

Not Back to School Camp Camper and Parent Handbook 2020



photo by Zoe Newmarco, Vermont 2019

Not Back to School Camp aspires to create a sanctuary
~that affirms, inspires, and mentors unschoolers..
~where campers and staff transform spiritually, emotionally,
physically, creatively, intellectually..
~where profound friendships begin and grow..
~and where adventure, mystery, music, wild spontaneous fun, and
magic prevail.

About this Handbook

Dear campers (and parents),

Hello, and thanks for registering for Not Back to School Camp! We are excited to spend time learning from you and with you, and cooking up all kinds of goodness and adventure together.

This handbook is your main reference manual for before, during, and after camp. Please consult it for details on most aspects of NBTSC. Good idea to **download** it so it's handy even when you're not signed into your account. Many campers **print out** some or all pages.

Campers, please make sure your parents have access to a copy of this handbook - if you are the only person who normally logs into your NBTSC account in the CampDoc portal, they may not see this handbook. (You can remind them to log in and download it for themselves.) It's important that your parents read it - unless you are *both* 18+ *and* taking absolutely full responsibility for everything related to NBTSC from travel to packing to finances and all the rest.

In the pages which follow, we try to address important questions you may have, and also to give you an idea of how camp works. **Our intention is to make this a helpful and satisfying document for those folks who want to quickly find and read the essentials.** If you want more information, or simply love details and context, please do also see the optional reading "NBTSC Camper Handbook Extras" available via the "[fine print](#)" page of our website. **If you are a new camper, you may find these "extras" essential.**

Some topics you'll find in the "extras" are

- Notes for Vermont campers who celebrate Rosh Hashanah (since unfortunately NBTSC overlaps with Rosh Hashanah this year)
- tobacco use at camp (must read if you hope to use tobacco in any form, regardless of your age)
- lost and found
- independent service project option (alternative to Creation Circle)
- shopping at camp (what to maybe bring cash for)
- group singing
- hair (basically a heads up that campers often cut/color hair during nbtsc)
- staffer Brittney's extensive notes on staying healthy at camp
- fairy godparent (explanation of an activity that often takes place at nbtsc)
- the media at nbtsc
- perspectives on sharing quasi-private information with us regarding specific campers
- NBTSC agreements - the long, more explanatory version

Even in this main handbook, some sections are more important than others. **Essential topics are noted in the clickable table of contents with an *asterisk - we count on everyone to be familiar with these aspects of NBTSC** (unless they apply only to a session you are not attending) and to prepare accordingly. Even if you (or your kids) have been to camp a trillion (or 5) times before, please check to make sure you are up to speed on these subjects.

If we haven't satisfied your curiosity, by all means, [contact us!](#)

We're looking forward to being with you soon!

Cheers,

Grace Llewellyn, Matt Sanderson, Margie Sanderson, Maya Toccata, and co.

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Nuts and Bolts



photo by Nathen Lester, 2013

*What We Need From You and When We Need It

Important notes and reminders

We work with an organization called CampDoc to process NBTSC registrations and to share information. You'll receive emails (with the links you'll need) prompting you as necessary. If you are confused, experience any glitches, or have questions or concerns, don't hesitate to get in touch with us!

On the next page ("Dates and Deadlines") you'll find a handy checklist of everything we need. You'll find more details on some of these items elsewhere in this handbook. Please doublecheck everything for completeness and accuracy.

Should you need to mail items (such as a check or money order), the **NBTSC postal address** is NBTSC, PO Box 2034, Joshua Tree, CA 92252.

Make sure you *and* your parents have access to your online account and email updates from us.

Use the "manage users" button on your CampDoc profile page to do this. We send important updates for campers and parents before, during, and after camp, and **only the email addresses in your CampDoc user section will receive these updates.** If your contact info changes, you must update it.

Also please **make sure your email program understands** that our profound missives are **not spam!**

Our emails via CampDoc are likely to make it past your spam filters, but NBTSC admins may also send emails from their individual email addresses from time to time. In the past these have often landed in spam folders. (**Gmail**, especially, seems to be problematic.) You may receive emails from [Maya](#), [Grace](#), [Margie](#), [Evan](#), [Matt](#), or from anyone with an address from @nbtsc.org.



Dates and Deadlines

(Print this page and use as a checklist!)

March 31

- **Early registration** deadline
 - Register online and pay your deposit to qualify. (On April 1, tuition increases \$100 per session. If you missed this deadline, put it on your calendar for next year!)
- **Worktrade application** deadline

June 1: all tuition is due.

The balance of your camp fees must be paid by June 1 (unless we have agreed on a payment plan that includes later installments). By this time you can either

- mail your paper check or money order to NBTSC, PO Box 2034, Joshua Tree, CA 92252
 - if mailed inside the U.S., postmarked by June 1 is fine
 - if mailed from outside the U.S., plan for us to *receive* it by June 1.
- pay online via your CampDoc account.

optional (but extremely important for some!) June 1 deadlines

- [T Shirt design contest](#) entries due
- Culmination requests (via your CampDoc account)
- Creation Circle signups due (via your CampDoc account)

July 1: online information (everything except travel plans) is due.

- **Bio and photo for the directory.** You'll upload these via CampDoc.
 - All campers and staff receive a paper directory at camp. You can enter about 250 words - you might describe a workshop you'll teach, list your interests or experiences, share your goals for NBTSC, tell us what personal pronouns you prefer (i.e. she, he, they), share your social media handles, channels, etc. We don't proofread, so check your spelling.
- Complete and e-sign your **health profile and camp info**. This includes personal and health data, diet restrictions, authorizations, workshops you'd like to teach, cabin preferences, and a "store" for T shirts and field trips, etc.
 - **Please don't provide a "preferred name" unless** it's one you actually use and plan to use at camp, and that your parents will recognize when we communicate with them. This is the only first name that we will use for you and publish in the camp directory.
- This handbook contains further details regarding
 - your **health history**.
 - More info about our **dietary restrictions questions** on our [food pages](#).
 - More about the **authorizations section** on our [authorizations/insurance page](#).
 - Vermont - if you need a ride from/to Philadelphia or Albany, reserve it by July 1.

Travel info must be completed by

- **August 1** (Oregon campers)
- **September 1** (Vermont campers)

(You'll be prompted for travel info in your CampDoc account. By this deadline you must also reserve and pay for any travel-related needs such as rides in Vermont.)

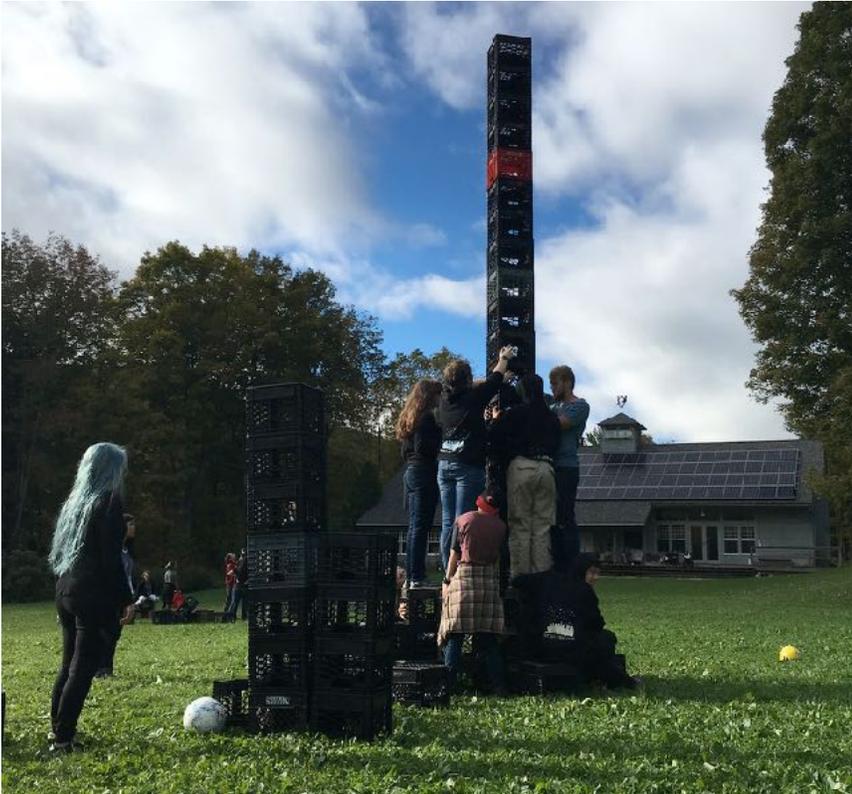
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*Tuition and all things financial

General notes and reminders

You can view the exact amount you owe us (for camp tuition plus anything miscellaneous) in your “account” section of your online NBTSC account (via CampDoc). All camp tuition is due June 1 (or immediately, if you register later than June 1). We do charge a \$35 fee if tuition is late.

Please make sure you are familiar with our [refund policy](#) to prevent misunderstanding and frustration for everyone.



You’ll have the opportunity to purchase a “protection plan” (insurance) via CampDoc.

You’ll see this when you’re logged into your account - you can opt for emergency medical insurance, travel insurance, etc. We know almost nothing about this product and can neither advise you for nor against it. However, we do know that some camp families would prefer more peace of mind and assurance than our own refund policy can provide for, so we want this option to be available for any who so choose. NBTSC has no financial relationship with the protection plan. We are very pleased with our overall experience in working with CampDoc, but are not in a position to specifically endorse this plan.

Work trades

See details on our [worktrade web page](#). The **application deadline is March 31st** and we are strict about it - except that sometimes we still need lifeguards after the deadline has passed so **if you are a certified lifeguard it’s okay to check in with us later**.

Diversity scholarships available in Vermont

We believe NBTSC will be a better place for everyone as it continues to grow more racially diverse. We are therefore seeking ways to make NBTSC more welcoming to, and inclusive of, folks of diverse racial backgrounds. We offer a “diversity scholarship” program in Vermont. (Oregon later – we want to focus our resources one session at a time.) If you are (or know) a potential camper who *both* 1) is a person of color who could help diversify us so that NBTSC Vermont is a richer, more wonderful place for everyone, *and also* 2) might have a hard time paying for camp, don’t hesitate to let us (or them) know! There is no deadline to apply for these scholarships - but, our funds are limited so we recommend getting in touch sooner rather than later.

2020 only - Vermont campers who celebrate **Rosh Hashanah** may arrive at camp late and we will prorate tuition accordingly. More details in 2020 Camper Handbook Extras (accessible via our [Fine Print](#) web page.)

More on our website!

See our [tuition details](#) page for additional information on

- our two-tier tuition system
 - By the time you are reading this handbook, you have probably already determined which tier makes sense for your family, but if not, our tuition details page offers guidelines. (And also an explanation of why we have chosen this structure.)
- sibling discount
- multiple session discount

Payment options

You can pay online through CampDoc, set up a payment plan (also through CampDoc), or mail us a paper check (or money order).

Paying online

This should be straightforward when you're logged in on CampDoc. Note that if you set up a payment plan that deducts from a bank account, we'll apply a discount of approximately 2%. (This may not show up immediately as we will need to personally apply your discount.)

Checks or Money orders - discount: You get a discount of approximately 4% for paying via old-fashioned paper checks or money orders. Make 'em out to *Not Back To School Camp*. (Please make sure your check isn't going to bounce. We charge \$25 for NSF checks.) Discounted tuition is as follows. (Of course, deduct your \$150 deposit and any additional amounts you've already paid.)

Oregon

If you registered by March 31

Tier 1: \$1280 Tier 2: \$1430

If you registered on April 1 or later

Tier 1: \$1380 Tier 2: \$1590

Vermont

If you registered by March 31

Tier 1: \$900 Tier 2: \$1000

If you registered on April 1 or later

Tier 1: \$1000 Tier 2: \$1100

Like any other NBTSC postal mail, checks/MOs go to NBTSC, PO Box 2034, Joshua Tree, CA 92252.

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*Health information

You'll encounter a health section as part of your required CampDoc information. This provides helpful information to camp staff and/or to medical personnel in case of a health problem or emergency. Also, if you have any kind of mental health or other condition that might pose a challenge for you at camp, *or impact others negatively*, you must let us know clearly. We may want to talk with you and/or your parents ahead of time, too. In these situations, ignorance is not bliss for anyone—the camper involved, the staff, or other campers. We are not staffed to support every type of need, and we may determine together that NBTSC is not the right fit at this time. (See our [fine print](#) web page for more on this.)

Important: if you've already told us something about your health (informally, verbally, in an email, etc.), you still need to also share it via your online health history. This is our reference anytime a camper has a health problem - so it must be thorough and complete.

You absolutely may not attend camp if you don't provide complete health history information.

You'll see that we ask whether it's okay to offer alternative health remedies.

Our longtime health-support staffer in Oregon (a layperson) wants you to know that she brings a select few, research-supported supplements across these categories, purchased from established health food stores and Young Living Essential Oils company, to conservatively share, as needed and/or requested by individual campers needing/requesting extra support for specific, minor needs not requiring formal medical attention, and/or for virus-prevention and immune system boosting. (While that information comes from Oregon staff, similar remedies may be offered in Vermont.)

Make sure to upload a copy of your insurance card (front & back), and provide accurate, complete insurance info. Although it's rare for a camper to need medical attention during camp, it does happen. When it does, things are exponentially easier and faster when this information is clear and complete. When it's not, there can be long frustrating waits and lots of phone calls. Please doublecheck that you have included accurate information.

Concerns?

Some families limit their use of conventional medicine, and thus find some of our health history questions challenging.

Occasionally we have a camp family who chooses to avoid conventional medicine even in some emergency situations, and so they prefer not to sign the medical authorization as it is. If that is true for you, please contact Maya. You will most likely need to provide a detailed letter, spelling out what sort of emergencies you are willing to have handled medically, etc. Please note that any stipulations you request will be shared with staff session directors. Occasionally a family makes requests we are not comfortable with, and if this is the case it is possible we will not be able to host you at camp.



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Notes on authorizations and insurance

Whenever anybody has a health issue at camp, boring things like authorizations and insurance (as well as [health history](#) and [dietary restrictions](#) information) suddenly jump into the spotlight and become very exciting, in either a good way or a bad way.

We'd like to mention here that it's WAY EASIER for campers to get health care (in local clinics, emergency rooms, etc.) when they have health insurance (or travelers' insurance), and when we have complete information about this insurance (including readable copies of the front and back of insurance cards).

Also, we're noticing a tension between - on the one hand: the fact that we ourselves (NBTSC directors and staff) vastly prefer a free range world where children (let alone teenagers) run and play and romp wildly and safely use knives and climb trees and swim and navigate through wilds and cities.... and then the other hand: the fact that some teenagers (let alone children) simply are not experienced enough in such pursuits to engage them safely. "Safely" meaning, of course, without any guarantees but with some good skills up their sleeves and the wisdom to avoid unnecessary risks, to respond to Situations smartly, and to not do rash things in hopes of looking cool to peers. So we find ourselves adding things (like tree climbing at Camp Myrtlewood) that we require parents to sign authorizations for - not because we want to discourage them, but because these are not one-size-fits-all activities and we don't know all of our campers well enough to assess individually whether they have good skills and maturity for stuff like this. We figure parents are in a better position than we are to make those judgment calls.

You will encounter the following sections as you fill out your CampDoc profile. To sign them, just follow the instructions to "accept section" or type your name. Some of them mention "The Melting Point, Inc.," which is the simple corporation that officially runs NBTSC.

Insurance (and waivers/authorizations)

While we do sometimes carry limited accident insurance, it excludes pre-existing conditions, some accidents that happen off of site property, and sometimes athletic accidents and other specifics, so it is important that you also have your own insurance that meets your needs. We require that you (and your parents unless you're 18+) sign a statement affirming that you take responsibility for yourself in this regard. (The insurance we carry at some sessions requires a rather oddly-worded waiver with seemingly irrelevant language about "coaches," athletic events," and such.)

Hiking and field trips (and authorizations)

Most of the accessible-to-camp hiking trails are outside the boundaries of the sites that we rent, and thus not covered by their insurance. Mainly for this reason, you (and your parents if you're under 18) must sign an authorization for you to be allowed to hike. (This usually also includes things like blackberry picking, going for a walk up the road, visiting swimming holes just up the creek, etc.) Generally, we allow people to hike unsupervised during the daytime, and at night with special permission (usually only in groups with at least one person we trust to be a nighttime leader). This is typically an enriching part of the camp experience for a lot of people and we don't want to raise any alarm about it, we just want parents to consider what is appropriate in their case.

Similarly, if you go on our field trips (such as in Oregon to the ocean) you're not covered by accident insurance except while riding on the bus or other vehicles (that would be the vehicle-related insurance) - so we require a signed authorization for those trips as well. The Oregon field trip requires you to affirm that you will respect any "no swimming" rules set by staff - most of Oregon's stretch of the Pacific Ocean is cold and dangerous compared to parts of the Atlantic, Caribbean, etc., that campers may be familiar with. (Playing and wading near the edge is okay, as is going on long walks on the gorgeous beach.)

Also: Occasionally campers with parental permission have a spontaneous opportunity to go on a short field trip. For instance, in Oregon, a couple carloads of Oregon campers and staff typically explore nearby waterfalls and swimming holes.

Oregon Session 2 tree climbing authorization

Camp Myrtlewood is blessed with many beautiful old trees. At some sessions of camp, campers get excited about climbing them - most often, one specific very tall Coast Redwood. With occasional exceptions, this climbing was not regulated by staff prior to 2012. We have never had an accident, but staff often observes that if someone *were* to fall, the consequences could be bad - falling from a significant height, hitting sharp branches on the way down, etc. Recently staff has suggested that we require parental permission as a gateway to allow climbing. No, we do not see ourselves as part of the mega-movement to keep people indoors, seatbelted, and coated in scratch-resistant polyurethane. But



we do see a wide range of campers excitedly (and sometimes rapidly) scaling that tall redwood, and while some of them climb with the agility of spiderman or at least what seems to be good clear judgment, others sometimes look like they're ascending on the fumes of inspiration and sleeplessness. We figure parents know their kids better than we do, are better equipped to assess skills and (even more importantly) their kids' current capacity for good judgment regarding physical risks. As with hiking, tree climbing has been an enriching part of the camp experience for a lot of people and we don't want to raise any alarm about it. Most NBTSC staff are enthusiastic proponents of tree climbing and other adventures - we just want parents to consider what is appropriate in their case.

