

YHA Parents' Guide

Crammed with useful information, this is your go-to-guide for YHA Summer Camps and all that will happen before, during and after one of the best weeks of their lives.



yha

summer camps

Preparation is the key

To bring or not to bring, we answer your questions.

Do pack

- A fleece or warm coat
- A waterproof jacket
- A hat or cap
- Jeans or casual trousers *
- Tracksuit or jogging bottoms
- Shorts
- T-shirts
- Sweatshirts and/or jumpers
- Socks and underwear
- Trainers or shoes plus a spare pair
- Personal medication including inhalers **
- Sun block/lotion
- Sunglasses
- At least two towels
- Toiletries ***
- A laundry bag (a plastic bag is fine)
- Perhaps some spending money for the tuck shop, but we recommend no more than £10

* Jeans won't be suitable for some activities so make sure to pack tracksuit bottoms as well.

** When children arrive at camp, any medication will need to be signed over to staff. It will be administered by staff as per parent/guardian instruction.

*** Toiletries should include soap, shower gel, shampoo, a toothbrush, toothpaste, roll-on deodorant (aerosols aren't allowed at camp), and sanitary towels/tampons if required.

Don't pack

- Mobile phones. Because our camps are situated in beautiful rural locations, mobile reception is very rare so they won't be able to use it anyway. Payphones are available at each site though so we're not completely cut off
- Valuable items such as iPads, iPods, jewellery or designer clothes. Children simply won't need them. We can't accept responsibility for loss, damage or theft so please keep treasured possessions at home. If, either by accident or for any other reason, a camper ends up bringing something valuable, this should be handed over to a member of staff for safekeeping.

Prohibited items

- Aerosols
- Anything that could cause injury or harm, such as penknives or lighters. These will be confiscated.

Packing tips for kids

- Plan ahead to make sure you have everything you need
- Only bring clothes that you don't mind getting dirty
- Pack enough clothes for the whole time at camp
- Label everything with your name in case anything gets mixed up with other people's things
- Pack everything into a suitable bag
- Make a list of what you're bringing. You'll find it useful at the end of camp to check that you still have everything you brought with you.

And while we're on the subject...

Lost property

After camp is over, if you get home and realise something has been left behind, call us on **01629 592 530** or email us at yhasummercamps@yha.org.uk. If we locate your lost property, we'll let you know, and if you pay for the postage, we'll happily return your things home to you. Lost property is held for two weeks after camp.

So off to camp we go...

Arrivals and departures

Arrival day! Hooray! Please aim to arrive at camp between 3pm and 5pm. There'll be a team leader there to meet you and welcome your child to camp. After hugs and fond farewells it's over to us and the fun begins.

If you experience any delays or difficulties en route, and you think you're going to be late, please call the camp venue and let us know.

Please be aware that we're unable to provide any transport to or from camp and so it is up to parents and guardians to make their own arrangements. This includes responsibility for picking your child up should they need to leave camp early.

All good things must come to an end...

Please collect your child between 9am and 10am on the morning of departure. Again, if you experience any delay, please call camp to let us know.

Please remember to bring photo ID with you. We won't allow a child to leave camp without seeing this.



A day in the life of a Summer Camp

7am

Morning Campers! Our young people get a knock from their team leader to get up and get dressed. That is, of course, if they're not already up and about and raring to go.

8am

Buffet Breakfast. We love this time of the day. The breakfast room starts off quiet. Then, along with their appetites, our campers start to wake up. The noise level rises, full of conversation and laughter about yesterday and speculation about what's going to happen today - plus the odd shout of "whilst you're up grab me another juice and a sausage!"

9am

Activity groups are gathered together. Correct kit? Check! Packed lunch? Check! We're off. Some may leave on a mini bus for a short journey to the lake for canoeing, or perhaps set out on foot to go on a rocky adventure that includes abseiling, climbing or gorge scrambling.

12:30pm

Time to stop and refuel with a packed lunch. It's also a chance to regroup and get ready for the afternoon.

1:30pm

An afternoon of new activities. As a general rule the campers will move on to a different activity in the afternoon which might include high ropes, mountain biking or caving for example. One thing that's guaranteed - it will be fun and challenging!

5pm

After a day getting muddy and messy in the great outdoors, campers can't wait for a shower. This hour belongs to them, giving them a moment to chill out and get ready for dinner.

6pm

Time to tuck into more food. And the campers are ready for it! It's a good job it's two courses and as much as you can eat from the salad bar.

7pm

A game of whodunit, movie night, acoustic camp fire, music from the decks of Disco Dave... you name it. Our camp teams really go to town to make sure campers have a really fun evening.

9pm

Chill out time or bedtime for our younger campers until 10pm when it's lights out... ssshhhhh.

It's the staff that make the stay!

Our staff are really passionate about making young people's experiences the very best they can be. Their enthusiasm and expertise make all the difference in turning a week away into an unforgettable adventure.

Instructors

All daytime activities are run by staff and instructors that are appropriately qualified and experienced in working with young people. We work with activity partners who run fun, safe and rewarding activities. Where an appropriate formal qualification exists, we ensure that our instructors hold it. Many are therefore licensed by the Adventure Activity Licensing Authority (AALS).

