything out? If so, what are are your best tips for surviving a music festival?