Video & photo release

We require that campers (and their parents) give their permission to be included in published photos and videos. This is standard procedure at many summer camps, and it's too difficult to keep track of one or two campers who might prefer not to be included. The most common way we use camp photos is simply on our website (mainly in the photo albums we post for each session). (You might also want to know that many campers and staff post their NBTSC photos and videos on facebook, tumblr, blogs, and other

internet sites. We do not attempt to regulate these postings, and they are vastly appreciated by many in our community.) If you see a photo of you online that you don't like, let us know and we can most likely take it down or at least crop you out.

Less commonly, we put the releases to more excellent use. In 2009, camper alum Allen Ellis came to 2 sessions of NBTSC and created a [beautiful film](#).

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*What to Bring and What Not to Bring

important notes

Less is more. Some campers (especially those arriving by car) bring way too much stuff, making it impossible for them to actually keep their things organized and accessible in their cabins. You do not need a complete set of clean clothes for each day.

Except when more is more. Laundry facilities are not available except during our 2 week session in Oregon, so do bring socks for the whole session and extras for when it rains. ***Definitely err on the side of overkill*** when it comes to warm clothes and bedding, especially for Vermont.

People attending 2-week sessions (currently just Oregon) have one mid-session opportunity to have their clothes washed. We suggest you bring a large zipping mesh bag (such as an extra-large lingerie- or sweater-laundering bag) that can hold all your laundry loosely in both the washer and dryer. You will not be present while your clothes are washed (at a huge laundromat in a nearby town) but they will be kept together in a batch with 1-3 other people's clothes. A zipping mesh bag can help make sure everything comes back to you. We wash everything together and cannot separate out delicates, whites, etc. - good idea to pack (and launder) only sturdy items.

Label your important possessions, big and small, with your first and last name. We suggest that you bring a list of everything you pack, so you can use it as a checklist when you prepare to leave camp. NBTSC assumes no responsibility for lost, stolen, rotted, jammed-into-the-crack-between-the-bed-and-the-wall, or otherwise disappeared items. (If you ask, we can keep cash and other small, important items locked in a relatively safe place.)

You likely won't want to wear clothes specifically made for "camping"—most of us **wear "normal" clothes** most of the time. (But do you also need the solid outdoor gear about which we so often pontificate!) Some first-year campers wish (in retrospect) they'd brought more **fun, special clothes**.

If you're traveling by air or public transit, pack medications and other **essentials in your carry-on luggage** in case your checked baggage is lost. (It has happened.)

Valuables - see below under "what not to bring."



photo by Reanna Alder, 2012

Weather

Below, a few notes on what we've experienced and what we expect at our various sessions - and what you should therefore plan to bring. (Checking the forecast is a good idea also.) People who don't take our advice about bringing warm stuff usually regret it.

Oregon (Camp Myrtlewood)

It's usually hot/warm in the day, cool-to-cold at night, and it rains occasionally. Nights and mornings can be chilly—bring a *warm* sleeping bag, cozy sweats, toasty sweater, warm hat, and a warm, waterproof jacket (or a separate raincoat and fleece). You may enjoy a hot water bottle, too. (It doesn't usually get as cold at night as in Vermont, but the general Vermont advice - below - still applies.)

Vermont

It's likely to be warm (60s) during daytimes, cold at night (low 40s; though we've had a few nights in the low 30s), and it may rain too.

You absolutely **must** bring *very* warm bedding, a warm coat, and a warm hat. Even though nighttime temperatures don't usually dip below the 30s, many people aren't actually warm enough in a sleeping bag that is rated for the temperature they are sleeping in. **We strongly recommend a bag rated for 20° F** or colder, made by a reputable company. (You might do a little research on "Sleeping bag temperature ratings.") We also suggest cozy sweats, a toasty sweater or fleece jacket, and a hot water bottle. Most cabins are not heated—in fact, they are completely open on one side. (Of course, if you know that you will be sleeping in one of our indoor, heated dorm rooms, then you will want to adapt your bedding plans accordingly.)

If you bring adequate supplies there is no need for you to be cold at night! (Back before I, Grace, became a mama who slept with a human hot water bottle, I wrote: "I bring a very warm down sleeping bag and a flannel bottom sheet. When it's extra cold I sleep with a hat on; I almost always sleep with a hot water bottle. I've never had a cold night in Vermont - though I've had plenty of cold nights throughout my life when I've been inadequately prepared for a particular situation. So, I know **this is not an insurmountable problem and that nobody needs to consider themselves a victim of the weather!**")

Having said all that: **in the last few years we have sometimes experienced unseasonably warm weather during our Vermont session.** With climate changing - well, who knows? We certainly can't predict with certainty that you'll need cold-weather supplies, but we still think it's smartest to pack with long-term weather patterns in mind.

packing checklist

We suggest that you print out these pages and use them as a checklist.

Essentials

Each camper needs most or all of these items.

___ **watch** (or other timekeeper such as a phone you wouldn't be devastated to lose) ~ important that you keep a timekeeper with you. There is so much going on at NBTSC that it is essential to keep track of clock-time. Even if you don't participate in workshops, it is your responsibility to show up on time for meetings and chores.

___ **flashlight**—essential for all sessions for nighttime safety. Make sure you have plenty of batteries, and/or a backup flashlight. (Flashlights are particularly crucial in Vermont. Without one, you have no way of seeing anything in your cabin at night - no electricity, and you are likely to injure yourself while walking on the steep paths.)

___ **water bottle**—labeled with your full name—important for general hydration, bus rides, hiking, and preventing germ sharing.

___ **pens/pencils**. At minimum, you need one good writing utensil. Plan ahead for how you will not lose it and will keep it with you. (Some people attach a pen to a string and wear it around their neck.) Labeling it with your name is not overkill. If you might attend a writing workshop, it's nice to have a smoothly rolling pen that you really enjoy using.

___ **notebook** or clipboard—something you'll enjoy for taking notes. A pocket-sized notebook is good for keeping track of your plans for each day (workshops to attend, lunch meetings, etc.). If you might attend a writing workshop, consider a larger spiral notebook also. Of course some people just take notes on their phone but we suggest a paper option too, so you're not dependent on electronics.

___ **vitamins, supplements, tinctures, herbs, essential oils, etc.** that help keep your immune system strong (see more under "the vitality project").

___ **remedies** that you normally use to treat simple illnesses and symptoms. Whatever you use when you are congested, have a headache, cramps, sore throat, or allergies - good idea to bring it. (*Except - please don't bring* your own supply of acetaminophen, ibuprofen, or benadryl - see below under "what not to bring.")

___ any **medications**, in original prescription bottle, with your name and instructions (time intervals and dosage) clearly readable. We collect most medications (and some OTC meds) and keep them in a central, secure place to comply with state laws. Staff dispenses medications as needed.

___ **Thermos**. One of our staff nurses has said we should make a thermos for hot liquids quasi-mandatory. She says that carrying around hot tea or broth and drinking it regularly can make a huge difference for people fighting or recovering from sickness.

___ **daypack**, for hiking and for carrying stuff with you during the day. (If you know you don't want to hike, a tote bag works too.)

___ **Shirts**: T-shirts, tank tops, etc.

___ comfortable **pants** (and perhaps shorts)

___ stretchy or loose **clothing for yoga, dancing, relaxing, etc.**

___ **socks** (including cozy ones and including Smartwool or such for hiking)

___ **underwear**

___ **Closed-toed shoes are essential**. Flip-flops won't suffice for kitchen chores, partner dance workshops, and other essential moments.) Many campers bring **athletic shoes** for sports and hiking.

___ **sandals or flip flops** (for nice weather, and/or to wear in the shower)

___ **swimsuit** (yes, even in Vermont)

___ **hat** to keep the sun off you, also to keep ticks off while hiking

___ **rain jacket** (especially for Vermont, but sometimes it rains in Oregon too)

___ **warm long pants and/or warm sweats** (some people like the extra coziness of fleece pants or flannel-lined pants)

___ toasty **sweater or fleece jacket**

___ **jacket or coat** (not just a light jacket - bring something toasty)

___ **warm hat**

___ **gloves** - especially nice for cold Vermont nights, but a lightweight fleece pair is cozy in Oregon too.

___ 1 or 2 **towels** & a washcloth.

___ **Bedding** ~ a sleeping bag, and a pillow if you need one. Or blankets and sheets. A mattress or sleeping pad is provided; the rest is up to you. For Oregon, bring something substantial; for Vermont, something extra substantial unless you know you've been assigned to an inside dorm. (See "[weather](#)" above.) Important: **you must have your own bedding** ~ although we do usually offer public areas for group sleeping, each camper is expected to sleep in their own bedding.

___ **sanitizer** - pocket sized bottle. We stock communal spaces with large bottles of sanitizer, but it's good to keep a personal stash on hand - and also good for travel days.

___ **toiletries**—shampoo, soap, toothpaste/brush, hairbrush/comb, lip balm, fingernail clippers, etc. (Please avoid strong smelling spray deodorants and hair sprays and such, or at least plan to apply them outside rather than inside cabins, bathrooms, and shower buildings.)

___ **extra menstrual supplies**, if you menstruate or might start. SERIOUSLY. Lots of people who don't expect their periods during camp do get them, since their bodies sync up with others'. We bring emergency supplies, but not always enough to meet the desperate demand. Plus, we figure you'd rather have your own brand, size, etc. rather than be stuck with what we've got.

___ **insect repellent**

___ **sunscreen** (absolute MUST for Oregon field trip participants)

___ small amount of healthy **snacks** - not essential (for most people), but some campers do consider them a necessity. Communal snacks are available several times daily, in addition to three hearty meals. Even so, some campers bring a small personal stash so they can have access to food at any time, or for when they don't like what's being served. Snacks may be kept in a public space rather than in cabins (to avoid rodent problems) - **space is limited**, so **bring a relatively small amount** of dense foods - think nuts or energy bars rather than bags of pre-popped popcorn.

• **Please don't plan on bringing snacks containing peanuts.** Read the ingredients, if you're bringing store-bought items. It's usually okay if the package says "may contain trace amounts of peanuts/made on equipment that also processes foods containing peanuts" (because our sites are not normally peanut free and we cannot guarantee no trace of peanuts). However ~ **if** we have no known peanut allergies one month prior to your session we may decide to include peanuts in our menu, in which case we will let you know it's also okay to bring such snacks.

• *A parent suggests:* If it's your **first time at NBTSC** and you're not super-experienced at being away from home on your own, you may want to pack a **comforting homemade snack or treat especially for the first night.** "*Something familiar can go a long way.*"

___ a **phone card** ~ to make calls from camp other than with your cell phone.

___ **cell phone** - important for travel days, but won't work much at camp except Verizon in Oregon

___ your parents' (and other **emergency contacts**) **phone numbers and email addresses**, memorized by your own brain as well as by your cell phone and other gadgets.

___ **debit card** or other access to cash (**essential for food purchases** during your trip to and from camp, as well as in case of travel emergencies or delays; also in case you need to visit a health clinic or pay for a prescription while you're at camp).

___ A **checklist** of everything you're bringing

___ **flexibility**

___ **150% of yourself**



Other stuff that could come in very handy

___ Two **epi-pens**, if you are a person who sometimes (or potentially) needs or uses an epi-pen. (If you don't have two, *get them* and bring them.) Our outdoor environment, with the potential for insect stings, plant allergens, etc., is as likely a place as ever for you to need one handy. You can keep one with you, and we will keep the other with our central first aid supplies as a backup.

___ Two **inhalers** if you have a relevant health condition - especially for Oregon. Since there is always the potential for wildfire smoke to drift into our area, we feel it's best to be prepared. You can keep one with you and we can keep the other with our first aid supplies as a backup.

___ **supplies for the workshop** you'll teach

___ whatever you need for your **talent show performance**

___ Your **artwork** for our [art show](#) ~ something you made, drew, painted, calligraphed, sculpted, designed, patched, knitted, welded, snapped, carved, etched... and that isn't so precious that you'd be devastated if something happened to it.

___ That fabulous **short film you've made**, for our NBTSC [film festival](#). Ideally you remembered to email us about it before camp, but just bring it even if you didn't.

___ fun, **festive clothes** for special occasions (prom, talent show, closing ceremony, etc.)

___ **rain boots**, especially for Vermont campers

___ a small amount of **extra cash** (\$20 should do it) for miscellaneous stuff like an extra T shirt, etc.

___ **umbrella** - particularly in Vermont, people sometimes wish they had one (particularly at night when they're carrying bedding from their cabins to group sleeping space). If you're an umbrella-user, camp is a good place to have one.

___ **long underwear** (mainly in Vermont)

___ **sunglasses** (especially in Oregon if you're going on the ocean field trip)

___ **mirror** - for people really into grooming, it would help if you would bring your own mirror, particularly to Oregon, so that the bathroom sinks are not rendered inaccessible to those who just want to brush teeth or wash hands. (And in Vermont, mirrors are scarce anyway.)

___ a few **small, familiar, comforting items** (such as a favorite giant mug to carry around constantly drinking hot tea)

___ **camera**

___ **hot water bottle** or other securely closing non-breakable container/bottle you can fill with hot water and take to bed with you (can make a huge difference in Vermont)

___ good **earplugs**

___ **alarm clock** (recommended for heavy sleepers)—we have a wake-up call shortly before breakfast, but a few people sleep through it. (For anything other than regular wake-up call time, **your alarm must be non-disturbing** to others, i.e. a vibrating device rather than an ear-splitting device.)

___ **sketchpad**

___ **journal**

___ **games** to share

___ a drum or **musical instrument**

___ **Frisbees** (make sure to label with your name!)

___ **wading shoes** (for creek or ocean)

___ **stamped postcards**, or **stamps/paper/envelopes**.

___ For Oregon - a **tent** - if we have agreed you will be bringing and sleeping in one. (Let us know you're interested via your CampDoc account!) More details on our [Camp Myrtlewood](#) page.

___ For Oregon - a **sleeping pad or outdoor mattress** if you'll be tenting or if you're excited about sleeping under the stars. More details on our [Camp Myrtlewood](#) page.

___ For Oregon - large (preferably zipping) mesh **laundry bag**, lingerie bag, or sweater bag - for midsession laundry service (see notes above)

If you go on the Oregon field trip to the ocean, consider

___ An extra towel

___ extra sunscreen (strong) (sunburns are common on this trip)

___ Shoes in which you can walk/hike on damp rocks

___ A windbreaker

What not to bring

___ **illegal substances**

___ **tobacco** (in any form), **unless** your parents have signed our tobacco use form (or you are 18+). (Regardless of age, read the page on tobacco use in our “camper handbook extras.”)

___ snacks containing **peanuts** (or peanut butter, etc.). (If we have no known peanut allergies one month prior to each of these sessions, we may let you know that it’s okay to bring such snacks.)

___ **Ibuprofen, acetaminophen, or benadryl.** Health codes pretty much require that we collect these, keep them locked up, and then distribute them as needed. We stock these anyway, and dispense as needed - so it just causes extra hassles for our health staff to have to keep track of individuals' supplies and return them at the end of the session. (If you have some extenuating circumstance, or really need to have this stuff with you while you're traveling to and from camp, you can bring it - but we'll need to hang onto it for you during camp.)

___ **valuables** such as fancy phones or large amounts of cash, unless you're willing to risk them. We are sad and sorry to report that on rare occasions (very rare - nowhere near every year, let alone every session) we have had such items stolen. Hundreds if not thousands of other gadgets and wads of cash present at camp have *not* been stolen - we've rarely had theft of any kind during the past 24 years, but it can happen. Staff cannot spend extensive time and energy trying to find missing valuables, nor devote significant time in group meetings to discussing their whereabouts. (Staff can keep phones and other small valuable items, cash, and such in a lock box.)

___ **knives** (such as swiss army knives and other small tools), maybe. We generally err on the safe side and collect some folks' knives during the week. Sometimes exceptions are made - it's up to the staff person in charge of this domain (usually one of our health or outdoor specialists). Anyway, it's fine with us if you travel with them, just know that you may not be able to hang onto them during NBTSC.

___ boom boxes, speakers, or other **music amplifiers.** We generally reserve the airwaves for acoustic homemade music, the lowing of cattle and singing of birds, conversation, and grunts of concentration.

___ **personal items you intend to share** with the community, **unless you are willing to risk damage.** (Some campers have generously shared hammocks, tents, guitars, etc. While for the most part these items have made it through with only mild scuffs, sometimes they get full-on broken/ripped/etc. We love sharing and we encourage everyone to take good care of all the stuff in our midst, but NBTSC can't take responsibility for damage to your belongings.)

___ **if you're not sure about something, please ask.**

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*Travel

It's important to tell us how you are traveling. If your plans change, tell us that too!

