

The right food is absolutely ESSENTIAL to the success of your gold expeditions. It will give you the energy you need, a morale boost and you must ensure you are carrying a realistic amount in terms of weight and size. Spend plenty of time planning your food and think about how much you normally consume. This document will give you some help and advice on what foods to take but it will still take a lot of thought, planning and preparation on your behalf to get it right. Any questions get in touch, have fun!

## Food Required:

Breakfast x 3  
Lunch x 4  
Evening Meal x 3  
Snacks for Day x 4  
Emergency Rations

### Breakfast

Don't ever bring food to fry like bacon, sausages etc. You want something that is quick and easy to prepare in the morning, if you don't normally have breakfast at home then a few cereal bars may be sufficient. However it is really important you make sure you eat something in the morning, without food your body is like a car with no petrol and will eventually just stop moving. If you would normally have a reasonable size breakfast then you are going to need something more substantial, a few ideas:

#### Muesli with Powdered Milk

Measure a portion of muesli into a re-sealable sandwich/freezer bag; add the desired amount of powdered milk (you will have to practice at home to establish how much powdered milk to use), and seal. (You can also add sugar or raisins if you wish.) To eat, add hot water and stir, this can then be eaten from the bag.

This is light to carry and quick and simple to make and can be made and eaten in the sandwich bag so you don't have to wash up. Good source of energy to start the day.

#### ***Ready Brek or Instant Hot Oats with powdered milk or hot chocolate powder.***



This does not need to be cooked like porridge oats, you just add hot water and it's instantly ready to eat, no cooking involved! Measure a portion of instant oats into a re-sealable sandwich bag and add either powdered milk or hot chocolate. (The hot chocolate will provide the milk as long as it is hot chocolate that says 'add hot water', not 'add hot milk' on the front,). To eat, add hot water and stir, can be eaten out of the bag. This is light to carry and easy to make. Can be eaten out of the sandwich bag, good source of energy to start the day, as always practice at home first to get the quantities of powdered milk and/or hot chocolate right. You can also put a lump of nutella in which will melt and give great chocolate flavour.

## Porridge Oats



You can buy porridge oats in sachets ready to go, often ready flavoured too. Don't forget you will need the right amount of powdered milk too (and as always practice at home, but not in the microwave, you can't carry one of them!)

They do need to be cooked for a couple of minutes and the pan is hard to clean after, but a great hot and healthy start.

## Breakfast/Cereal Bar

These come in a variety of cereals/flavours and don't require any preparation. If you don't normally eat breakfast at home then a few breakfast/cereal bars will ensure get some energy in you to start the day, however you have to have a VERY small appetite for this to be sufficient.

## Pitta Bread or Stay Fresh Bread with Jam or Nutella

If you buy pitta bread or 'stay fresh bread' then you can just add nutella or jam. You will need to buy jam in individual plastic packets, you can get them off ebay. You can also get nutella in small packets but nutella keeps really well so you can pre-make nutella pitta breads before you go so you don't have to carry a jar or packet.

## Hot Drink



Make a hot drink too for breakfast if you like. If you want tea then don't forget powdered milk, you can buy coffee sachets that already have milk powder (and also sugar if required) added. Or a hot chocolate sachet.



## Lunch

As you will have a substantial distance to cover during daylight hours, lunch isn't going to be the hour stop it may have been on your bronze or silver expedition. It's best therefore to have something that you don't need to cook, because it means using more time, and having to carry more water and fuel to cook a second meal during the day. The best meal ideas for lunch time are things that are packed with calories to supply you with energy for the afternoon and that don't require a great deal of preparation. Ensure that you make the portion sizes relative to yourself, if you would normally eat one sandwich for lunch on a regular day, then you are going to need at least two for lunch on a hill day as well as other snacks.

## Pitta Bread/ Sandwiches with choice of fillings



Pitta bread is a good alternative to normal bread because it lasts longer and doesn't get squashed as easily. There a huge range of fillings to choose from, you can have sachets of tuna or chicken that don't need to be refrigerated, or pastes that can be added to make a sandwich. You will find these in the canned food isle at the supermarket. If you take crisps then put them in a sandwich bag and that will stop the crisps bag from popping and the crisps being all over your bag



You shouldn't normally carry tins or glass but if you have bought a small jar of sandwich paste leave it in the jar and make it straight from there when you stop for lunch, as once its opened it will go off in a few hours, however its far better not to carry glass so if you can find an alternative not in glass get that one! If you do carry a small glass jar make sure it's in a separate freezer bag in case it breaks.



If you have a sweet tooth then you can buy little plastic portion of nutella from some supermarkets (I think Morrisons sell them) these will give you plenty of calories to replace what you have been burning!