Volunteer Team Leaders

On arrival, campers will be placed in small pastoral care groups and assigned a dedicated team leader. Team Leaders will be on hand throughout to encourage and support the members of their group. As well as acting as role models, mentors and friends, team leaders are also responsible for organising top tier evening entertainment - a role that they invariably approach with gusto.

These young adults have been specially selected for their aptitude, responsible attitude and experience of working with young people in a summer camp or similar environment. Rest assured that all are subject to a DBS check before camp begins.

Anti-bullying charter

Everyone participating in a YHA Summer Camp has the right to feel safe, respected and valued. No form of bullying or harassment will be tolerated and all incidents will be addressed in line with the YHA Summer Camps Anti-Bullying Policy.

Our aim is to prevent bullying before it happens and encourage mutual respect between participants. At the beginning of camp we therefore ask attendees to sign our Contract of Behaviour. It's important to us that every child understands what is expected of them and what they can expect of each other.

Food glorious food

Food is important. Especially to teenagers taking part in days packed full of physical and mental challenges.

Campers start their day with a hearty breakfast. At YHA we make a big effort to cater for all tastes; we offer cereal, toast, fruit juice, pastries, fruit, yoghurts, cold meats, and a hot breakfast with a choice of seven items from the grill. And as it's a buffet, there's no reason to go hungry!

As we want to squeeze in as much activity as we can to each day, we take lunch with us. Each camper will receive a lunch pack of a sandwich of their choice, cereal bar, fruit, crisps and bottle of water.

Our evening meals include, as standard, a scrumptious hot vegetarian or meat option. This is complemented by a full buffet salad bar. And for afters, a choice of desserts. All our red meat, with the exception of bacon, is Red Tractor accredited. We source seasonal, local ingredients where we can and believe in the power of good food. We therefore offer healthy, tasty meals that are well balanced and a good source of energy.

Special dietary requirements are no problem. Our catering team will make sure no young person goes hungry. Just let us know about any allergies, dietary requirements or dislikes ahead of time and we'll make sure we're well stocked with alternatives.

Remedying homesickness

For some, a week away from home can mean a few wobbly-lip moments. And that's completely understandable. But we want to do our utmost to ensure that each and every young person feels settled and reassured as soon as we can. Homesickness isn't fun, for anyone. And in the nicest possible way, we don't want your child to miss you.

By keeping campers busy with fun and challenging activities, making sure they're well fed, and not actively encouraging phone calls home, we can prevent homesickness. So, don't be offended if they don't call - not hearing from them is a good thing.

Inevitably, for some children, homesickness will happen. If it stops your child from having a great time, we'll be sure to get in touch with you. Working together, we'll help them through their feelings of homesickness and get them back on course to enjoy the rest of camp.

The highest standards of health and safety

The safety of our participants is our priority. We apply strict management standards developed in line with Health and Safety legislation and good practice. We are approved by many Local Authorities and all camps and activities are fully risk assessed. In the event of an accident at camp we will contact the child's parent/guardian immediately using the contact information provided on the booking form. Please therefore ensure that the information you provide is accurate and up to date.

In the unlikely event of an emergency occurring when we are unable to make contact with a parent or other nominated responsible adult, we will act in the child's best interests and take responsibility for making certain decisions on their behalf.

All sites have staff with first aid qualifications and a pre-established contact with local doctors, dentists and hospitals. Decades of experience have made us a very safe pair of hands.

Office hours

The central YHA Summer Camps office is open from **9am to 5pm Monday to Friday** and can be contacted by phone on **01629 592 530**. If you need to urgently contact your child whilst they're at camp, please call the camp directly on the emergency number listed. Because they'll be too busy making magical moments, our camp staff won't have the capacity to pass on routine messages.



Our camps

YHA Edale

Address: Rowland Cote, Nether Booth, Edale, Hope Valley, Derbyshire, S33 7ZH

Getting there: From Edale railway station: Travel east for 1.5 miles until you reach the hostel drive.

Telephone: 01433 670 302

YHA Ironbridge Coalbrookdale

Address: 1 Paradise, Coalbrookdale, Telford, Shropshire, TF8 7NR

Getting there: From Telford centre or M54: Follow the signs to Ironbridge. Pass through Ironbridge centre (passing the bridge on your left) and turn right at the roundabout in to Coalbrookdale (Dale Road). Continue half a mile up the road, then turn onto Paradise which will be on your right. This is a sharpish turning. The hostel is immediately on your left, just before the war memorial.

Telephone: 01952 432 979

YHA Okehampton Bracken Tor

Address: Bracken Tor, Saxongate, Okehampton, Devon, EX20 1QW

Getting there: From the east leave A30 at Okehampton junction and follow the road for about one mile into town. At the third set of traffic lights, on a crossroad junction, turn left following signs to Okehampton station and Youth Hostel. After 200m, take the third turning up Station Road. Follow this road as it passes over the railway bridge and A30. There is a small turning on the right after the dual carriageway, which leads to an unmade road to YHA Okehampton Bracken Tor.

Don't use the postcode for Sat Nav as it may try to take you up and access road for emergency vehicles only. Instead, set your Sat Nav for Okehampton town centre and once there, use the postcode.

Telephone: 01837 539 16

YHA Summer Camps include

- 5 nights' accommodation
- 4 full days of activities led by expert tutors
- All meals and snacks
- Evening entertainment
- In-programme transport (where required)
- All equipment
- A souvenir refillable water bottle

What's not included

- Travel to and from camp
- Towels