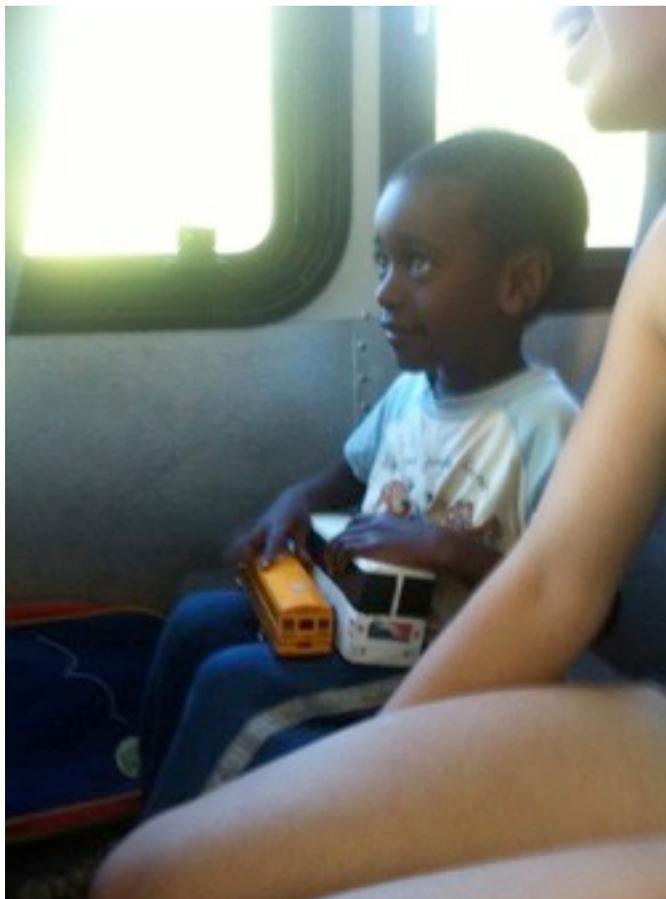
Please get your travel information in on time~

Add your info via your NBTSC CampDoc account. If you're late we may not have space for you on our bus or van, or know where to look for you. Make sure we have cell phone numbers - these really help when a camper doesn't show up when and where they said they would.

We need you to carefully read the travel parameters for your session (arrival times we can work with, etc.), and arrange your travel in accordance.

Traveling outside of our standard time windows (or locations) will likely mean that we can't provide you with a ride to camp. Even if we *are* able to change our plans to work with you, traveling outside our normal parameters typically causes a *lot* of logistical hassle and extra work for us. You can also expect for it to cost you a lot of extra money (in mileage costs and payment for our drivers who make special trips), canceling out anything you were saving by intentionally traveling at an odd time.

Thanks for helping our travel days to flow by working with us on this!



Not-so-great things happen when we don't have accurate travel info from you.

If you get your travel information in on time, we will gladly reserve bus or van space for you and expect you to show up where you said, check up on late flight information (etc.) that you've provided if you're missing, have a staff person with a car wait behind for you if necessary, and do everything in our power to get you to camp (assuming you haven't made a major mistake on your end like forgetting to catch your train, or changing your travel plans without telling us). If you *don't* get your travel info on time, instead of calling you and leaving dozens of messages and spending lots of time or money trying to track you down (as we sometimes used to do), we may simply expect you to show up at Camp Myrtlewood or Farm & Wilderness at the start of camp and welcome you with the usual friendly greeting (and optional hug) when you get there. If you show up at one of our bus/van locations instead, you will be given a seat *if* (and only if) there is room for you. If there isn't space for you, *it is entirely your own responsibility to get yourself to camp*. This might mean taking a greyhound bus 70 miles and then hiring a driver or taxi for another 55 miles.

photo by Reanna Alder, 2012

We welcome you to send us copies of your travel itinerary.

Email them to our [logistics coordinator](#), with your full name and “travel” spelled correctly in the subject line. Good chance we won’t actually *read* your itinerary - you must still make sure to accurately and completely fill out your travel info online - but having it on hand in case of a hitch may be helpful.

Allow enough leeway when making travel plans

If you are flying, keep in mind check in, security, and boarding times. And also, again, be sure to share your plans with us. NBTSC cannot be responsible if you miss your flight because you didn’t pay attention to our parameters, nor if you don’t provide us with your travel details (and not at the last minute!). This way everything goes more smoothly for everybody - especially you!

Travel directory

Via your account on CampDoc, you can access the password-protected travel directory. This lists all of the people who are registered at this point and who agree to be included in the directory. If there’s no note by someone’s name, you can still contact them to suggest shared travel; they just didn’t tell us to say anything particular about their plans.

Plan on arriving and leaving when everyone else does.

Every once in a while someone informs us casually, during camp, that they will be leaving a couple days early to attend a soccer tournament. Or, their parent calls on the first day to say that their little Johnny won’t actually be showing up until the 3rd day. This doesn’t work for us (or for everybody else in your advisee group, etc.). NBTSC is a one- or two-week event, with an important orientation at the beginning and closure at the end, not well-suited to part-time attendance, except and unless in those rare instances that we make a special agreement with a camper ahead of time. *(A note to all the extra-polite people in our universe: we **do** make special agreements in advance when there’s good cause, so don’t hesitate to ask!)* (When someone finds during the session that the camp experience is just not working for them, that’s another matter.)

If you are driving yourself to camp

Please be aware that you can’t drive your car during the session, regardless of your age—we will ask to keep your keys. Also, we will probably ask you not to use your car as a hangout space during the camp; sometimes in the past this has contributed to a separate subculture that has felt exclusive and not great to everyone else.

Make sure you completely understand the travel details for your session:

[Oregon travel information](#)

[Vermont travel information](#)

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Food



We serve substantial, delicious meals ~ made with fresh, mostly organic ingredients. We bring our own kitchen staff, many of whom have long been an integral part of our community - they prepare vegetarian meals, accommodating vegans and working with many other restrictions as needed.

Snacks

Healthy snacks are available several times daily. Some campers also bring their own supply, so they can access food whenever they're hungry or when they don't like what's on offer. (But **don't plan to bring snacks containing peanuts***, and we also encourage you not to bring candy, soda, or other junk food.) If your normal diet includes a lot of sugar and such, and you don't think you can be happy for a week or two without, we suggest packing only the amount you think you will really need. Personal snacks are typically kept in a public storage area (to avoid rodent problems). **Space is limited**, so **small amounts of dense snacks** (like nuts, energy bars, or dried fruit) are better than high volume ones (like bags of popcorn or rice cakes).

* If we have no known peanut allergies at your session one month before it begins, we may include peanuts in

our menu. If so, we'll let you know (and you can bring them in snacks if you'd like).

Meat

We don't serve meat. This helps keep food costs down, simplifies our menu, and makes kitchen sanitation easier. We realize that some people include meat as an important part of their diet, so you are welcome to bring your own. But, since storage, cooking, and the possibility of cross-contamination present major challenges, your meat must be dried or canned or otherwise able to stay completely separate from our kitchen and refrigeration systems. (And you must bring any necessities such as can openers.) We do serve lots of protein-rich foods ranging from eggs to legumes to dairy products to nuts.

Caffeine

We don't serve much in the way of caffeinated beverages—we feel that large amounts of caffeine can lead to health problems when people are already pushing their bodies and perhaps not getting enough sleep. If you can't live without, bring teabags or a simple coffee setup. (We occasionally serve tea with breakfast, but not in the quantities that some campers pine for.)

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Dietary restrictions

If there are any foods you don't eat for any reason, please read this section carefully.

The dietary needs of our community have exponentially complexified over the past 2.5 decades, so we ask detailed questions. If you are vegan, if you have food allergies, or if you have other food needs (not minor preferences, but actual needs), be sure to carefully fill out our dietary restrictions information. (It's part of our online information gathering via CampDoc.) This information is due July 1.

It is essential that you **provide us with complete information on food allergies and other restrictions**. And then at camp we need you to **eat what you said you would eat, and not eat foods you said you cannot or will not eat**. Sounds simple, but we've had significant problems and misunderstandings. ("If this issue continues to grow it's going to be harder and harder to be excited for this job," says one of our beloved longtime cooks.) In hopes of clarity, here are some guidelines and notes about dietary restrictions and the questions we ask. We deeply appreciate your collaboration and cooperation!

Your dietary restrictions info is not kept confidential.

At minimum, all cooks and all health staff (plus other staff as needed) have access to it. Also: some or all of this information is posted in the kitchen, and campers may see each others' data when we check to make sure that everyone is cognizant of what we have them down for. **If you have something more private** you want only staff (or some staff) to know (perhaps something about your mental health in relation to food), please share it with us when you come to the question, "Do you have more information about how food may affect you, or your relationship to food, that you'd like to share?" Your responses to this question will be shared with the kitchen coordinator, health staff, and camp directors, and then with other staff only when deemed important and relevant.

Things to know about our food before sharing your needs with us

We serve all-vegetarian meals (no meat of any kind including fish, poultry, etc.). We use mostly organic dairy products and eggs (and produce, grains, etc.) but are not strict about this - there are exceptions now and then. When we are aware of any peanut allergies (one month prior to the start of a session) we exclude peanuts from our menu and also ask campers and staff not to bring snacks containing peanuts. We do our best to accommodate dietary restrictions but there are some diets we do not have the resources to support.

Please plan to eat what you say you'll eat

We invite you to let us know that you're vegan, that you're allergic to cayenne, whatever. Thing is, **once you tell us what you want, we need you to stick**. You can't eat the amazing vegan uncheesecake if you didn't sign up for vegan meals. (Unless there's explicitly enough for everybody.) This is a real, perennial issue for us - people trying to eat the food they did not sign up for. It is an intensely intricate job to purchase and prepare food that fulfills everybody's needs, and it's depressing for allergic folks when their piece of gluten-free pie is gobbled up by somebody who thinks it looks "interesting," discouraging for cooks when they take pains to accommodate an alleged wheat allergy and then that person eats wheat bread all day at the snack table, etc.

Please don't state preferences as needs.

We all have things we prefer not to eat, but that don't hurt us or violate our philosophical commitments. (One year, our cooks bent over backwards to create banana-free editions of certain desserts, only to find out later that the camper who "couldn't" eat bananas merely didn't like them.) We can't plan around preferences except, for example, if your casual preference is to avoid wheat and you are vegan, then **if** there are other vegans who are allergic to wheat we can easily add you to their ranks - that sort of thing, we can work with. We do already take into account the things that lots of campers don't like (brussels sprouts, etc.). We love to please as many people as possible - we just don't have the budget to accommodate everyone's exact tastes.

And please do not dream up a special diet just for camp.

If you want to experiment with being vegan, fine - it's easy to add you to the list of other plain-vanilla vegans. But if you normally eat onions (or corn, wheat, soy, etc.), please do not decide to try "onion-free" during camp. We really don't like it when we find out that someone decided to "experiment" with a new, complicated diet just for camp. On top of all the rest of the kitchen complexity we understand to be necessary, it makes us a little crazy.

Sorry, but your food may be boring~

While our cooks are sometimes mind-bogglingly kind in their efforts to cook up beautiful meals for each individual with special parameters, on a policy level NBTSC is moving toward more simplicity. We cannot afford the staff to accommodate all campers' needs unless we sometimes batch various needs together. Sometimes folks complain that their special needs are lumped together with other special diet folks (gluten-free and nut-free together, for example). Sorry, but sometimes that's how it goes - our cooks simply cannot prepare 5 different versions of a meal. To do that, at minimum we would need to hire more staff, and families would need to pay more for NBTSC.

And there may be times when you are left out.

If you are allergic to strawberries, for example, it's possible that there would be a strawberry shortcake night without a special separate dessert just for you. Philosophically we like to include everyone in everything as much as possible. But logistically, we may not be able to create alternatives for every single person on every single item at every single meal. Just like other campers, you are [welcome to bring snacks](#).

If your diet changes after you submit your information, let us know ASAP.

Parents (or campers age 18+) should contact Maya (909-206-2872, or NotBackTo@gmail.com). Make sure you receive confirmation that Maya received your information. We will do our best to incorporate it into our plans; the sooner we receive your updates the more likely we can accommodate your needs.

Kitchen is not available to campers

We have sometimes allowed special diet folks to prepare their own food in the kitchen. Occasionally this has gone well; usually it has not. Please don't plan on kitchen access.

A toaster oven and/or microwave may be available in the dining hall.

At some sessions, we offer this in light of campers' diverse needs - to lessen the burden on kitchen staff, and to make it easier for campers with dietary restrictions to bring and prepare foods they like. If this would make a helpful difference for you, let us know and we'll amp up our effort to make it happen.

Parents need to understand that we're not enforcers.

We provide food; we do not supervise, monitor, prevent, or enforce its consumption. Staff cannot guarantee that any camper will make decisions consistent with the information that parents provide. If your child is not mature enough to avoid foods he knows to be problematic, NBTSC may not be a good fit. (We have, for example, witnessed a "strictly-gluten-free" camper consuming hunks of regular bread at the snack table, even after talking with him about his diet.)

Small amounts of any food may be present in anything.

At each session, we have only one kitchen to work in. We are not a nut-free camp, and we do not have a separate gluten-free kitchen. (We do exclude peanuts from our menu when there are allergic folks on the roster, but there still may be peanuts present in the site kitchens.) Hence, NBTSC may not be a good match for people with severe allergies even to trace amounts (of pretty much anything, including gluten and nuts). (That said, we often have cooks on our kitchen team who are strictly gluten-free themselves, and who have severe reactions to even touching gluten, so when they're present on staff our GF campers are pretty well taken care of. Feel free to reach out if you want to discuss particulars.)

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*Health, Safety, and Special Needs

(See more about health on our [vitality](#) page and our [health history](#) page.)

We are not a medical camp. You must take basic responsibility for your own health, bring any (regular) necessary medications with you, etc. We do have staff with basic first aid skills, as well as a staffer who dispenses prescription meds and offers a bit of TLC to campers who aren't feeling well whether due to a sore throat or menstrual cramps. Occasionally we have a licensed nurse on staff. Often but not always, we have one or more staffers with certifications such as wilderness first responder and/or EMT.

Please be prepared in case you need to visit a clinic or hospital. Although only a few campers now and then need to leave camp to see a medical professional, we have learned that these trips can be a nightmare (and involve really, really long waits) when folks are not prepared; or they can go easily with a little bit of advance planning. Things tend to flow nicely when:

- you have insurance. If your family doesn't have regular health insurance, we suggest getting traveler's insurance for the duration of your trip away from home.
- we have a copy of both sides of your health insurance card, uploaded via your health history. Ideally, you also have an actual card with you at camp, but the online copy is an important duplicate and works as a backup. (For additional backup, it's good to have a picture handy on your phone of the front and back of your card.)
- you know the date of birth of the parent who is the main subscriber to your family's health insurance (and their name, of course).
- you call your regular doctor before camp, to let them know about your camp plans. Some medical visits can be avoided if a doctor is available to authorize a prescription over the phone.
- you have enough cash (or a debit or credit card) for a typical office visit, prescription, etc.

Preferred hospitals or other local healthcare providers

In emergencies, urgent situations, and less urgent situations (such as a clinic visit for conjunctivitis) campers are usually taken to whatever nearby hospital or clinic is normally used (and recommended) by site managers. (Or whatever hospital an ambulance defaults to.) We once had a parent share afterward that she would have preferred a different (slightly further away) hospital than the one we chose. If you would like to look into local options you are welcome to share your preferences with us. Of course we also try to contact parents by phone before seeking medical care for (minor) campers. (In any serious emergency we would likely prioritize proximity/rapid access over other concerns.)

Special health needs

If you have special needs, inform us in advance. We'll study up a little on our own, but if you fill us in on the specific ways that you personally like to be helped in relation to those needs (again, ahead of time!), we'll be that much better prepared to support you in having a comfortable, safe, and fulfilling session. Our sites can accommodate wheelchairs, though like any outdoor setting, they can pose challenges to anyone (including those in "normal" physical condition).

Food allergies

In an attempt to make sure we have all the necessary information on each camper, you'll see that in our online information forms we ask detailed questions regarding your dietary restrictions.

Other allergies

If you are a person who sometimes (or potentially) needs or uses an **epi-pen**, bring two. (*Get them if you don't have them already, and bring them.*) Our outdoor environment, with the potential for insect stings, plant allergens, etc., is as likely a place as ever for you to need it. You would keep one with you, and another as a backup in our central health supplies.

Asthma and related conditions

We suggest bringing two inhalers - keep one with you, and the other in our central health supplies as a backup. Especially important in Oregon - we sometimes get smoke from regional wildfires.

What if you get sick when it's time to come to camp?

Depending on how sick you are and what you have (and of course whether it's contagious), we may ask you to stay home until you're better. (Generally speaking, folks with flu or flu-like symptoms are asked to stay home for a period of time, whereas folks with mild colds are usually cleared provided they are willing to take care of their health and avoid spreading their germs at camp.) If we ask you not to attend at all, we typically refund your camp fees minus \$160. (Before sending the refund we may need a statement from your healthcare provider.) See our [refund policy](#) for details.

Oregon notes

In case of emergency, you would most likely be taken by ambulance to the nearest hospital (in Coquille)—it's approximately 45 minutes away, but the ambulance is local and can arrive quickly.

Natural hazards

We have occasionally experienced wasp and bee stings. Camp Myrtlewood also has poison oak - in previous years, a few people who have gone hiking (and strayed a bit from the trails) have had minor incidents. We'll show you how to identify it, and if you pay attention it shouldn't be a problem, but at camp we talk about what to do if you get poison oaked.

Also, unfortunately, like many areas throughout the West and Northwest, Camp Myrtlewood sometimes experiences **smoky air** due to wildfires elsewhere in the region. (The only time this has been significant during our stay was in 2017, but realistically it could become an issue at any time.) If you have asthma or another health condition that is triggered by periods of poor air quality, please bring inhalers and any other supplies that may be helpful for you. (In fact, we strongly suggest *two* inhalers, so you can keep one on your person and we can keep the other in our central health supply area in case you misplace yours.)

Vermont notes

In addition to our own staff with first aid and/or emergency training, all Farm and Wilderness staff are also wilderness first responder certified. In case of emergency, there is a 911 First Responder Team in Plymouth; if necessary, you would be taken by ambulance to the nearest hospital. (Rutland Hospital is 30 minutes away; Dartmouth is 12 minutes away via helicopter.)

