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From the ranting and raving in the RV next door, to pets in our personal space,

outdoor experts Lauren and Ben pull into Camp Etiquette and give a tour of common courtesy within shared spaces.

Be it putting the midnight mayhem to bed, setting up your space strategically, or avoiding the drone of a dirt bike, this episode of the Snowys Camping Show unpacks the various campsite concerns, how to escape them on your next trip away – and why you might be one of them!

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Mentioned in this episode

Products:

Awnings

Engel 2500W Pure Sinewave Inverter Generator R500IS

Bushman Fridges DC65–X 65L Upright Fridge

Episodes:

Ep7 – Gear You Don’t Need For Camping

Ep 18 – Camping, Waste, and Leaving No Trace

Ep21 – Camp Furniture Setups with Zempire

Group Camping

There are two types of families at a campsite: brothers by blood, and brothers from another mother. While the former enjoy board games after dark and helping Dad peg out the awning, the latter find fun in throwing back beers, blasting beats, and just being with the boys.

If you're one of 'the boys', don't worry – you're still a legend. Nonetheless, we have a bro-code of our own for the sake of the mums and dads in the tents next door.

If partying until the portable speaker runs flat is the plan for your trip, we suggest booking out the campsite entirely. If this isn't an option, simply keep in mind polite practices and consider those hoping for a good night's sleep on their getaway.

Campsite Noise

Following on from above, music can be pleasant within our own camp space. If you're the type who loves a sunset tune or two, simply be mindful of the groups camping around you. Often, families and groups venture to a campsite for the same reason – to relax, unwind, and enjoy the peace. The rowdy behaviour of one group can not only ruin the sleep of another but affect the day that follows – especially for families with young children.

Generators & Chainsaws

There's a reason Lauren and Ben consider both devices as Gear You Don't Need For Camping – they're often considered a noisy nuisance to other families and groups within the same campsite.

When few people are about and power sources are scarce, a generator is both appropriate and necessary. In other cases, their relentless, monotone groan can be irritating for campers who came for peace, quiet, and calm. While the whirring of a portable fridge tends to cut in and out, a generator's drone is ongoing.

Most people don't chuck their chainsaw in with their tackle on an off-road adventure, though some love taking tools that are a little rough around the edges. If you're one who enjoys opening the chainsaw choke, avoid cranking it at particularly early or late points in the day when other campers are either waking up slowly or unwinding after hours of activity.

Dirt Bikes

From cranking it to fanging it – dirt bikes, while popular in the camping realm, can also be deemed a disturbance. Some campers are impartial, though others prefer listening to the clicking of cicadas over that of a motorbike's ignition! Dirt bike owners are therefore encouraged to be mindful of the noise and road safety issues their vehicles pose within shared spaces.

Nonetheless, increasingly more campsites are restricting dirt bike access. For this reason, dirt bike owners are more than likely to find themselves camping with those alike. The bikes in question don't refer to the road-registered types (accepted by most campsites), but instead those that tear up the outback tracks.

With the pool of dirt bike-friendly camping grounds gradually shrinking, those who can't tolerate their noise are recommended to select one of the many options that turn them away. Just like being mindful of your blaring bike engine, campsite etiquette also spans to being conscious of what is available to some and not to others. For this reason, be selective when choosing your campsite and avoid silencing dirt bike owners who are within their right at relevant grounds.

Watching Out for Others

Campsite consideration covers many scenarios, but even so follows the simple, unspoken rule of watching out for others. While this extends beyond base camp into everyday life too, it's important to remain friendly and considerate of others in your camping area. Be it a family of five or a soul-searcher with a single swag, we all seek the same thing on a trip away – to enjoy the outdoors.

We Aussies love to lend a hand around the house, and it should be no different around the caravan. Be it repairing a hole in the roof or mending a broken brow pole – helping a friend in need is something we do, from the household to the tent folds! For the avid campers though, it's often easy to forget that others may still be learning the guy-ropes of setting up a living space beyond the bricks of their domestic home. Always keep an eye outside your awning for anyone who looks to be struggling with their setups. Doing so not only allows the opportunity to pass on your wisdom but contribute to creating a positive camping community.

On the contrary, too much interaction can be the opposite of what some campers prefer when kicking back by their caravan. As mentioned, the purpose of an outdoor getaway can often be to find solitude and personal space. Overly friendly neighbours, while fun to befriend, can be excessive for those who simply want to switch off and limit how often they socialise. To determine who these campers are, beware of potential boundaries, watch for body language, and observe social cues. On the other hand – if it's you we're describing, it can often help to arrange your camp space so it faces away from others and creates more segregation. Further information on campsite arrangements can be found within [Ep21 – Camp Furniture Setups with Zempire](#).

Walk AROUND Other People's Sites!

