

Packing a Bear Resistant Canister

With forethought and planning, it's amazing how much food you can fit into a canister. If you choose the right foods and repackage them, you can maximize canister space. It takes a little effort and time but the results are rewarding.

Remember, when you are using a canister ALL scented items - food, toiletries and garbage - must fit inside the canister throughout your entire trip unless you are in attendance or actively preparing your food.

How to Do It

- **Choose** the right foods.
- **Measure** out every meal.
- **Repackage** your food and toiletries into baggies or small containers.
- **At the trailhead**, make sure that **ALL** food, trash, toiletries and scented items will fit inside the canister the first night.

Food Choices - Choose foods that are compact, compressible and high in calories.

This includes rice, tortillas, jerky, flat pastas, dehydrated powders, nuts, dried fruits, peanut butter, candy and nutritional bars. Since you are trying to put as much food in the canister that you can, think about volume when you purchase food. For example, instead of bread rolls, buy tortillas. Instead of macaroni, choose spaghetti. You get the picture - don't waste space on bulky food items.

Plan Your Menu - Carefully count every meal that you will be eating.

By doing this, you will save weight and space. Put all the food on a table and plan each meal, snack, drink and condiment. Pre-measure and pre-mix food.

Repackage Your Food - Take food out of its original package.

This allows you to fit more food inside a canister and reduces the amount of garbage you generate. Repackage food from boxes, bottles, jars and cans into resealable plastic bags. These bags are flexible and fit into small spaces. Force air out of packages. Poke tiny holes in freeze-dried packages to release the air. Save instructions for cooking and put inside meal bags. Write food contents on outside of bags with a permanent marker.

Toiletries - Pack toiletries similarly to foods.

Put toothpaste, soap, sunscreen, bug repellent, etc. into small containers. Stores sell small, lightweight plastic containers that work well for this. Don't take more than you need.

Modified from information from the Sierra Interagency Black Bear Group.