Natural hazards

Farm and Wilderness has ticks, poison ivy, and snakes. None of these are likely to pose any real problems (nor have they in past sessions), and at camp we talk about ways to deal with them.



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How to Contact Us (Campers, Staff, Office) during camp season

Check our [contact page](#) for updates on how to best reach us, particularly *during* camp. (That page is updated as necessary starting around mid-June, we don't expect to change this handbook after it is published in January.)

Calling our main office phone number will not connect you to us at camp - you'll be calling Maya at home in Joshua Tree, California.

Parents: If you call camp (while we are in session) and reach voicemail but want someone on staff to return your call, please be specific as to the nature of your question or concern. That way, the appropriate person can call you back. For instance, it's a waste of your time and ours if you ask for a director to call you back, but what you really need is to discuss (with the logistics coordinator) changes to travel plans. Also, note that **we cannot be consistently or reliably reached by email during camp** (if this changes, our [contact page](#) will say so). Make sure to convey important information by phone, or at least to verify that it has been received by email.

Need to contact us regarding travel or other logistical concerns, in the weeks just before camp?

For issues related to payment, status of your registration or the information we need from you, please continue to contact Maya. *Our logistics team cannot help you with these things.*

For other concerns, including questions about travel, you can also contact our logistics team. In the weeks and days prior to camp they are usually available via [email](#). Our website [contact page](#) may also offer a seasonal phone number.

If you are coming to a later session of camp and want to discuss your travel plans or such with logistics folks *during* an earlier session of camp, see below, "How people can reach you at camp." (If your question can wait till camp's not in session, though, that would be great.)

How people can reach you at camp

Oregon

Phone (urgent or important situations only - up to 130 people share one land line): 541-572-5307. (Actual humans - the Camp Myrtlewood site managers - often answer this phone at all hours in case there is an incoming emergency call. Therefore, please take care not to call in the middle of the night if it's not an emergency.)

Mail: *Camper's Name*, c/o NBTSC, Camp Myrtlewood, 49658 Myrtle Creek Rd, Myrtle Point, OR 97458

Vermont

Phone (urgent or important personal calls - up to 130 people share; also to reach our logistics coordinator regarding travel plans or other logistics): 802-422-3447. If you're not able to reach us at that number, you can also try 802-422-7583. For emergencies only, if you can't reach us at the numbers listed above, call the Farm & Wilderness Emergency Pager, 888-622-3276 - you may need to ask for the "school year programs coordinator," and then say that you're calling for someone at Not Back to School Camp, Tamarack Farm.

Mail: *Camper's Name*, c/o NBTSC, Tamarack Farm Camp, 263 Farm & Wilderness Road, Plymouth, VT 05056

More about phones, mail, and email at all sessions

In each of our locations there is only one official phone to be used for important or urgent situations. “Important” can mean checking in with your parents occasionally if you’re not used to being away from home or just need to hear a familiar voice, so do ask us if that applies to you, but you will need to keep your conversations fairly short. Please also plan to provide a phone card so that the site is not billed for your call. But, if you need to make a call and you don’t have a phone card, it’s no big deal - we’ll pay for it.

We do sometimes have an additional phone available for use, but even so - many people share; calls need to be limited and short.

Cell phones

In Oregon, Verizon cell phones work pretty well; sometimes others work, but reception is inconsistent. In Vermont, on rare occasions people have gotten a cell signal, particularly after hiking up a tall hill.

Please plan to keep your phone off, and put away, during meetings, workshops, meals, etc., and in cabins and public buildings. We hope we will never need to actively regulate cell phone use, but we do expect everyone at camp to be courteous and to pay attention to the people they are with rather than to their phones. (Since it is up to you how you spend most of your time at camp, it should be easy to find time to step away from things and make calls or send texts in privacy.) (We understand that sometimes people use phones to take notes, or campers enjoy sharing games and such with each other, and all of this is fine.... we just don’t want rudeness, and we need everybody’s focused participation during meetings and such.)

Email is not reliably available at camp. Some of our sites have occasional internet service, but we can't count on this (and it changes year to year), and even when it is available we don't normally make it available to campers. When the site has internet (again: not always!) and a camper has a particular need or special reason to use it, we consider such requests individually. Parents, it’s okay to *try* emailing us (staff) to communicate important information during camp, but there’s a good chance we won’t get it - so if you don’t hear back promptly, please phone.

Senders of postal mail should keep in mind that delivery can be slow, as in any remote area. You should expect your mail to take at least one more day to arrive than it would to reach a nearby city. (Also, we *strongly* request that parents please not send large quantities of cookies, candy, etc., in care packages. There is usually a fair amount of sugar floating around camp already—because some campers bring and share it—and we feel it contributes to their immune systems getting compromised and sickness encroaching. **Please also make certain not to send cookies or other snacks containing peanuts or peanut butter - unless we explicitly inform you that nobody with peanut allergies is attending your session.**)

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Camp Life



How to Get the Most Out of NBTSC

We talk all session long about this topic, but it can be good to ruminate beforehand also:

Think about what you want to get out of camp, before you come. Set a few intentions and memorize them or carry them around in your pocket on an index card, or write them on your hand. Consider talking about them with your parents.

Yet, don't limit yourself to preconceived notions. NBTSC is a space that often widens people's perceptions of what is possible. Maybe let one of your intentions be to stay open to new things and new ways of being.

If you're lonely, or nervous about making friends, go to stuff! The easiest and least threatening way to make friends at camp is to participate in workshops and other scheduled events, of which there are tons. NBTSC is also a very welcoming community in which to simply introduce yourself to other people and strike up a conversation, join people you don't know at breakfast, start your own lunch-table discussion group, or ask for volunteers to help you with a skit for the talent show. Everyone benefits when campers reach out this way, and many do. But we repeat: you don't even have to be that proactive in order to start making friends—you can just start by going to stuff that other people have organized!

Whether you're new to camp or a 5-year veteran, we suggest that you **see yourself both as a newcomer and as an "old camper,"** which you will technically be after the first night anyway. See yourself as having everything to learn about these 70-130 people and what they know about, and about yourself in this particular context. At the same time, see yourself as having all kinds of wisdom and knowledge and experience from your own life (and possibly from past sessions of NBTSC) to share. Everyone, new or not, is welcome to feel like a raw beginner and to have waves of insecurity. And everyone, returning or not, is welcome to share their skills and insights and fully participate in co-creating NBTSC.

Older campers and veteran campers, know that even if you have your own insecurities, *you are important* to younger campers and new campers. The staff often hears comments like this one from a new camper in 2010: "It's nice to have older campers approach new campers to draw them out. It makes a big difference."

Organization—plan how to not lose your stuff, label your possessions, and check the lost and found frequently. Write your name on the directory you receive at camp. (We make sure everyone gets one, but we don't plan to bring extras.)

We strongly suggest that you **make a schedule for yourself each day**—workshops you'd like to attend and what time they start, when you have chores, potential nap times, people you want to make a point of talking with, things you want to prepare for (talent show, your workshop), etc. There are so many choices that it can get overwhelming if you don't do some planning. Many people comment on the last day that they wish they'd been more proactive in this way. There are also many spontaneous opportunities that you and others will create, but a little bit of planning can enhance your week.

Along that same line—**some people have a hard time dealing with the wide open structure of camp;** they find that making plans, choosing what to do throughout the day, etc., can be challenging. If you find yourself in this position, ask your advisor for help, or turn to an older sibling or friend or somebody in your advisee group who's been at camp before.

Plan to take care of yourself. We don't baby you—you get a lot of freedom, choose your own bedtime, etc. Fun spontaneous things do occasionally happen at night, but you can miss them and still have a fabulous time. We address the sleep issue directly and proactively at camp, but how much you get is ultimately up to you. And we're not talking only about sleep—stay centered, go off by yourself and sit in the sun and just breathe when you need to. Along that line...

Pace yourself, especially if you're coming for two weeks. If you've never had to pace yourself before, take some time before camp to really think through how that might work for you. Our schedule is designed to help (we have rest days every so often), but you should also make it your own business to get enough sleep and take enough time for yourself (journaling, etc.) early in the session, so you don't burn out.

Turn to your advisor when you need support. We're here for you, whether you have questions, need a hug, want our best attempt at advice, whatever. If your advisor is busy or you'd rather talk with someone else, other staff are usually available also.

Remember that **sharing your skills** with others doesn't have to be limited to our official workshop schedule, and feel free to watch for opportunities to do so. Maybe bring your hacky sack or a couple embroidery hoops or a harmonica.

Make an informed, thoughtful decision regarding whether to play Assassin. Assassin is a game often played at camp, over a duration of several days. When someone decides to organize it, they explain the rules in a meeting, and then a lot of people typically choose to play. While it can certainly be intensely exciting, many people later feel that they wound up spending a lot of time being paranoid and sneaky, rather than really relaxing into the open friendly atmosphere of camp. (If you're curious, there's an explanation of Assassin on wikipedia. The version played at camp is less complex, and there are no play weapons involved, but still - the article gives a sense of how it works.)

(Oregon) - **Make the right choice for you, regarding the field trip to the coast.** The field trip day used to be the one and only opportunity during the session to just sleep in and lounge around without missing all kinds of stuff - there were two fabulous and very different choices: big adventure vs mellow self-care. Now, with our two-week schedule, there are three rest days that do not coincide with the field trip. (We have recast field trip day as "adventure day," and for people who don't go on the field trip, we offer some close-to-home excursions like walks up the creek, basketball tournaments, a blackberry picking and pie making project, etc.)

You reap what you sow. If you arrive determined to give your whole self—communicate honestly and openly, be emotionally available and authentic, take risks, wipe tables or scrub toilets with gladness (yeah, really), make a fool of yourself trying new stuff, share what you know, listen deeply to your new friends—we can promise you one of the best times of your life.



photo by Claire Ward, 2013

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Help co-create and re-create NBTSC culture!

Part of why NBTSC is awesome is because of all the great traditions and values we've gradually built together. Many of these were originally brought and shared by individual campers. (Bonding night, for example, came from a camper who had done a similar activity in her Unitarian church youth group.)

NBTSC culture is always shifting and growing, mostly as a result of the individuals who join us. **If YOU come to camp, then we want YOU and YOUR CULTURE to become part of NBTSC culture.** The more you show and share who you are, the more NBTSC can reflect who you are.

So - please, please share whatever is important to you. This means you as an individual, and it can also mean you as part of your family, and/or part of a larger culture or cultures. The cultures that campers and staff bring and openly share at camp can include their ethnic or religious culture and heritage as well as other aspects of identity (like queer culture). Campers also expose our community to a multitude of *sub*cultures - through their connections to skateboarding, hip hop, video games, punk music, the maker movement, etc.

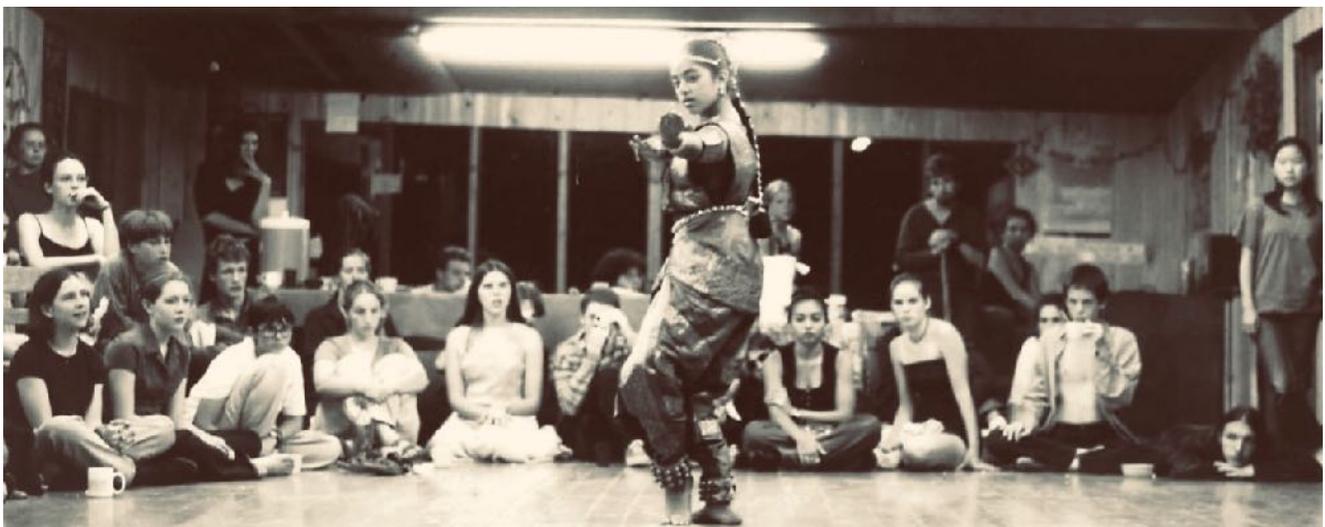
So how exactly can you bring your culture to camp?

Some straightforward ways are:

- A workshop you teach
- Your talent show act
- Something you display in the art show
- Conversations you initiate or participate in
- The clothes you wear (every day, plus special moments like prom or closing ceremony)
- Bring a song that we can all learn and sing together (tell our staff songleaders)
- Bring a game to teach your advisee group (tell your advisor)
- Bring a small item to show to your advisee group

Occasionally we can also add a whole new activity or event to the schedule - as a one-time experiment or the start of a new tradition. If you have an idea, talk to us! Reach out prior to camp or during camp. If it's a small thing, like a 5-minute activity we can do at the end of some meetings, there's a better chance we can integrate it, but regardless of length, we want to hear from you!

Thanks for being you and thanks for being part of us!



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*The Vitality Project

What with people bringing germs from all over the continent, and folks not sleeping a whole lot, and getting worn down traveling and visiting friends before camp even starts, and then hugging people nonstop at camp, in our past we sometimes had a *lot* of sickness. We then made a concerted effort to turn this around and overall, we've been healthier in recent years - but still with a few disturbing backslid moments. We intend to continue toward an even more radiant NBTSC into the future. Our policies are designed to support all of us in having a zesty, sparkly, healthy, energized camp experience together. Here are a few important things to keep in mind and to do.

We can't admit people to camp with flu-like symptoms or certain other contagious illnesses.

All campers are screened for flu-like symptoms upon arrival at camp (or, upon meeting our buses/vans in town). People with these symptoms are generally not admitted to camp. (We reserve the right to make exceptions to this policy where that seems like the best choice, all things considered - such as when a young, sick camper is far from home with no relatives nearby.)

Please notify us in advance if you have a cold or flu-like symptoms, lice, pinkeye, mono, or any other infectious disease that might be spread at camp. Depending on what you have and other factors, we will decide whether you can attend camp and what additional measures we might take at camp to protect your health and others' health if you do attend. If you have a minor cold or certain other conditions (such as lice), we may still allow you to come, but will likely ask you to bring special items or take specific steps to protect others. We will also want to meet with you right at the start of camp to make sure we're on the same page. If you have the flu, or possible other conditions, we'll likely ask that you not attend camp - or at least wait until you're better. (If we asked you not to attend at all, you would be refunded all but \$160 of your fees, though this refund might require a statement from your healthcare provider - additional details in our [refund policy](#).)

We usually send an email in the summer reminding you about the importance of this policy, and asking you to get in touch with us if you have a situation that might pose a challenge for camp.

If you get sick at camp, staff may require things of you such as

- Going to bed by a certain time
- Sleeping in your own bed or in an assigned infirmary bed, rather than in a public space
- Not participating in bonding night or other activities that involve lots of hugging
- Not going through meal lines (a friend can get your food).

As always, we consider each situation individually, but we definitely take a proactive stance on health. We want to support people in getting over illnesses quickly, and also in not getting sick in the first place.

Our requests and suggestions

- We strongly **encourage you not to bring candy, soda, or other sugary snacks, or caffeinated or super-salty/greasy foods or beverages**—for yourself or to share. Or, if you do decide to bring some, consider bringing the smallest amount that you think you can live with for the session. We are not trying to make anyone feel ashamed of their eating habits, or moralize—we just want to keep people healthy at camp, and junk food and caffeine (and even natural sugars like honey) can undermine your immune system.
 - **Parents** ~ *please don't send* large quantities of **sugar** via “**care**” packages.
- Bring a **water bottle**, labeled with your first and last name, which you will carry around all the time and not share with anyone. This way you'll likely drink more water, and you'll be less likely to acquire—or spread—germs. The dish people will have less work, too.
- Bring a **thermos** for hot liquids. One of our staff nurses has said we should make a thermos quasi-mandatory. She said that carrying around hot tea or broth and drinking it regularly can make a huge difference for people fighting or recovering from sickness.
- Get lots of **sleep before camp**.

- **Wash your hands obsessively**, especially before meals. We also recommend carrying a small bottle of **sanitizer** in your pocket—great for after you’ve been hugging and holding hands with germ people. (We also keep sanitizer on hand in main camp buildings.)
- Make sure you have a **warm jacket** to wear at night and in the morning, and **warm enough bedding** (“warm enough” varies by session - see [“what to bring.”](#))
- If you **sneeze or cough**, do so **into your elbow**. (You are less likely to touch someone else, someone else’s food, or something that someone else will touch, with the inside of your elbow than with your hand.) Or into a tissue and then immediately throw away the tissue.
- If you live in a different time zone (or even if you don’t), try to **adjust your body to the practice of getting up by approximately 9:00 a.m.** (pacific or east coast time, depending on which NBTSC) before camp starts. (Breakfast usually runs from 9:30 to 10:15 a.m., and the first required activity is check-in, usually at 10:15.)
- Watch what you do in the **days and weeks before camp**, especially if you’re traveling or visiting friends: get plenty of sleep, stay hydrated, and otherwise take care of yourself so that you don’t come to camp run down.
- **Avoid picking up germs while traveling** through airports, bus terminals, train stations, etc. Wash and sanitize your hands frequently, especially after touching other people, and before eating or touching your face.



photo by Jules Rogmans, 2013

Please bring supplies that work for you!