These are easy to prepare out on the hill and a good source of energy. There are a variety of fillings available which will give you energy and can be a really tasty lunch time meal.

You can also take tins of corned beef but only if at least two of you will be sharing as even a small tin is way too much for one person at lunch time, with two of you sharing you can share the carrying as well, you only have to carry two each for the 4 days. I always take some pickle in a small Tupperware container as well, corned beef and pickle in a pitta bread is truly the lunch of kings!

## Ready Made Pasta Pots



Some supermarkets sell pasta pots mixed with vegetables/tuna. These aren't the fresh ones so they won't go off, the ones you want you will find in the canned food isle, they will stay fresh and come in a stronger container. They generally come in a cardboard sleeve; remove this at home to save on carrying rubbish out on the hill.

For dessert at lunch time you can get a variety of different dried fruits, although fresh fruit is refreshing it is heavy to carry and goes off quickly. Nuts are a great source of energy and will fill you up. Any chocolate bar will provide you with plenty of calories, bars with nuts will give you extra energy. **(Not if you have a nut allergy!!)**. Chocolate is a great source of energy that will give you an instant boost to get yourself moving again after lunch, help to move those slow 'lunch legs'!

## Evening Meal

Your evening meal needs to be a warm cooked meal, after a long day out on the hill you're going to need to replace the energy your body has lost during the day. Also after setting up your camp and all the day's activity you will be cold and tired. A warm meal is crucial for warming you up and preventing your body temperature from dropping too low. It is important therefore that you ensure you have something quick and easy to cook, which is also packed with calories. Between breakfast and your evening meal, you should have already consumed 50% of the day's food so your evening meal should be the final 30% of the day's intake.

It is really important that if possible you cook in groups of 2, 3 or 4. This is because you will only have one Trangia stove between you and it will take a while to boil water, this is cooking in the outdoors, not your oven at home! So try and cook meals with the same requirements, for example if you are all having cous cous then you can just boil the water and pour the required amount onto your individual cous cous portions, if you are all having pasta then cook a load of pasta for all of you then all add your own sauces etc, if you are having the dried pasta and sauce flavoured packets (see below) then make sure you are all having the same flavour and cook them all together. You don't want one having cous cous and one having a pasta and sauce flavoured packet as you can't both do this at once. Hope that makes sense, just use your common sense and plenty of planning and communication and you will be fine! .

To add more flavour and sustenance to any of the meal suggestions below then you can add things like:

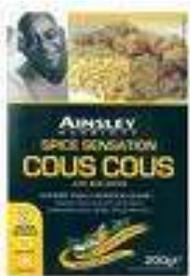
1. Small tin of mackerel fillets in a variety of sauces



2. Pepperami's don't need to be kept in the fridge and can be cut up into your main meal,
3. You can buy a pre-cooked tuna steak in a sachet which doesn't need to be kept in the fridge.

We would suggest the following possible meal options:

### Cous Cous



Comes in various flavours and often in a foil packet. You just need to boil water and add it to the cous cous, no need to boil the cous cous, it just sits in the boiled water for about 3 minutes, make sure you add just the right amount of water though! Top tip, if your cous cous needs 300ml's of water then measure out this amount in a measuring jug at home and pour it into the water bottle you will be taking on exped, then put a mark where the water comes up to and use this to measure out your water for cooking. If in doubt add water until the cous cous is covered by about 3mm of water then cover and leave to soak for about 3 mins. Cous cous is great as its soooo small and light to carry, only takes a small amount of water and can be made an eaten in the packet so no washing up. Quick and easy tasty meal that will provide you with plenty of energy. I recommend it with mackerel fillets!

## Super noodles



These come in a variety of flavours. You need to boil water and add the noodles, they cook incredibly quickly. They are also light to carry, try a few at home first as there are loads of different flavours.

## Quick Cook Pasta with pesto or stir in pasta sauce (Spaghetti packs down best)



Cook a pre-measured amount of quick cook pasta, and add pesto or there is a variety of sachets/tubs of pasta sauces available from the supermarket (nothing from the refrigerated section though!). Pasta is quick and easy to cook and is a good source of energy. A great warm and tasty meal that you will want at the end of a long day on the hill. Although you will have to drain the pasta after cooking, and there will be washing up. (Don't bring fresh pasta or pasta with added water as it is heavy, dry quick cook pasta is the best option.)

## Pasta 'n' Sauce



This pasta comes dried out and has powdered sauce. You need to boil water and the cook the pasta, make sure you add the right amount of water, as with cous cous practice first and maybe mark your water bottle for the right amount of water. This stuff is great as its super light and very tasty and full of carbs and energy. Some recommends you add milk as well as water in which case take some powdered milk.