It's human nature to always want a faster way of doing something – be it cooking a meal, losing a few pounds, or simply travelling from A to B. In that, living at a communal campsite has us wanting to dodge all the 4WDs, bypass every barbeque area, and trudge past someone else's Trangia. Unfortunately though, there's no fast way to manoeuvre mindfully through a campsite.

Just. Go. AROUND.

Taking a shortcut through the centre of someone's camp space just to reach the toilet block is like walking straight through someone else's lounge room to reach the bus stop. Co-existing at a campsite involves maintaining a level of respect for others' privacy – and let's be honest, it's not that much further to simply follow the footpath.

On the other hand, how and where you set up camp in relation to others around you can help with how people are directed around your space and through the rest of the grounds.

Consider where your tent is pitched or how your caravan sits with respect to pathways, shared facilities, and other set-ups.

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Co-existing at a campsite involves maintaining a level of respect for others' privacy. Credit: OZtrail

Should you Share Your favourite Campsites?

While our “favourite” campsite can still be enjoyed by many others, sometimes our attachment can lead us to believe that it’s ours...and ours only! A site that secures our fondest holiday memories and keeps our routine road trips alive can often be what keeps us coming back.

Ben and Lauren suggest keeping any preferred campsites and camping grounds under wraps. As more people learn about your secret space, more will venture there during holiday periods and contribute to the crowding. Camping is becoming increasingly common with the COVID-19 pandemic, which can now make it difficult to locate a campsite roomy enough to relax and recharge. If we’re talking campsite etiquette, sharing a friend’s most-loved site with other groups isn’t necessary. As much as the site doesn’t belong to this friend – or any frequently-visiting group – it remains a location that is safe, familiar, and special to them when they travel.

From a planning perspective, some of the more hidden patches of paradise are found by investing time and energy into both travelling and building relationships with property owners. In that, Ben and Lauren agree that a free or low-cost campsite shouldn’t simply be handed to those who aren’t willing to adopt the same approach.

Leave No Trace

You wouldn’t leave a family friend’s barbeque without first asking if they need help cleaning up, or leave your hotel bed unmade before checking out.

...OK, maybe this is more common than we think. Maybe the kids are getting cranky, or you’re running late for your flight.

Nonetheless, leaving your camp space as you found it before departing is standard bush camping etiquette. Not only are you leaving an area where another family may like to pull up in the future, but you’ve also cooked on your campfire and tapped away at your tent pegs within the natural habitat of many animals and wildlife. Free, council-run campsites are there for our convenience, but the reality is that the more frequently they are left unkempt the more unlikely they are to continue as an overnight option. For more information on how to manage waste when camping, check out [Ep18 – Camping, Waste, and Leaving No Trace](#).

Station Stays

For an authentic, outback experience, station stays offer accommodation across guest rooms, cabins, and campgrounds. Like much overnight housing alike, station stays will cease as an option if left untidy by outback adventurers passing through.

With plenty of freedom for fun, it’s nevertheless important to remain respectful and



considerate of the grounds. Picking up rubbish, keeping fences intact, and following the station rules will promise both an enjoyable and comfortable experience.

Fires

Firepits are a common indication of previous activity at a campsite. Spotted in open spaces, it's usually telling where someone has previously created a fire. Any pre-existing firepits should be reused by the next group, as with too many campfires comes too much coal, ash, and soot in one area.

When leaving a campsite, refrain from leaving any burnt rubbish and debris in the pit, such as tin cans, bottle tops and glass.

Pets

As furry members of the family, pets are wonderful, kid-friendly camping companions. Nonetheless, a group should be conscious of how any untoward behaviour displayed by their pet could impact another family's experience. Common issues include dogs consistently barking, running free from their leash, and invading other campsites.

However, those who want to avoid a dog skidding, scampering, and sniffing about the new smells of the space should instead choose a campsite where pets are not accepted. After all – like dirt bikes – dog-friendly campsites are for dog-friendly campers.

Kids

Even as an adult, it can be easy to forget how an animated conversation or heated discussion can affect nearby groups in earshot. Children are more susceptible to misunderstanding this idea, so parents should simply be wary of their behaviour. Common examples are constant bickering or over-excitement during campsite activities, so forewarning your children about keeping chaotic and loud behaviour to a minimum is a good place to start before entering the campgrounds. In that, there's no harm in outlining the other campsite etiquettes discussed throughout this podcast too.

Likewise, reminding children to stay within your camp space (unless you've told them otherwise) will divert them from disrupting another family's privacy, meanwhile keeping them safe and in sight. That said, it's common for kids on camping holidays to jump on their bikes and jet off on their own adventures with other children. Standard campsite etiquette is simply to make the effort to check in on your children if they're interacting with other families in another campsite. Typically, families will supply enough food for their own children and may not have the means to provide for another, so it's a common campsite courtesy to offer to contribute.

Thanks for listening, tune in again for next week's



episode!

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If you have any questions for Ben and Lauren, make sure you head over to our [Facebook group](#) and let us know as we'd love to hear from you.

Catch you out there!