Do bring your own stash of remedies that you use both to prevent and treat simple illnesses and symptoms - vitamin C, throat lozenges, etc. Whatever you use to boost your immune system to *avoid* getting colds and to keep your energy up, and whatever you use when you are congested, have a headache or sore throat or allergies - good idea to bring it (and then just return whatever you don't use to your family's health supply cabinet). **We keep a well-stocked first aid kit, but cannot guarantee that we'll have what you prefer to take, or enough of it to make you happy. (We can't, for example, provide everybody with dozens of throat lozenges.)** We do keep certain OTC items belonging to campers (like painkillers) in our lock box along with prescription meds, but our health staff can dispense them to you as needed. (We don't typically keep supplements or alternative health remedies locked up, though it's not out of the question that this could happen in specific circumstances.)

(However... please do *not* bring acetaminophen, benadryl, or ibuprofen - unless you have unusual circumstances or really need this stuff with you while you travel. Legalities require us to keep it locked up with the prescription meds, and we keep plenty of this stuff on hand anyway, so... just simplifies things for everybody if you don't bring a personal supply.)

Some people bring

- Echinacea tincture. (Take 1-2 droppersful 3 times a day, or more often.)
- Thyme essential oil. It's a great natural antibiotic and antiseptic. Don't put it directly on your skin without diluting it. Put a few drops on your collar, a few times a day, and put a few drops on your pillow each night.
- Tea tree oil. Use in combination with thyme oil, or alone. Also antibiotic, antiseptic, antifungal, and perhaps antiviral. Most people can tolerate it directly on their skin, but to ward off airborne germs your best bet is just to make sure you're breathing it in, so again, try a few drops on your collar and pillow.
- Vitamin C, particularly Effer-C (comes in packets and you mix it with water). Or chewable vitamin C. (We love when people pass out vitamin C, instead of candy, to their friends.)
- Other remedies, essential oils, herbs, vitamins, etc., that you know to be helpful.

Advice from staffers

From a past advisor (Brittney) who had gotten sick at previous sessions of camp:

I didn't get sick at camp! I came home, got a good night's sleep, and went on with my life! My recipe was

- sleep (headed for bed at 10 PM each night)
- daily vitamins
- Wellness Formula (a supplement - daily prevention started w/ traveling)
- hand-washing (+ periodic sanitizing for fun & peace of mind)
- nightly showering & teeth brushing
- daily Claritin for relief of allergy symptoms
- extra Vitamin C
- tea

For me, that seemed to make a world of difference.

Brittney later sent another, much more comprehensive email about staying sparkly at camp. You can find it in the "NBTSC Camper Handbook Extras," accessible via our [fine print](#) page.

From Grace (who has attended more NBTSC sessions than anyone else)

Over the years I've boiled my own stay-well-at-camp strategy down to a few things that I know work for me and I trust myself to use:

- Lots of hot tea,
- a strong commitment to go to bed right after the evening events end,
- a protein-heavy breakfast,
- a double dose of daily multiple vitamins,
- making a point of stretching and breathing deeply in the sunshine every day.

If despite all that I feel symptoms, I'll chew up a clove of raw garlic twice a day with meals, and sometimes dose myself with very-strong echinacea tincture. Last but certainly not least, in Vermont I have often slept with a hot water bottle.

But don't worry, just bring a few things that work for you!

Our many suggestions are not intended to overwhelm you! We offer them just to help you think about your options and choose a few that you're already familiar with and that you know you would actually use at camp. It's so much better to have a healthy camp session, and frontloading a bit of thoughtful effort can make a big difference.

Of course, health is connected to sleep ~ see the next page, on [sleep and bedtimes](#).

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*The NBTSC Approach to Sleep

We take the sleep-and-bed-time issue seriously. It is important to us that people take advantage of what NBTSC offers during the daytimes. NBTSC is a great social gathering, but it is also much more than that. A (mere) great social gathering would not need to cost as much, nor require a posse of talented and dedicated staff people who travel from all over tarnation to contribute expertise. We rarely require anything during the daytimes beyond our two community meetings; however, we do want to *encourage* you to take workshops, teach workshops, enjoy the sunshine and the forest and the wild water, participate energetically in our evening events, and eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

Why we talk about sleep and bed time

- To encourage vibrant daytime sunshine magic.
- So it's easy for people who want to sleep to do so.
- So that cabins (and nearby areas) are quiet.
- So that people don't get sick.

We know that many factors are involved in each of these goals. One of those factors is what time people go to bed, and where and in what manner they sleep. We think this is an important factor, since sleep is healing and some people get little of it at camp.

We have never enforced a bed time, and don't want to; we never want to unnecessarily limit freedom. But we do ask you to contemplate your needs and goals and make a commitment regarding when you go to bed - *prior to camp*. This could be as concrete as specifying your latest possible bedtime. Or a list of the factors you will consider each night in deciding when to go to bed, or a commitment to set an alarm for midnight at which point you'll take 15 minutes alone to tune in to your body and decide what's best for you that night. We suggest you talk about this with a parent or another person whom you respect and who cares about you. Your commitment becomes your personal NBTSC "bedtime policy," and we ask you to write a draft before you come to camp. (For example: "I will go to bed by 1 a.m. every night, earlier if I'm feeling sick, except the last night. And, I won't start new activities and invite other people into them after midnight."*) You can change your policy at camp if you want (and nobody besides you helps enforce it unless you want them to), but it's best when people arrive with a clear idea of how they intend to take care of their sleeping needs.

**Our "Handbook Extras" offers additional sample bedtime policies.*

Also, we do close some or all of the public buildings, usually between midnight and 2:00 a.m. We sometimes provide an indoor space for group sleeping.

To sleep better, we recommend good earplugs - if you're a light sleeper, possibly a heavy duty version plus an eye mask. Another way to improve your chances of sleeping well is to request a **quiet cabin**. While *everyone* is expected to be quiet and keep the lights off in cabins during certain hours, quiet cabin folks usually cooperate even better in this realm. (And lights-out time begins a little earlier, though you still don't need to be in your cabin by any particular time.) We also designate the most isolated cabins as the quiet ones, so they are less likely to be disturbed by noise from other buildings.

(Occasionally, though, there aren't enough campers who want a quiet cabin so we don't designate any buildings as "quiet." Also, cabin preferences are mostly first-come first-served, so it sometimes happens that campers who register later are assigned to quiet cabins even though they didn't request one - or vice versa.)



photo by Sophie Biddle, 2013

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*Agreements

(a.k.a “how we do things at camp,” a.k.a. “rules”)

We started—and continue to run—NBTSC because we have a particular vision. We want to create an environment where a big group of people supports each other in: learning new things; growing intellectually, physically, emotionally, creatively, and spiritually; challenging themselves and taking healthy risks; giving and receiving love; making friends; being supported as unschoolers; getting inspired about life and learning; and experiencing joy. (Another way we express our vision is with our [mission statement](#).) We ask that you make certain agreements to help us make the NBTSC vision come true and to avoid the kinds of obstacles that would threaten it. And that is the only reason for our agreements—not because we think that every single one of them represents the way you should necessarily live all the time, and not because we wish to police or moralize.

We are not trying to oppress anybody, and are always open to explaining and talking about the agreements, so if you have any questions or concerns, please send us an email or give us a call or talk with staff (especially directors) at camp.

If you break agreements at camp, do expect consequences. For very small things we may feel satisfied after sitting down with you for a chat; for medium things we’ll expect you to make amends, to contribute something back to the camp community that seems commensurate with what you’ve done; for things that feel serious (and “serious” does include being repeatedly dishonest with the staff), you may be asked to leave camp. Grace, Evan, Matt, and the other staff run NBTSC because we love to work cooperatively with teenagers, and it is not our idea of fun to have to redirect our energy to playing police. If you are looking for a place to rebel, please find it somewhere other than NBTSC.

Everybody signs a statement that they will keep the agreements, as part of registering for camp. We imagine that for 93% of our campers, that commitment is sufficient. But ~ because signing a piece of paper 6 months prior to camp can be a little abstract, we keep it real by also verbally committing, at camp, face to face, that we will keep the agreements. (Our research guru, Nathen Lester, has also pointed out that research shows, overwhelmingly, that verbally committing to something vastly increases the odds that a person will pull off their commitment. Therefore, one of the main reasons we all verbally commit at camp is in solidarity with those campers whose everyday lives are such that keeping the agreements at camp will be a challenge.)

A note to parents about our agreements

You read about this topic before your family registered, but we address it again here to make double-sure we’re all on the same page.

NBTSC is a pretty free environment compared to most camps and other adult-organized activities for teenagers. For many of our campers, this feels natural and reflects the freedom they are accustomed to at home, although in a large gathering of teenagers it obviously has different ramifications. Largely because so many of our campers are already accustomed to taking significant responsibility for their own decisions, our setup tends to work well overall. But, if our agreements don’t address something that is important to you, or if your kid is on the younger side or just isn’t used to being in charge of most of their decisions, please discuss any issues that you feel are important, making additional agreements amongst yourselves as needed. It is our experience that when people who have good relationships with their parents come to NBTSC, they are quite willing to do things that their parents request of them. We can’t take on the role of enforcing these agreements, but several campers have told us that, for instance, they are sleeping in their own beds each night at their parents’ request. Also, of course, we can’t guarantee to you that campers will keep even their agreements with us, though we are quite proactive about engaging when needed. Campers are in charge of their own behavior—that’s how we do things at NBTSC. We don’t play a policing role except in occasional moments when that seems called for. We do pay attention, stay in close touch, make our expectations clear, build trust as much as possible (which helps to avoid rebellion, though we also like to build trust for bigger reasons), and follow up when we know of problems. Overall, the general vibe is usually that campers and staff respect each other and the camp agreements.

And yet, alas, occasionally we have to ask someone to leave.

Unfortunately, we do need parents to be prepared for their kids to get sent home if they break agreements repeatedly or in any way that the staff deems serious or likely to undermine others' camp experience. Bringing or using illegal drugs or alcohol, sharing prescription medications, leaving the grounds all night, having sex with another person at camp, abusing another person physically or emotionally, stealing from other campers or staff, or lying to staff about their own involvement in such activities are the main reasons campers have been asked to leave in the past. The people who do such things at camp are a tiny minority, but their activities tend to erode morale for everyone. We do look at each situation individually, and make a great effort not to shame anyone in the process of handling disciplinary stuff, but it is also important to us to protect the NBTSC environment as well as our own peace and happiness. (We tend to resent having to spend a lot of our time tracking down 1 or 2 people who are creating serious problems, and thus not having time to do the jobs we have prepared for, and looked forward to, all year.)

Yes, it breaks our hearts, but most years (not sessions; *years*), on average, approximately one camper is asked to leave.

We do our best to make sure that no one leaves on bad terms and, believing in people's capacity to change and grow, we are almost always willing to start over with a clean slate the next year. The only time we have unequivocally extended the exile into future years was a case of multiple thefts (cash, electronic items, etc.) - it seemed to us that in this instance, the threat to other campers' security and peace of mind was too great to invite the person back. Conversely, we have had several campers not only return, but eventually become staffers after once being sent home.

If you violate a major camp agreement, then you and your family are responsible for all travel expenses and other responsibilities incurred. We generally require campers to leave the property within a few hours after we decide they need to go. Yes, it can cost a lot to change airline tickets at the last minute. Yes, it can be a major pain for a parent to immediately abandon their beach vacation to come get you early. Yes, it can be confusing and scary to make hotel reservations in an unfamiliar city. It's up to you to prevent these possibilities from becoming realities.

(Thanks for reading this last section ~ we don't like to write these gnarly little notes and we know they apply to almost nobody. Thing is, when they do end up applying to somebody it's important that we've been clear from the outset. We also hope that these words might help avert, now and then, a stray plan to be-a-pain-in-everybody's-butt.)



The agreements

You must be willing to keep our agreements in order to come to camp. Here is our most recent version. (This is the “short” edition; we also post a long edition at camp - and in the “Handbook Extras.”) We may tweak agreements before 2020 camp sessions, but no major changes are expected.

Take care of yourself, participate in the camp community, and get the most out of camp that you can.

- Come to NBTSC only if you want to, not just because your parents or friends think you should.
- Help co-create and renew our legendary culture of kindness, honesty, trust, openness, cooperation, safety, and all-around radical goodness.
- Stay within the daytime and nighttime boundaries.
- Participate in morning meeting, advisee group, and evening meeting each day.
- Take responsibility for your own well-being.
- Don't smoke cigarettes or use tobacco unless you have written parental permission.
- Cooperate with any additional agreements the staff needs to request.
- Do your best to have a wonderful time and to help others have a wonderful time too.

Take care of each other and respect differences and boundaries.

- “Each other” means all campers, staff, visitors, and folks who live and work on site.
- Respect others of all backgrounds and identities.
- Respect others’ boundaries.
- Watch out for each others’ health and avoid spreading germs.
- Speak helpfully. Don’t gossip.
- Make it easy for people to sleep and rest.
- Stay out of others’ cabins.
- Share the air.
- But do not share smoke.
- Pay attention ~ read our stuff, and listen during meetings.
- If you interact with others in the camp community throughout the year (not just at NBTSC), keep it kind and respectful.
- Follow common sense rules of courtesy, kindness, and safety.

Take care of the environment.

- Respect the natural environment, buildings, and other surroundings.
- Before using hair dye (indoors or out), get site guidelines from the staff logistics coordinator and follow them rigorously.

Behave in a way that will allow camp to continue in future years.

- When you experience or are aware of problems at camp, tell a staff person.
- Don’t have sex.
- Keep your clothes on.
- No illegal substances.
- Follow NBTSC swimming rules.
- Observe any additional rules that are set by our sites.

NBTSC Sexual Assault Policy

This policy is a living document. It will evolve as NBTSC evolves.

NBTSC staff and administration is committed to

- preventing sexual assault, harassment, and other boundary violations via education, clear policies, and an atmosphere that welcomes victims to come forward;
- encouraging full, immediate, and honest reporting of any sexual assault, harassment, and other boundary violations; responding helpfully and thoroughly to such reports;
- protecting and supporting victims of sexual assault, and those who report incidents of sexual assault (if they are different individuals);
- when necessary, also advocating for alleged perpetrators' rights (such as not to be subjected to inaccurate gossip).

At each session of camp we provide education, support, and response:

Education

- A mandatory presentation regarding consent and sexual assault, at the start of each session

Support

- NBTSC staff is chosen largely for their approachability and openness so that campers feel safe going to them. All staff are instructed to be available; campers are told all staff are available.
- Campers are told that in cases of sexual assault, they are granted immunity from disciplinary action. This is to encourage them to report without fear of disciplinary consequences.
 - For example, if they were assaulted while intoxicated, camp staff will not take disciplinary action regarding the drug or alcohol use although these are prohibited at NBTSC.
- A staff "consent" team (or individual "consent consultant") available specifically to talk about consent- or assault-related questions or concerns
- Other staff roles also intended to offer overall support and availability:
 - counselor or "listener"
 - nurse or lay "mama bear"
 - advisor assigned to each camper
 - night watch person

Response

- When allegations of sexual assault, harassment, or other boundary violations arise, administrators and other staff engage as needed to resolve the situation to the best of our ability.
- When a camper, camp parent, or staffer reports allegations, we report back to them in some way. There is often personal information that must be kept confidential, but we intend to at least communicate back with a general update.
- If a situation indicating mandatory legal reporting were to arise, camp staff would make reports (such as to Child Protective Services) as necessary.

During the off season, camp administrators also encourage reporting, and they respond as needed.

- We understand that campers might choose not to report an incident until after camp. While we intend and attempt to respond to any form of communication that lets us know there has been a problem, we encourage you to follow our official policy:
 - Email NBTSC Executive Director, Grace Llewellyn (GraceLlewellyn@gmail.com), with the words "incident report" in your subject line.
 - Grace intends to respond within one week (preferably sooner), and to take further action as needed.

Also see "What to do if you experience (or hear of) problems at camp," next page.

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*What to do if you experience (or hear of) problems at camp

In 3 words: *talk to us!*

In more words.....

Campers' physical and emotional safety is important to us. If something unhealthy happens, we want to know so we can offer support (and if needed, intervene or otherwise create change).

We care about anything that is undermining your safety, or that is disrespecting your humanity. Here's a partial list of things we care very much about:

- Racism ~ racist jokes and comments, etc.
- Also: sexist, fatphobic, classist, anti-Semitic, ableist, transphobic, homophobic, ageist, etc. comments or jokes
- Prejudicial or intolerant comments based on who a person is, even if they do not belong to a marginalized category. (For example, it's not okay to put someone down or ridicule them for being a cisgender white man, or for being Christian. If there is a problem with a person's behavior, we encourage you to address that, but it's not okay to put a person down for their identity.)
- Sexual assault - including any kind of unwanted physical contact. We take it seriously whether it's verbal harassment, kissing, overt "sexual" contact, etc. We ask campers to get verbal consent before making overtures like kissing, etc.
 - See our sexual assault policy for our more official language on this topic.

Sometimes people say the wrong thing or make another mistake out of ignorance, and so sometimes our approach focuses on raising awareness (such as by having a significant conversation with them) and expecting them to make some kind of amends - rather than on punishing or shaming them. Some of our campers are quite young - emotionally and socially as well as in years. It has also been our experience that campers who make mistakes are frequently either neurotypical, or have a mental disorder, or have an intellectual disability - and such context also influences our approach. (Others may not be aware of such issues, and in the interest of respecting privacy we may choose not to disclose them.) Societal expectations can also change rapidly. For these reasons we may not always react with harshness when a mistake is made (to the disappointment of some folks).

On the other hand, if a person were to be deliberately bullied or assaulted we would not hesitate to take more dramatic action (such as sending a camper home). We are deeply committed to protecting victims of sexual harassment or assault, hate speech, and other wrongs. (By "we" we mean both NBTSC on a policy and administrative level, and also the many individual staff members who have a strong personal interest in social justice.)