## Boil in the bag dry rice and sauce

This is great as rice is small, light and filling. Make sure you buy the rice that is already in bags ready to go so you just boil it in the bag and then hook it out with a fork and it will drain out the bag too. The only down side is that rice does take a long time to cook compared to pasta or noodles, but that's OK, you should have plenty of time in the evenings (if you don't get lost in the day?!) You can buy all sorts of different flavoured sauces to go with it, sweet and sour for example, get something in a sachet, not jar or tin, have a really good look round a supermarket.

## Dessert

At gold level it is really important that you have a dessert after your evening meal (I know tough life!) as it will help to keep your calorie input high enough. We have had problems before where assessors have not been happy about letting people start as they don't have enough calories for the 4 days. A few ideas are as follows:



### Welsh cakes etc and custard

Instant custard is an amazing source of calories as it is super light and small and full of calories. One sachet like this will feed 3-4 people. You can also make it in a sandwich bag to save on cleaning. You can take welsh cakes or any range or pre-packed cakes to go with it. It's super easy to make, just pour boiling water over the powder and mix it up, great stuff!



### Hot chocolate and cookies

A cup of hot chocolate and some cookies will also provide you with some much needed calories and give your evening a morale boost! Make sure you get a hot chocolate sachet that is made to be added to water, not milk.

## Snacks

You should be putting the most amount of energy into your body between breakfast and your evening meal. Half of the energy you take in should be in this time period and that includes your lunch. In order to make this possible you will need to make sure you have lots of snacks during the day.

Here are a few ideas for you:

1. Sweets/ Sugary Sweets eg. Haribo
2. Chocolate Bars
3. Energy/cereal/snack bars
4. Chocolate biscuits like cookies/hob nobs.
5. Bags of sweets, Cadbury's éclairs for example.
6. Dried nuts and fruit, amazing for energy.
7. You can buy packets of peanuts, raisins and choc chips which are excellent to 'graze' on during the day.
8. Jaffa cakes!

# Emergency Rations

This food is not to be eaten unless there is an emergency, and it is essential that it is saved as an emergency ration. So don't pack your favorite chocolate bar because it will be far too tempting to eat it! Bring food that you would be able to eat if you had to in an emergency. You need to ensure that this is food extra to the food you have packed for the expedition. Unless you have had an emergency, your emergency rations should still be intact at the end of your expedition.

The type of food you can pack as emergency rations is the same as the food on the snack list, one or two items from the snack list along with a dehydrated meal e.g. cous cous will be fine. It is important to have a mix of fast and slow release energy foods which will sustain you over a longer period of time.

## Essential Tips

Separate and organize your food into days including all your main meals and snacks, you will need the extra large sandwich bags for this. This will ensure you have enough meals and you don't under or over eat.



This shows a one day bag with breakfast, lunch and dinner, there are some pitta breads and some custard under the pasta. You then need to do this for each day, give yourself plenty of time to do this as it may take a while to get the balance right, also when you start to pack your bag with all your stuff you may find that the bag is too heavy or there isn't enough room in which case you may need to make some cuts/changes in the food department. The photo below shows four bags ready for a gold exped.



One of the problems you face is food going off after being exposed to air for long periods of time. Buy food where possible in individual packets or repack in re-sealable sandwich bags, they are great use them for everything.

For example a custard mix contains four servings, if you weren't sharing it with anyone else then you could reseal the bag and keep it for the next day. The same can be done with other foods that don't come in individually sealed packets. Or you can pre-measure and individually seal your portions beforehand. (Re-sealable sandwich bags).

- ❖ If bringing powdered milk or anything similar always experiment on how much you will need beforehand, don't experiment on the day or you will be hungry and disappointed! Pre-measure your milk and keep in a sandwich bag. If having instant oat cereal for breakfast then you can put the milk and cereal in a bag ready. Try it first at home to check you have the quantities right and it tastes good!
  
- ❖ If food comes in several layers of packaging then remove all but the essential packaging as this will keep the rubbish you have to carry off the hill to a minimum.
  
- ❖ Talk with your team about what they will be eating, and decided prior to shopping for food if you are planning a similar menu, or cooking together.
  
- ❖ Try everything at home first so that you know you like the food you have, otherwise you may find yourself with food you don't like and can't eat.
  
- ❖ **Practice cooking everything you will be eating at home first so you will know what to do when on expedition, you don't want to realise your mistakes when the rain is pouring down, you are starving hungry and there are no shops to buy more food if you mess it up!**