Naturally we have more power to help if we find out right away, *during* camp, that you are experiencing a problem. If for any reason you don't choose to share with us during camp, please don't hesitate to let us know later about your experience. The more information you share, then the more likely we will be able to prevent similar problems in the future, and the more our community will be able to evolve.

We receive all kinds of commentary and feedback on camp, throughout the year. If you have a problem to report please help make sure that it gets proper attention by following this protocol:

- Describe what happened in an email to Grace (GraceLlewellyn@gmail.com). (Grace is the Executive Director of NBTSC and the person who is ultimately most responsible for NBTSC policies and actions.)
- Don't include anything else in that email - focus it on the specific problem you want to report.
- Include the words "incident report" in the subject header. (Even if what you are sharing doesn't feel exactly like a specific incident, this is the best way to make sure Grace understands clearly that you are reporting a problem that needs focused attention.)

Grace will get back to you - the intention is to respond within one week (but when camp is in session or during other particularly busy times it may be longer). If you don't hear back promptly, please check in to make sure that your report has been received.

Thank you for helping us to support you and to improve NBTSC for everyone!

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Transgender & gender diverse support



NBTSC is often blessed by the presence of gender non-conforming campers, and over the years we've gradually learned more about being courteous and welcoming. This is an evolving journey for NBTSC, but for now here's where we find ourselves: our general policy is to include transgender folks in the cabins that match their gender identity (when that's what they want). We also offer all-gender bathrooms (in addition to girls' and boys' bathrooms, which are open to all who identify as such).

In addition, we also offer all-gender cabins for anyone who would be most comfortable in a cabin not labeled "male" or "female." In the past there has been some confusion, so to clarify: even if you are cisgendered (your gender identity matches your biological or "assigned at birth" sex) you are welcome to sign up for an all-gender cabin. Don't worry that you're "taking away" a spot from someone else; if we have trouble accommodating everyone's preferences we'll problem-solve as needed; this is nothing you need to worry about. Tell us what kind of cabin you want via your CampDoc account.

It is important, however, to know that all-gender cabins are not offered as an opportunity to sleep with your sweetie. Given our responsibilities as adults running an event for youth, we cannot allow bed sharing in cabins, and we make an effort not to co-house campers who are romantically involved - regardless of gender configuration - whenever possible. Campers who want to sleep near others more cozily must do so in our public group sleeping spaces rather than in cabins.

Parents should know that occasionally campers change their minds regarding which type of cabin they prefer. Aside from our attempt to not place romantically-involved campers together, our policy is to respect campers' choices (and not to consult parents before making changes).

Not everyone wants to talk about their gender status, so if you're a transgender or gender non-conforming person it's up to you whether you bring that up with us - prior to camp or during. We just want you to know that if you want to communicate with us about how we can support you at camp, we're available. (Prior to camp, "we" would mean an NBTSC admin: Matt, Evan, Maya, Margie, or Grace; during camp, any staff or directors you wish to talk with.)

Conversely, if you are not transgender and are concerned that you might feel awkward or accidentally offend someone in a cabin or bathroom that included transgender folks, you are also welcome to contact us. One of our goals in hosting NBTSC is for *everyone* to feel comfortable where they sleep, shower, and etcetera.

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Teach a Workshop!

Workshops are the backbone of NBTSC, and it's awesome to watch (and partake in) the incredible energy of 60-130 people sharing all kinds of stuff with each other. **We highly encourage you to offer a workshop!**

Back in the early days of NBTSC, *most* campers taught workshops - even brand new campers, regardless of their age. We would love to recapture that magic! In recent years some campers have said that leading a workshop sounds "scary" and they don't want to try it until they've come to NBTSC for a year or two. And it's up to you if you don't want to, now or ever. But workshops are a wonderful way to participate in NBTSC and we highly recommend choosing a subject and going for it!

All you have to do to sign up to teach a workshop is.... sign up to teach a workshop! You'll run into a prompt while you're completing your CampDoc info. We prefer that people sign up prior to camp, which helps ensure you'll have access to the right resources (dance floor, piano, etc.). But, it's also OK to wait until camp, and then write your workshop into a blank space on the schedule.

Here are some helpful tips we've gathered over the years:

- Teach something you **love!**
- You definitely **don't have to be an expert** to teach a workshop. Many campers have discovered that even beginners can be good workshop teachers. Build on your personal understanding of the ways that beginners might be confused, and questions they are likely to have.
- It's community-building to **ask participants to introduce themselves** at the beginning.
- It's important to **begin on time**, or close to on-time (at least be in your announced location on time, so people who'd like to attend aren't confused).
- It's even more important to **end on time**. You want your group to have the luxury of a relaxed transition from the end of your workshop to the next event they'll participate in. Pro tip: set an alarm for 5 minutes before ending, so you can take that last 5 to wind up in a non-chaotic way.
- If you need **supplies**, we can usually provide ordinary and inexpensive art and office supplies (such as paper, pencils/pens, markers, scissors, crayons, glue, stapler, etc.), a boom box or speaker (connects to phones/etc., might play CDs), basic sports equipment, etc. If you need more extensive supplies, please bring them. Usually we also ask that you take any leftover supplies home with you, though we occasionally accept donated supplies for future years.
- Workshops and games generally run **50-60 minutes** during the daytime (we also have some 25-minute spots). Occasionally we can accommodate a longer event, especially if you contact us ahead of time. Many groups make plans to get together again later or to continue a discussion over lunch.
- Some workshop topics work well in our mostly-outdoor setting, and others don't. If you need a **table** or a **large floor space** or a **piano**, we can provide that. **Most workshops take place outside**, sitting in a circle on the ground or at a picnic table. Sorry, no workshops in the kitchen.
- You **can limit your workshop** if you wish. Some people limit their workshops to approximately 10-15 participants. It's also okay to restrict your workshop to people who already have particular skills or knowledge. For example, you could host a Spanish language lunch table for people who already know at least a little bit of Spanish and want to practice together. (Of course, the fewer restrictions, the more people have the option to participate.)
- It's okay to offer something **controversial**, particularly since no one is required to attend your workshop. Basically, you can teach or lead whatever you want to as long as it works logistically and doesn't violate camp agreements. You are welcome to *discuss* pretty much everything—for instance, smoking marijuana at NBTSC is not okay, but talking about it is fine. That said, in keeping with our NBTSC agreements, we don't welcome workshops that condone racism, sexism, etc.
- We want to be mindful about **cultural appropriation**. We don't have a rule that you can't share something you've learned from another culture (music, dance, art, etc.), but context and approach is important, especially when your material comes from a marginalized culture. We'd love to communicate with you ahead of time if this feels confusing.

- You can write your name and a description of your workshop on an index card, or make a poster **advertising** your workshop. At camp, add the date and time and then post it in a central location.
- **Don't spend so much time preparing that you'll be devastated if only a few people (or even no one) comes.** All of us take risks at camp. No one is required to attend workshops, and although most people attend numerous workshops, sometimes people get worn out, or have a hard time choosing between all the options. Please don't take it personally if it turns out people are more interested in playing in the water during your workshop slot. (Grace says: speaking for myself, I've taught many workshops at NBTSC, and the number of people attending has ranged from 0 to 50ish.) If you work hard to prepare, we suggest you give your workshop elsewhere before or after camp, perhaps to other homeschoolers, or in a school or at your church, so your efforts won't feel wasted if no one or only a few people attend at camp. It's an experiment! Have fun getting ready.

What to teach? Here are a few possibilities to get your imagination going. Just about anything goes—as long as it will work in our mostly-outdoor camp setting, doesn't require extravagant supplies (unless you are willing to buy and bring them), and doesn't violate camp agreements.

- foreign language—songs, beginning conversational skills, etc.
- dance, yoga, martial arts
- political or social issues (animal rights, education, income inequality...)
- all kinds of inexpensive arts and crafts
- drama, magic, juggling, performance art
- music, singing, drumming, etc.
- writing, poetry, journaling
- massage, aromatherapy, other healing stuff
- math tricks/rapid math, alternative math, logic games and puzzles
- science projects
- nature/wilderness skills and exploration
- soccer, volleyball, basketball, softball, ultimate frisbee, etc.
- hide and seek, capture the flag, freeze tag, twister, board games, a chess tournament...
- facilitate an event—poetry slam, face painting, dance jam, spelling bee, quilting bee...



Past workshops have included solar cooking, kung fu, orienteering, yoga, Zimbabwean singing, college applications, web-page designing, surrealist games, Bharata Natyam dance, VW engine fixing, drama, writing poetry, getting published and self-publishing, human digestion, origami, art booklets, swing dancing, youth rights, tree identification, songwriting, conscious communication, suicide prevention, beading, photography, ballet - just to name a few.

Workshop fair

Before your workshop you'll have the chance to briefly tell everyone about it. We encourage multimedia presentations, demonstrations, or short, entertaining speeches—up to 1 minute. Try to not only entice people to attend your workshop, but also to give them a little nugget they can use or that opens a conceptual window for them.

If there is time available during the fair, you can also promote other projects (collaborative talent show skit, knitting circles before breakfast...).

photo by Zoe Newmarco, Vermont 2019

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Talent Shows

NBTSC has fantastic evening talent shows, which are memorable highlights. You are invited to participate! Bring whatever you need (fiddle, pointe shoes...). Almost anything goes—play the piano, tap dance, let the audience give you math problems and solve them in your head, sing, show your artwork, do stand up comedy, turn cartwheels, juggle forks, tell us the wildest thing that ever happened to your family, swallow a sword, read your poetry or a very short story, or just tell us what makes you tick. One good approach is to perform or share something related to your workshop.



And here is Grace's little sermon:

Please be brave and take this opportunity to let it shine—we're all richer if you share your gifts with us. I know there is a tendency, particularly among young people (but perhaps more among schooled young people) to feel it is narcissistic or egotistical to get up and perform. I feel very strongly that the opposite is true, that we are selfish when we don't share our unique selves. (I'm fond of something modern dance pioneer Martha Graham wrote: "There is a vitality, a life force, an energy, a quickening that is translated through you into action and because there is only one of you in all time, this expression is unique. And if you block it, it will never exist through any other medium and be lost, the world will not have it.")

Each act gets up to 4 minutes—occasionally more is okay if you clear it with us ahead of time. Performers need to observe the time limit; there are often more than 100 of us! And, each person performs just once, unless they're also assisting with (not starring in) someone else's act.

Generally, you can count on a boom box or PA system being available (plays from phones or similar devices; sometimes plays CDs). And willing helpers of all kinds (to move chairs, hold mikes, press "play" on your music, etc.). Often, it's also easy to rustle up a guitarist or pianist to accompany your singing - or actors for your skit, backup singers for your band, etc.

photo by Dandy Denial, 2019

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Prom

Each session of camp features a prom. (Often it's pointedly referred to with quotation marks in the voice for irony: "*prom*." No date, pretensions, or fancy clothes necessary. It's a fun, celebratory dance and all are welcome, exactly as they are.)

Approximately a month before camp, the [Creation Circle](#) chooses a prom theme and spreads the word. Those who are so inclined can plan costumes or even create decorations and bring them along.

(No obligation to dress in theme, though. At past proms people have worn sweaty camp T-shirts, exquisite hand-sewn renaissance dresses, fabulous drag costumes assembled from borrowed stuff, Halloween costumes, vintage tuxedos, and ball gowns made of garbage bags.)

You are also welcome to bring music to share. Usually a staff DJ or a committee makes final decisions about what to play – shooting for a great dance mix that will please as many people as possible as much of the time as possible – and if possible, they will include a song or two that you share.



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Bring a Film for the Film Festival!

At many sessions we host a one-night film festival. So, if **you** have created a short film you'd like to share, please [email Matt](#) prior to camp - include a brief description, the length, and (if already available online - youtube, vimeo, facebook, etc.) send a link. **Email us by August 1 for Oregon, or September 1 for Vermont.** If you miss that deadline, just bring your film to camp and if it works, we'll include you.

We are open to a wide range of films -

- your music videos
- the short screenplay you wrote and brought to life
- a short documentary (that you made) on a subject that fascinates you
- a well-curated slide show ~ of your paintings, your surfing safari or your hitchhike through Croatia, your photographic work, etc.
- personal films - **we think it would be really cool if a bunch of campers brought well-edited 3- 5-minute "a day in my life" videos.**

The only thing we definitely don't want is barely edited or raw video footage (unless, *maybe*, it is super-short and the subject matter for some reason is just perfect for camp). We don't need slick and hip, but we do need enough thoughtful editing that viewers feel that their time and attention has been respected.



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Bring your Art for the Art Extravaganza

At both sessions we host a one-night art show. Artists of all kinds, we need your creations! We'd love to display something you've made, drawn, painted, calligraphed, sculpted, designed, patched, knitted, welded, sewn, carved, etched... and that isn't so precious that you'd be devastated if something happened to it.

Don't worry, of course, that you need have won Nobel prizes or first prize ribbons in order to participate. Or that your work must fall into some narrow definition of "art." Just bring anything you've created that you love or find interesting or that was fun for you to make, and that you are willing to bring along for the journey.



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*Projects



At some sessions, campers cluster in groups for several mornings (usually 5.5 - 9 hours total) to undertake nifty projects—and at the end we have show-and-tell. Some projects are for “committed” participants only—people who agree to be present for all sessions; others are set up to accommodate both drop-in and full participants. Nobody has to participate in a project.

In late spring or early summer we share project descriptions, and you sign up for your 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choices. We do recommend advance reservations, since projects are first-come first-served. (At camp, before projects begin, leaders explain their plans. At that point you can switch if there is room available.)

For 2020 we’re considering some shifts to the way we do projects. Regardless, we’ll be in touch with all registered campers (late spring/early summer) to let you know what we’re planning this year.

Half and full worktraders alas, can't sign up for committed projects, and need to be prepared to miss project blocks. Except.... if there is a committed project you *really* want to participate in, go ahead and sign up, and send both [Grace](#) and [our logistics team](#) an email. **Make sure your second choice is an uncommitted project you are excited about**, because that's probably where we're going to put you. If it is *convenient* for us to schedule your worktrade around project blocks we will do so, in which case you'd get your first choice assuming it wasn't already full when you signed up. *But please don't count on this* - during projects, worktraders often make our world go round.



Top photo by Mike Reddy, Vermont 2013; bottom photo by Dandy Denial, Oregon 2019.

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*Leaving camp part-way through

Can you leave camp if you're homesick or don't like it? Yes, but it's a pain for everyone involved (you, us, your parents, your new friends), so we strongly suggest that you only come to camp if you are pretty sure you want to be there. (And then if you find yourself homesick the first night or two, please talk to us! We won't force you to stay if that's what you ultimately decide is right, and meanwhile as long as you're with us, you may find that just settling in for a cozy chat with a staffer - or with other homesick campers! - is enormously reassuring.)

We do tend to support a camper's decision to leave, even though occasionally parents would prefer that we be a little more forceful about keeping them at camp. If you do decide to leave, you will probably need to arrange for your parents (or someone else that they authorize, unless you're 18 or older) to pick you up. Sorry, but you don't get any refunds for anything from us, because our expenses are already incurred.

Parents, if you think there's a good chance your child will be overwhelmed and want to leave, you might consider driving them to camp and then staying in the general area - at least for a couple days.

What if you're sick at camp? Can you leave? Do you have to leave? You can choose to leave (with your parents' approval). All the same stuff applies to you as to homesick folks (above). Also—unlikely but possible: if *we* feel that you are so sick or contagious as to endanger yourself or others, we may ask that you leave, and work out with your parents how that can best be facilitated. The most likely scenario in which this would occur is if someone arrives at camp already sick, having failed to notify us ahead of time of their condition.

What if you break camp agreements and we send you home? That's a whole 'nother matter, and it breaks our hearts in a different way. Details on our [Agreements](#) page.



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Oregon



Wednesday August 12 (5 p.m.) to Wednesday August 26 (8:30 a.m.)
Camp Myrtlewood ~ Bridge, Oregon

Important dates

details on the [“What we need from you and when we need it”](#) page

- **June 1:** tuition due; deadlines: T-shirt design contest, Creation Circle & Culmination sign ups
- **July 1:** deadline to submit information online via CampDoc (directory photo and bio, workshop plans, cabin preferences, health history, dietary needs, authorizations, etc.).
- **August 1:** travel info due online via CampDoc

Drop-off & pick-up times (at Myrtlewood) (also see [travel details for Oregon](#))

Drop-off between 5:00 and 6:00 p.m. (August 12) Pick-up by 8:30 a.m. (August 26)

Parent open houses (also see [Open Houses and Visitors](#))

Arrival day (8/12): 5:00-5:30—tours led by staff, 5:30-6:00—meeting and Q/A with staff.

Saturday August 15th: 3:45 to 8:15 p.m.

How to contact campers and staff at Camp Myrtlewood

further details on our [“How to Contact Us...”](#) page

Phone (urgent or important situations only): 541-572-5307. (Actual humans - the Camp Myrtlewood site managers - often answer this phone at all hours in case there is an incoming emergency call. Please take care not to call in the middle of the night if it's not an emergency.)

Mail: *Camper's Name*, c/o NBTSC, Camp Myrtlewood, 49658 Myrtle Creek Road, Myrtle Point, OR 97458

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Field Trip to the Oregon Coast (Oregon)



We highly recommend this optional day trip. Participants leave on buses in the morning and return before dinner, and just about everyone returns bright-eyed and terribly glad they went. People spend their time at the beach pretty much however they want. Some go on long walks or hikes exploring the water's edge. Others play tag with the waves for hours, bury each other in sand, or sit in clumps talking and singing and napping and playing games and building sandcastles.

We usually choose either Sunset Bay State Park (near Coos Bay) or the spectacular beaches at Bandon (pictured here) - another location is possible also. Destination

depends on several factors including tides, weather, and which staffer is in charge of the trip.

Reasons not to go? Save \$25, avoid spending several hours on the bus (though most people enjoy the opportunity for conversation), don't get sunburned, have access to indoor spaces regardless of weather. You will also still have the opportunity for adventure - staff offers activities such as long hikes, service projects, etc. There may be a small field trip organized - for these you might need to chip in a few dollars for vehicle expenses.

Possible stop in town - up to \$10 is an ideal amount of spending money.

When the field trip goes to Bandon (rather than Coos Bay or another destination), sometimes campers make a stop in Bandon's very picturesque, very touristy waterfront Old Town. We request that campers bring only a small amount of spending money, such as \$10 or less. Larger amounts sometimes result in way too much sugar/candy brought back to camp. They also tend to serve as an unpleasant reminder that outside of camp, some folks have a lot of money and others very little.

We also expect that staff may offer an alternate activity such as a long hike near the coast.

If you decide to go

Cost is \$25. Sign up and pay via your account on CampDoc.

Parts of the Oregon coastline are notoriously dangerous with undertows, frigid water, and such. Unless we choose a beach that is known as a swimming area, this is not a swimming trip—you're welcome to wade, but not swim. You must cooperate with limits set by staff.

Bring: an extra towel, strong sunscreen, flip-flops or other beachy shoes if you want them, shoes you can both hike and be wet in (like chacos, tevas, or high-traction rainboots), a windbreaker, fleece or wool clothes (or other clothing that is warm even when wet), a water bottle.

Although we are covered by accident insurance at Camp Myrtlewood, we are not covered during the field trip (except while riding in the buses). We need you and your parents to be aware of this and to sign our agreement (you'll find it in our online Oregon authorizations section in your online account).

We may have spots available at the last minute. If you don't want to commit, but still leave open the possibility if there is space available, complete the online authorization. At camp, if there's still space, you can sign up. You must have cash (\$25) with you.

If you reserve a spot, you don't have to go, but you won't be able to cancel and get a refund.

photo by Jules Rogmans, 2013

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Camp Myrtlewood

We're so fortunate to spend beautiful late-summer days at this lovely spot, supported by wonderful long- and short-term residential site staff. For 24 years, we have been deeply inspired both by their stewardship of Camp Myrtlewood's natural environment, and also by their commitment to social justice and to living in harmony with their beliefs.

See <http://campmyrtlewood.org> for more information on

- Camp Myrtlewood
- Camp Myrtlewood's unique, exemplary, and extensive ecostewardship program
- opportunities to offer financial support (they do a lot with very little)

Tenting

Bringing (or maybe sharing) a tent rather than sleeping in a cabin is a great option, allowing for a closer connection to the forest, better air, and perhaps more privacy. If you'd like to tent, let us know via your CampDoc account. If you want to tent but can't bring one, or don't know a camper who can share one with you, sometimes we can help with that. (Also, we typically *need* at least a few campers to tent as we often have more people than indoor beds.)

Outdoor sleeping - bring an outdoor mattress?

Many campers like to spend at least a night or two sleeping outdoors under the (amazing) stars. Camp Myrtlewood has a few loaner outdoor mattresses, but sometimes not enough for everyone who wants one. If you have one that's easy to pack and might like to sleep out, consider bringing it.

Dogwood Cabin

When you're sharing your cabin preferences with us online, you'll run across mention of Dogwood cabin. In addition to sleeping space, Dogwood has a lounge area which is open to the whole camp community during the day and (as long as it's all working nicely) until (usually) somewhere between midnight and 2 a.m. At night, people use this space to play games, talk, etc. Some campers like to be assigned to Dogwood, to have easy access to this lounge. But for people who like to get to bed early and have peace and quiet, it's a bad match. (Also, it's an old building and often has a musty or even moldy smell. If you are sensitive to air quality, probably not the best choice.)



photo by Sophie Biddle, 2013

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Oregon Travel Details



photo by Jules Rogmans, 2013

Unless you're driving directly to Camp Myrtlewood, you can meet our buses in Eugene at the Amtrak station (which also serves Greyhound), airport, or at Monroe Park. Make sure to reserve a bus seat via the travel section of your CampDoc account by August 1. Don't change your meeting place without letting us know; we take a list of campers to each site, and if you show up at the wrong place we may leave you behind, or you may delay our departure.

How to recognize us

We'll watch for you, and our meeting places are small enough that it won't be a problem. Our staff wears NBTSC T-shirts. If you're new to NBTSC, chances are good you will connect en route with returning campers.

Arrival Day can be a bit stressful & confusing, so

- Pack in a daypack or other accessible place: warm sweater, healthy snacks, water bottle, a watch or phone, and any necessary medications. Our first meal will be dinner, at about 7:00 p.m.
- Use a restroom before you get on the bus.
- Bring a lunch, or (if you'll have time between arriving in town and meeting our buses) money to buy lunch in Eugene. Otherwise you'll be famished by dinner.
- If we make stops while traveling and you need to get off the bus, you *must* return promptly.

What if you get into Eugene late, and miss us?

If you're driving, meet us at Camp Myrtlewood. We won't wait for late folks to meet us at Monroe Park. (But you might swing by there just in case the buses haven't left, or give us a call to see if the buses are still loading elsewhere in town.)

If your train/bus/plane is running late, call the number(s) listed on our [contact page](#), leaving a clear and detailed message if you don't reach us directly.

If you don't have the chance to phone, we'll figure out your situation by asking at the airport/station. We'll have a staff person stay and wait for you, or deal with it another way. (Despite airline strikes, fogged-in airports and delayed-till-the-next-day flights, lost luggage, and other mishaps, we've always managed to get everyone to camp. No need to worry!)

Arrival details

Amtrak train, Amtrak bus, or Greyhound bus

(All of these arrive at the Eugene Amtrak station.) Arrive by 2:30 if possible, 3:00 at the latest. Amtrak *trains* into Eugene (not Amtrak buses) are usually late (sometimes extremely late), so make sure that your train is scheduled to get into town by about 1:00.

Arriving by air

Arrive at the Eugene airport by 2:30 p.m. (If you contact us personally to see if we can accommodate you, you may be able to arrive as late as 3:30, but we *strongly* discourage arriving later than 2:30, and you absolutely must not make plans to do so before [contacting us](#).)

Don't worry about finding us. First of all, we'll have your flight number, and second, the Eugene airport has 4 gates total. Just go ahead and get your baggage and enjoy getting to know other campers. As long as you're in the airport (but not past the security checkpoint, please) or immediately outside (on the grass), we'll find you.

In the past few years more and more flights have been delayed, so **we encourage you to book a flight that is scheduled to arrive earlier than necessary, and without any tightly scheduled connecting flights.**

A note about traveling with airlines that require “**unaccompanied minor**” status for your age bracket: although we understand that from the airlines' (and some parents' and maybe some campers') perspectives they are just offering extra help, this adds an extra layer of logistics that can be frustrating for campers, parents, and our staff. If you're flying as an unaccompanied minor, let us know ASAP. However, on our end we may not know who exactly will pick you up (or drop you off) until the day of travel. We suggest that you avoid traveling as an unaccompanied minor if possible.

Flying into Portland

Sometimes (but not always) it's considerably cheaper to fly into Portland than into Eugene. (Portland is 100 miles north of Eugene.) Of course, that also means you add one more leg to your journey, and one more opportunity for Murphy's law to kick in.

In the past, many campers have taken Amtrak (train or bus) to Eugene after flying into Portland. Several shuttle companies run from the airport to the train station; check the internet for current information. (If you're up for navigating public transportation, the "Max" is cheaper than a shuttle; see the [trimet](#) web page. This does require an approximately 5-minute walk - 0.2 miles - which, with giant amounts of luggage, can be daunting.)

Another option, with which we are not very familiar, but may be superior, is the Hut Portland Airport Shuttle, which runs every couple hours directly between Eugene and Portland. See www.hutshuttle.com.

Obviously, if you plan to fly into Portland you'll need to make sure that your schedule leaves plenty of room both to connect with your transportation from Portland and to meet our buses in Eugene on time. We can't take any responsibility for getting you to camp from Portland if your flight is late and you aren't able to arrive in Eugene on time.

Traveling by car

You can:

- Have someone drop you off at Monroe Park in Eugene no later than 2:00.
- Have someone drop you off between 5:00 and 6:00 p.m. at Camp Myrtlewood (not earlier, please!).
- Drive yourself to Camp Myrtlewood, arriving between 5:00 and 6:00 p.m. (See note below.)

We ask that drivers not meet us at the airport or Amtrak station in Eugene. It's just easier to have the extra room to organize at Monroe Park.

Please note: as soon as our Monroe Park bus is loaded and ready to go, it will leave. This could be at 2:30 p.m. or it could be at 4:00 p.m., but it will not wait for late drivers. If you get to Monroe Park after 2:00 and we're gone, drive on to Camp Myrtlewood. (It's about 2.5 hours from Eugene to Camp Myrtlewood.) Or, call us to see if you can catch up with a bus at another location in Eugene.

Directions to Monroe Park in Eugene

Monroe Park is small, so we won't have any trouble finding each other. To get there:

From I-5 traveling South, take Exit 194-B (Eugene/highway 105), go about 3 miles, take the W Eugene/Florence exit, which feeds you onto Sixth Avenue heading West. Go about 3 blocks and turn left on Blair (it's a not-perpendicular cross street with a stoplight—you'll see a 7-11 on the right corner). After 2 blocks, Blair merges with Monroe, and then the park is one more block on your right. (It's bordered by Monroe, Broadway, Tenth, and Adams.)

From I-5 driving North, take the U of O/city center exit. You will find yourself driving West on Franklin Blvd. Stay in the right lane and go about 2 miles, following the signs to downtown. Franklin becomes Sixth Avenue after a sharp S curve, which will put you on Sixth heading West. Go about half a mile and take a left on Monroe (immediately after Madison). Go 3 blocks and you'll see the park on your right. (It's bordered by Monroe, Broadway, Tenth, and Adams.)

Directions to Camp Myrtlewood

From I-5 just South of Roseburg, take the Winston/Dillard exit into Winston, then travel WEST on Highway 42 almost 50 miles to the tiny town of Bridge. Turn LEFT onto Myrtle Creek Road and go approximately three miles to Camp Myrtlewood.

From 101, take Highway 42 (five miles south of Coos Bay) EAST to the Bridge Junction (very roughly 30 miles), and turn RIGHT onto Myrtle Creek Road, and go approximately three miles to Camp Myrtlewood.

If you're bicycling to Eugene (but not all the way to Camp Myrtlewood)

Meet us at Monroe Park. Stash your bike somewhere safe beforehand; no room for bikes on our buses.

Departure information

Traveling by car

If someone picks you up at Camp Myrtlewood, they should arrive by 8:30 a.m. If they haven't arrived by the time our buses leave, you may need to travel back to Monroe Park with us, since we are responsible for getting everyone out of Camp Myrtlewood.

Traveling by bus, train, plane, or if you're being picked up in Eugene

Our buses will drop you off at your preferred location: Amtrak station, airport, or Monroe park. You should be back in Eugene by approximately noon, but try to arrange your departure for 1 p.m. or later in case of snags. The buses go to Monroe Park last, so ask drivers to meet you there at approximately 1:00 if they don't want to wait. (In reality the buses sometimes arrive at Monroe Park by noon, so if your driver doesn't mind waiting, they could come earlier.) A staff person waits with campers at Monroe Park until 2:00 p.m.

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Vermont



Thursday Sept 17 (4:30 p.m.) to Saturday September 26 (10 a.m.)
Tamarack Farm @ Farm & Wilderness Camp ~ Plymouth, Vermont

Important dates

details on the [“What we need from you and when we need it”](#) page

- **June 1:** tuition due; deadlines: T-shirt design contest, Creation Circle & Culmination sign ups
- **July 1:** deadline to submit information online (directory bio, workshop plans, cabin preferences, health history, dietary needs, authorizations, etc.). *Also the deadline to reserve a ride from (or to) Philadelphia or Albany.*
- **September 1:** travel info due (including reservations/payment for Vermont pick-ups/drop-offs)

Rosh Hashanah 2020

We sincerely apologize that this session conflicts with Rosh Hashanah. If this is a concern for you, please see our notes in the “2020 Camper Handbook Extras” accessible on our [Fine Print](#) page.

Drop-off & pick-up times (at Tamarack Farm) (also see [travel details for Vermont](#))

Drop-off between 4:30 and 5:45 p.m. (Sept 17), pick-up between 10:00 and 10:45 a.m. (Sept 26)

Parent open houses (also see [Open Houses and Visitors](#))

Arrival day (9/17): 5:00-5:30—tours led by staff, 5:30-6:00—meeting and Q/A with staff.

Sunday September 20th: 9:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.

How to contact campers and staff at Tamarack Farm

further details on our [“How to Contact Us...”](#) page

Phone (urgent or important personal calls - up to 130 people share; also to reach our logistics coordinator re travel plans or other logistics): 802-422-3447. . If you’re not able to reach us there, try 802-422-7583. For emergencies only, if you can’t reach us at those numbers, call the Farm & Wilderness Emergency Pager, 888-622-3276 - ask for the “school year programs coordinator,” and then say that you’re calling for someone at Not Back to School Camp, Tamarack Farm.

Mail: *Camper Name*, c/o NBTSC, Tamarack Farm, 263 Farm & Wilderness Rd, Plymouth, VT 05056

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*Essential notes ~ Vermont



Bring warm clothes and

bedding! September is definitely the beginning of fall in Vermont. We spend our nights in three-sided (obviously non-insulated) cabins, and we've experienced dips into the low 30s. Imagine yourself snug in your down sleeping bag rated for winter camping conditions, or your down comforter (complete with twin-sized flannel sheets), or layers of wool blankets...nice and cozy, resting up for each action-packed day at camp. You've got your trusty flashlight by your side in case you need to see anything in the night. (There's no electricity in the cabins.) A lovely thought...

...especially considering the alternative: you've brought the dinky little threadbare comforter, that one decorated with pictures of fetching woodland creatures, which you've had since you were four. Or you're lying in bed, trying to tuck yourself into a faux-quilted van bag that leaves your top half out in the cold. And there you shiver, as the temps dip and the breezes blow through, and your fingers turn purple (though it's hard to see them, since you forgot your flashlight), and...

Did we mention? *Please bring warm bedding!* It's likely that we'll have warm, sunny weather during camp. And, we would never let anyone's fingers or toes turn purple. But, don't forget to BRING WARM STUFF! Check our "[what to bring](#)" section for detailed suggestions.

(Yes, indeed it is true that in recent years we've sometimes enjoyed unseasonably warm weather, and perhaps may again, but many of our past 14 years in Vermont have included notably cold moments.)

Let us know if you strongly prefer a heated indoor sleeping space.

Tamarack Farm has a few dorm rooms inside the heated main dining hall building ("farmhouse"). If you have a strong preference for sleeping inside, please let us know when you tell us about your cabin preferences (via your CampDoc account). First priority goes to campers with health situations that indicate indoor sleeping, campers who plan to consistently sleep in their own beds rather than in group sleeping areas (in unheated buildings that are not fully enclosed), possibly to campers who request a quiet cabin, and then, all other things being equal, to campers who contact us earliest.

photo by Signe Constable, 2013

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Tamarack Farm (at Farm and Wilderness)

Farm and Wilderness Tamarack Farm is a magical spot nestled on Woodward Reservoir in rural Vermont. We're lucky to spend our early fall days there, in a rich and unpredictable mix of sweet sunlight, determined rain, and sometimes very crisp nights. For more information on Farm and Wilderness and its own renowned summer camp program, see <http://www.farmandwilderness.org/>.



photo by Signe Constable, 2013

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Vermont Travel Details

Pick-ups and drop-offs

For a fee, we arrange for rides from/to:

- Bus and train stations in White River Junction
- Burlington International Airport
- Philadelphia, PA and Albany, NY

Reserve a ride in the “camp store” section of your CampDoc account and fill out your travel details on time. (For pickups at the airport and in White River Junction - Amtrak and Greyhound - “on time” means by September 1st. But for our van rides from Philadelphia and Albany, reservations should be made by July 1. You can contact us later to ask if there are still spaces available.)

What if you get into White River Junction or the Burlington Airport late?

If your mode of transport is delayed, call F&W Tamarack Farm. If no one answers, leave a message—we’ll check frequently. If you don’t have the chance to phone, we’ll probably figure out your situation by asking at the bus or train station or the airport. We’ll have a staffer stay and wait for you, or otherwise troubleshoot. (Despite airline strikes, fogged-in airports and delayed-till-the-next-day flights, lost luggage, and other mishaps, we’ve always managed to get everyone to camp in a timely manner. No need to worry!)

Arrival details

Amtrak or bus - White River Junction

We’ll arrange for someone (usually a F&W van driver) to pick you up at the Amtrak or bus station in White River Junction. You need to arrive by 3:30 p.m. Unless we contact you with a different pickup time, don’t wander far from the station so your ride can easily find you.

Air - Burlington airport

If you fly into Burlington International Airport we (or more likely a F&W van driver) can pick you up - arrive by 3:00 p.m. (Possibly, on a case by case basis, we may be able to accommodate a few campers flying in slightly later - please contact us to discuss your situation.) Some campers also fly into other regional airports, seeking out a local NBTSC host family who can transport them.

Meet us in Philadelphia or Albany

We arrange for a driver to pick up campers in Philly and Albany (and return them after camp). Because we need to plan ahead, please reserve and pay for your ride by July 1. (It’s okay to check in later to find out if there is still space available, but your chances are lower and the price may be somewhat higher.) Cost is \$130 one way, or \$215 round trip. Good chance we’ll meet campers at Amtrak stations - around 8:00 a.m. in Philly (30th Street Station) and early afternoon in Albany. Space is limited and it’s important to pack compactly. If you reserve a ride, we will be in touch with location and time details. (These details, though, may not be finalized until early September.)

How to recognize us if we (or F&W staff) pick you up

We’ll watch for you, and all our meeting places are small enough that it won’t be a problem. Our staff wears NBTSC T-shirts; Farm and Wilderness van drivers wear F&W shirts. If you’re new to NBTSC, chances are you’ll meet returning campers who can help you spot us.

Arrival Day can be a bit stressy and confusing, so

- Pack in an accessible bag: a warm sweater, healthy snacks, a water bottle, a watch or phone, and any necessary medications. Our first meal will be dinner, at about 7:00 p.m.
- Be sure to use the restroom before you get on the F&W vans.
- Bring a lunch, or (if you’ll have time between arriving in town and meeting our vans) money to buy lunch. Otherwise you’ll be famished by the time we serve dinner.
- Listen to any staff announcements during the van ride.

Traveling by car

You may drive directly to Tamarack Farm at Farm and Wilderness. **Please arrive between 4:30 and 5:45 p.m., not earlier** without making special arrangements (see more below).



Unless our traffic control folks tell you otherwise, vehicles need to drive up onto the grass to park, so that the F&W road is not blocked and there is still emergency vehicle access. As soon as you arrive you will check in and then you can start settling into your cabin. If it takes you a while to get unpacked and get your bed set up, or if you are new to camp and want to go on the 5 p.m. tour led by staff - and don't mind having some downtime before scheduled activities - you may want to arrive closer to 4:30. (You will be busy with camp activities—dinner in your advisee group and a full group orientation—from 6:15 p.m. until about 9 p.m.)

If you drive yourself to Farm and Wilderness Tamarack Farm Camp, during the session you will need to leave your car parked approximately a mile away from our site, in the main F&W parking lot.

photo by Signe Constable, 2013

A very important note about arriving early

Please don't, without making special arrangements! Staff have commented that it is awkward and frustrating to have unexpected campers arrive while we are eating lunch or busy in staff orientation meetings. We like to have the time and free attention to give you a warm greeting and take care of all the necessary check-in business when you arrive. But we also need to have focused attention for each other and camp prep, before camp officially begins. *If you are driving yourself to camp or riding with another camper who is not a worktrader, don't arrive early.* If your parent (or whoever's driving) seriously needs to drop you off earlier, you can arrive as early as 2 p.m. - **if**

1. you let us know via your travel information, so we can plan to have a worktrader or junior staffer ready to check you in and put you to work,
2. you agree to help cheerfully with said work - basically anything that still needs to get done before regular arrivals at 4:30,
3. **you eat lunch before arriving and bring your own snacks** to tide you over until dinner at approximately 7:00. If you arrive during our staff lunch (which may be mid-afternoon), please don't fix yourself a plate and sit down with us - we don't want to be rude, but we won't have planned or budgeted to feed campers during that time. And
4. we absolutely cannot have campers arrive before 2 p.m. - except possibly for those traveling with worktraders whom we have asked to arrive early. If you are traveling in a vehicle with a worktrader, we can conceivably admit you early, but please do contact us ahead of time to make special arrangements. In other respects, the above list applies to you also. (And you will be expected to help out with whatever is needed.)

Also, while a worktrader or a junior staff person will be available to briefly greet you and your parents, the senior staff cannot be available to meet parents or spend any quality time with campers until official tour and open house times.

Directions to Farm and Wilderness Tamarack Farm Camp

In addition to driving directions, a simple map can be found at the Farm and Wilderness website (www.farmandwilderness.org).

From Boston: Interstate 93 to Interstate 89, Take Vermont exit 1 - Woodstock/Rutland/US Rt. 4. West on Rt. 4 to Rt. 100 South in West Bridgewater, south on Rt. 100, 1.9 miles to F&W entrance (Farm and Wilderness Road) on left. Follow the signs to Tamarack Farm.

From New York City, New Haven, and Hartford: Interstate 91 to Rt. 103, (Exit 6 - Ludlow/Rutland) West on Rt. 103 to Rt. 100 North. Go 12.3 miles north on Rt. 100 and turn right on Farm and Wilderness Rd. Follow the signs to Tamarack Farm.

From Western NY State: Interstate 87 to Exit 20 (Fort Ann) to 149 East. From 149 E take US 4 NE to VT. Follow Route 4 east through Rutland and Killington, then take Rt. 100 south in West Bridgewater. Drive 1.9 miles and turn left on Farm & Wilderness Road. Follow signs to Tamarack Farm.

Departure information

Traveling by car

Parents can arrive to pick up campers at Farm and Wilderness Tamarack Farm Camp between 10:00 and 10:45 a.m. Unless our traffic control folks tell you differently, parent vehicles need to actually drive up onto the grass and park there, so that the F&W road is not blocked and there is still access for wide emergency vehicles to get through.

It is important that campers are off the premises by 11:15 a.m., as the NBTSC staff will be in a closing meeting and the F&W staff may be preparing the site for the next event. If you want to meet your camper's new friends, or if you think it will take a while to load your vehicle, come at 10:00. Also, our staff loves to say hello to parents, but unfortunately won't have much time to chat or discuss the week.

If you can't depart by 11:15, we have room for a small number of hardworking, self-managing campers to stay and help with final cleanup until 1 p.m.. You will need to make arrangements with us in advance. Please note that anyone still present on the grounds at 11:15 or later will be expected to help. Breakfast is the last meal of camp (unless you've made arrangements to stay and help, in which case you'll be fed a simple dish of leftovers), so plan for snacks if you'll need something for the ride home.

Traveling by bus or train

If you reserve/pay for a ride, the F&W vans will drop you off at the bus or Amtrak stations. You should be back in White River Junction by approximately noon, but it may be possible to arrange for a slightly earlier departure (must be discussed in advance with the NBTSC office!). Breakfast is the last meal of camp, so plan for snacks if you'll need something for the ride home.

Need to leave a little early?

We may be able to transport up to 7 campers to White River Junction by 11:00 a.m. for early departures. These spots are first come first served, so phone or email right away if interested.

Traveling by air

If you reserve/pay for a ride, we'll return you to the Burlington Airport. Please try to schedule a flight for 2:00 p.m. or later, so that the van need not depart camp super-early. (If truly necessary, you can fly out between noon and 2:00 p.m. - but this requires *all* airport campers to depart early, so please don't do this unless you must. The absolute earliest we can plan to get you to the airport is 10:30 a.m.)

Van to Albany and Philadelphia

If you sign up for this option, we'll be in touch prior to camp with details (such as estimated time of arrival). Good chance our drop-off locations will be Amtrak stations (30th St. in Philly).

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Opportunities



Creation Circle

Creation Circle is open to all campers who have been at NBTSC for at least two years prior. You must be interested in working with others to help make NBTSC a wonderful place for everyone who comes, ready to collaborate on hosting an evening event, and able to participate in email or facebook discussions prior to camp.

***** Everybody read this important note!** A 2016 Creation Circle participant told us that they almost didn't sign up because it sounded daunting. Then it turned out not to be. They said it was important for campers to know this: *Creation Circle is not daunting!* It requires some effort and communication but it's definitely not a huge amount of work unless you want it to be! *******

Sign up by June 1, via your NBTSC account in CampDoc. We will be in touch, by email, in early June. (If you miss the deadline, you can email us to see if there is still time to join.)

Creation Circle is an opportunity to engage NBTSC with meaningful personal intentions; help to create a welcoming environment for new campers; collaborate with each other to put on a special evening event chosen and designed by your group; and help co-create, re-envision, and improve NBTSC in a plethora of ways. Anybody at camp can do all of those things, of course, without being part of anything official - and lots of people do, which is a huge part of what makes NBTSC special. Creation Circle is an opportunity to take it one giant step further, officially collaborating with others similarly engaged.

Note that if we have a large number of participants, we will break CC into subgroups. (Because in 2019, Oregon Creation Circle was just too big.)

Prior to each session, through email and/or facebook discussions, Creation Circle

- Plans a prom theme, which is communicated to all campers prior to camp. (It's okay if a sub-committee tackles this, if there are folks on Creation Circle who aren't that into prom.)
- Plans an additional evening event of their choosing. (OK for a sub-committee to do the heavy lifting, but ideally everyone helps out.)
- Shares with each other their individual intentions for ways they want to contribute to camp this year (important for everybody to participate in this).
- Collaborates in any additional way they choose - as a group, or in smaller committees.

At camp

- Creation Circle meets briefly with camp directors toward the start of the session.
- Individuals meet together daily in 2s or 3s to check in re: their camp intentions.
- Committees implement the themed prom and the additional event they have planned, enlisting other campers also (Creation Circle is not a clique!).
- At the end of the session, Creation Circle collaborates on a one-page summary of highlights/things to remember/lessons learned from the session, most likely in bullet-point form.
- Toward the end of the session, Creation Circle meets briefly with camp directors.

If you want to Culminate in 2020 or 2021, be sure to sign up! NBTSC Culminati participate for at least a year *before* culminating, for a minimum of two years total. (The two years can include culmination year or not.) It is important to us that Culminati have contributed actively and intentionally to camp, and not just in their culminating year. Occasionally this hasn't happened, which has led to the culmination ceremony and specialness feeling fakey.

(But if you'd prefer, you can dream up a significant Independent Service Project (or two) - see the "handbook extras" - if you want to make your contribution/s solo rather than in a group.)

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Open Houses and Visitors

Open houses and meet-the-staff opportunities for parents

(and for prospective campers and parents)

One day at most sessions we have official time when parents (and prospective NBTSC parents) can stop by to experience camp.

Also, on arrival day of each session, our staff offers a quick site tour for parents, along with a short Q/A meet and greet.

We regret that we can't take time on the last (very busy) morning of camp to have extended conversations with parents, though we love to say hello.

Arrival Day meet and greet

The first day of camp is a big, busy event for us, so we need to stay within these time parameters. But we love to meet parents in our friendly, informal arrival day meeting. Bring any questions you have for our staff.

First day of camp (all sessions)

5:00 - 5:30—tours of the site led by NBTSC staff

5:30 - 6:00—meeting and Q/A for parents with staff.

Midsession parent (and prospective parent) open houses

Parents of current or prospective campers are welcome at any of our open houses. Prospective campers may also come with their parents or a friend's parents. (Sorry, no prospective campers without parents; we can't take responsibility for them.)

Former campers, please note: *parent open houses are for parents, not for alumni, unless you contact us to make special arrangements. Generally, we will ask you to come on a different day, and also to teach a workshop or contribute to camp in some other way.*

Please check in with a staff person as soon as you arrive. You are welcome to share any meals that overlap with open house hours.

Oregon, Saturday August 15th

3:45 to 8:45 p.m.

This will most likely take you from the end of siesta/well-being time through a workshop slot or two, and then dinner and an evening all-group meeting. Most workshops warmly welcome parent participants. (Occasionally, a parent even offers a workshop!)

Vermont, Sunday September 20th

9:45 a.m. through the end of lunch (about 2:45 p.m.)

If you'd like to witness our large group morning meeting, do arrive by 10 a.m. We won't invite you to participate in our half-hour small (advisee) group meetings, but during that time you can wander around or look over the schedule and other postings in the dining hall, or take a tour with a junior staff person. Then there may be [project](#) time before lunch—if so, a few projects will be open to observers or even guest participants.

Visiting camp

Sorry, we don't normally host visitors except during parent open houses, which are for *parents* of campers (and for prospective campers and their parents). Other would-be visitors, including alumni, need to request permission to visit during open house or during another time. If you are a parent who for scheduling reasons has a hard time with our open house day, but would really like to witness NBTSC in action, do contact us - we'll be unlikely to host you at the start or end of a session, but we'll try to find another day that's mutually possible.

(Occasionally we do invite specific guests during a session - alumni, prospective staff, visiting workshop presenters, etc. - believing they have something special to offer our community. If you see yourself in that category, contact us and we'll discuss.)



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Become a lifeguard and come to Vermont for less!

We offer partial worktrades at our Vermont session for campers who hold current American Red Cross lifeguard certification.

Our annual worktrade application deadline is March 31, and your chances are best (and our logistics-brains happiest) if you apply on time. You'll find details and the application on the [worktrade page](#) of our website. However, sometimes we still need lifeguards after the deadline has passed, so if you are interested and qualified you can contact us anytime.

If you're a strong swimmer and good at paying attention, we encourage you to get lifeguard certified - maybe before next year's camps!



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Culminating

Culminati, Culminate, Culmination. (Webster: “To reach the end or the final result of something. . . . to reach the highest or a climactic or decisive point . . . from Latin ‘to crown.’”)

NBTSC “Culmination” is a process that makes sense for some campers and not for others, for all kinds of reasons (none of which have anything to do with how smart, successful, delightful, wonderful, or important-to-NBTSC an individual is). Our Culmination program began as an intention to honor those few campers who both attended for many years *and* were extremely proactive about helping to grow and define what NBTSC is. After a period of murkiness, it has evolved to not just honor but to also formally encourage this kind of involvement. As it stands now, its purpose is twofold:

- 1) to engage self-selecting campers, over a period of two or more years, in helping to co-create NBTSC in a formal, official way: the “Creation Circle,” open to all 3rd+ year campers. (Also, an independent service project option for people who prefer to contribute significantly on their own.)
- 2) for Creation Circle (and Independent Service Projectile) campers who attend NBTSC throughout their teen years (a minimum of 4 years ending at age 18+; occasionally 17): a series of meetings, events, and ceremonies in their final year that are designed to both support them in having the perfect-for-them NBTSC completion, and also to celebrate them when they go.

Do you want to Culminate this year? If . . .

- you’ll be 18+ (maybe 17), *and*
- it’s your 4th or more year, *and*
- you’ve either participated in Creation Circle or completed an independent project previously *or* you are now ready to jump immediately on an independent service project (see Camper Handbook extras, accessible via the [Fine Print](#) page of our website) *and*
- it’s definitely your last year of camp (more than once, campers have opted to Culminate and then been severely bummed the next year that they are no longer eligible to participate)

. . . read on.

Culminating is the process of deciding to be intentional and proactive about your last year of camp, doing some advance planning and contemplating, meeting with staff and other Culminati (during camp), taking on at least a little bit of a formal leadership role at camp, and (this last is optional) formally saying goodbye to the community. Nobody has to Culminate. You can attend camp for 6 years (and join Creation Circle too if you like) and then be done with it, without ever going through a formal goodbye process. It's an invitation, for those campers with whom the invitation resonates.

Culmination begins in June, when qualified campers opt in, and we ask them to start thinking about their final-year intentions.

Culmination continues during each session, with meetings (including an orientation for new campers, led by Culminati) and, of course, Closing Ceremony and those lovely goodbye presentations.

Remember: *If you want to Culminate this year, you must let us know via your [online account](#), by June 1. We will be in touch soon afterward.*



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Goodbye ritual and alumni hoodie available to all



Culmination is a potent experience for many campers. But sometimes, a person who doesn't want to engage NBTSC in that rather intense way still wants a way to say goodbye.

If this is your second or more year at NBTSC, and you are fairly certain you won't be coming back in future years (due to college plans or whatever you got), you can participate in a simple goodbye ritual which is part of our last night's closing ceremony. Because this event is much less of a to-do than is Culmination, we do not ban participants from later changing their mind and returning as campers (whereas we have learned through trial and error that it's not good to allow Culminati to return as campers). But, to keep this ritual special, please don't include yourself unless you're quite certain you won't be back. No need to sign up in advance - you'll just step forward in the closing ceremony when the time comes.

Once you are 18 you can also opt to purchase a fabulous alumni hoodie which NBTSC alumna Aremy Stewart has designed for us. You can order it in advance or purchase one at camp. (Advance costs less, and you're assured of getting your preferred size.) You can't wear it during camp (we try to keep it special for those who have moved on), but if you're 18+ and finished with your camp career (or think you are anyway), you can wear it on departure morning.

(The alumni hoodie is available to anyone who ever attended or staffed NBTSC, and is 18+.)

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T-shirt design contest

Fame and fortune await! Ever since 1997 we've had official T-shirts designed by campers, and we look forward to another great one. Guidelines:

- Send your design as a jpg or pdf file. **You must email it to both [Grace](#) and [our logistics team](#)** (no paper submissions).
- Design must be in black and white only. No grayscale or colors.
- Include "Not Back to School Camp 2020." ("NBTS" initials are not enough.)
- Don't include political, religious, etc. symbology. T-shirts represent all of us.
- We encourage you to incorporate a small but legible signature into your design - full name, or first name and last initial, etc. We announce the name of the designer at all sessions - most emphatically those sessions where they are present - but a signature helps create a permanent reminder.
- You can make color suggestions (T-shirt color and 1 ink color), but even if we choose your design we may not choose your color suggestions. (You are welcome to send one version in simple black on white and also a color version.)
- Artwork doesn't have to be 100% original, but if you're using clip art it must be copyright-free (like a lot of computer clipart and the Dover design library). Also, the overall *design* must be original. (If the design as a whole is yours, it can be assembled from other people's copyright-free stuff.)
- Tell us what adult unisex T-shirt size(s) you want if your design is chosen - the winner gets 2 free shirts.
- The deadline for us to receive designs is June 1.
- Send as many designs as you want.
- Make sure you've included your full name in the subject line and/or in the body of your email.
- The contest is open to campers signed up for this year's NBTS.
- Our decision will be based on overall impact and relevance to NBTS. The winning design will be used for all sessions of camp this year.



The prize is \$50 plus 2 T-shirts and a moment of glory. All entries become the property of NBTS and will not be returned.

Photo (showing the NBTS 2012 T shirt, designed by Emma Rouleau) by Sophie Biddle, 2013

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You have reached the end of the 2020 NBTS Camper and Parent Handbook!

If you're hungry for more, see the "[fine print](#)" page on our website, which links to the optional reading "NBTS Camper Handbook Extras" and additional resources.

~Thanks for reading ~ we are excited to be with you soon!~
