



Getting Prepared To Choose Activities

With some exceptions that we will spell out in this letter, **all campers will choose their activities THE DAY THEY ARRIVE.** Yes, for those of you who are returning campers, this is different than last year. We tried for one year to have campers choose their activities online at home, but for a variety of reasons, too numerous to bore you with here, we decided it wasn't that great of an idea. **So this year campers will choose their activities THE DAY THEY ARRIVE.**

THE EXCEPTIONS: The exceptions to this approach of choosing activities will be Pioneer B, Explorer B, and Trailseeker B, and possibly the New Adventure Camp. Because these campers will be walking into a program for which structure has already been established, we will create schedules for them before they arrive. I'll explain how that works later.

Because of the disruption caused by COVID 19, we may end up making some small changes to our list of activity. For example, we may have to cancel activities for which we can not secure instructors and we may add activities to fill in the gaps. We will make every effort to offer a full complement of activities, especially the popular ones, but we will let you know before you come to camp of the changes we have to make.

STEP ONE: You will need to orient yourself to the activities that we offer. You can do this by going to our website and clicking on the "Current Families" Then click on "Activities". As you hover over "Activities" another set of choices will appear. Click on "Activity Videos" Here is a link.

<https://friendlypines.com/gallery/activity-videos/>

You will see a series of short videos for each activity that we offer. **Note: We just added Tomahawk Throwing. There is no video. We will add a short description to the link, but it is actually, just about what you think it is. It will be for campers 10 and up.** The video will tell you about the prerequisites, the length of the period, and basically what you will do in the activity. (Now and then there will be a video for an activity that we no longer offer. We will let you know when this occurs, but right now the list looks pretty good.)

STEP TWO: Start thinking about what you would like to take. You will be asked to choose the **eight activities** you want the most. And then we'll ask for **4 alternatives** just in case there is some reason we can't get you an activity you requested. You need to list the activities in order of preference. In other words, #1 is the activity you want the most. #8 would be the activity you want 8th most. Below is an example of what someone might choose.

1. Western Riding
2. Sewing
3. Waterski (2 hours)
4. Soccer
5. Drama
6. Swimming
7. Riflery

8. Challenge (2 hours)

Alternates

1. Canoe
2. Campcraft
3. Fencing
4. Handcrafts

DON'T WORRY THAT THERE WON'T BE SPACE FOR YOU! We create enough activities to accommodate all the campers that want a particular activity. In other words, If 100 campers have Fencing in their top 8 choices, we will create enough classes so that all 100 campers can have fencing. **IT IS NOT FIRST-COME FIRST-SERVED!** If you were the last one to turn in your requests, you would still have the same chance to get all that you asked for as the first person who submitted her requests.

STEP THREE: Be prepared to fill out your requests the day you arrive at camp. You might want to jot down your choices at home and bring them with you to camp, so you don't forget. But remember this. The choices are yours! Pick what you want. This is for you.

So, at around 3 PM on the day you arrive, you will sit down with the rest of your cabin and fill out a form to select your activities. Your counselor will be there to help you should you need it. You will give your choices to your counselor, and he or she will turn them into the Program Office where they will start making schedules.

STEP FOUR: Get placed at the right level in some activities. A lot of our activities are offered at **Elementary**, **Intermediate**, and **Advanced** levels. Now if everything you are doing at camp is **new** to you, then you don't need to worry about getting placed in the proper level. You will immediately be placed in the Elementary level. Most campers are at the **Elementary** level of most activities; so don't worry how it will look.

Let's say you have been to camp for a couple of years and taken Western Riding, or let's say you've been taking riding lessons, you may not be at the **Elementary** level for riding. So you will want to be placed at a level that will offer you more of a challenge and help improve your skills. So in this case you will go see the riding instructors who are in charge of Placements for riding. We have set aside some time for this on the Sunday you arrive at around 4 PM. The instructors may have you ride, or they may just interview you. From that they can figure out what level would be best for you. They will make their decision and turn it into the program office, where it will get their attention.

Some of the activities for which we offer at levels are : Western Riding, English Riding, Vaulting, and Tennis. Older Campers who sign up for Challenge X will also need to be interviewed by a member of our Challenge team. Now and then we offer levels for Archery and Fencing. We'll let you know.

If all of this sounds confusing, don't worry. We will let you know when it's time to "Go To Placements", and your counselors will be with you all afternoon to remind you where to go and when to go.

STEP FIVE: Getting your schedule and understanding it. On Monday (the day after you arrive) you will get your brand new schedule right after lunch. We'll base the schedule on the choices made in **STEP TWO**. The schedule will look something like this.

Your Name

Green Day (M,W,F)

1. Sewing
2. Swimming
3. Drama
4. Riflery

White Day (T,Th,Sat)

1. Western Riding Elem.
2. Soccer
3. Waterski
4. Waterski

Our activity days are called White Days and Green Days. Those are our colors - Green and White. As you can see Green Days are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. White Days are Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. (Sunday is a Theme Day and a day the horses rest).

The camper above will go to Sewing the 1st period on Green Day. He or she will go to Swimming during period 2. After lunch is period 3 and 4. He or she will go to Drama and then Riflery. On a White Day, the camper will go to Elementary Western Riding and Soccer in the morning.

You will notice that this camper has Waterskiing two times during periods 3 and 4 of a White Day. This is because Waterski is a two-hour activity. We have a few 2-hour activities. Off the top of my head they are **Challenge, Hiking, Canoe and Kayak (sometimes), and Waterski**. You will also notice that this camper did not get Challenge, which was his or her 8th choice. That is because Waterski used up two hours and there wasn't enough room for her 8th choice. Now this camper may decide that he or she really wants Challenge. So the camper will go to the Program Office and request to be scheduled into Challenge. The Program Office is going to say they can make the change, but the camper must decide what activities he or she is willing to give up to make the change. I hope that makes sense.

THE EXCEPTIONS: Pioneer B, Explorer B, and Trailseeker B campers will do basically the same thing. Watch the videos, make your choices. The one difference will be that about a week before you arrive, we will send you a form to make your choices. You will fill it out and send it back. You can send it with email or fax it. You can actually just type in your choices like I did above. This way we will get your choices early and we'll try to have your schedule ready for you by Sunday when you arrive. You will start your activities on Monday morning.

It is important to remember that this schedule is YOURS. We make mistakes. We try not to, but we do. So if you ever get scheduled into an activity that you didn't ask for, make sure you speak up. If you ever don't get an activity you requested, speak up. Tell us. We'll change it. No one will know about the error but you. But you will have to speak up for yourself. No one will get mad at you or think you're being a pest. We need you to tell us when we've made an error, so we can have the chance to make it right. Scheduling 230 campers we're going to make mistakes and not know about it. We count on you to set us straight.

Note To Parents: We believe that one of the important aspects of camp is the opportunity for campers to make their own choices. Though we think it is a good idea for you to help your camper understand the activity choices, we urge you to let kids **make their own choices**. Yes, sometimes campers will make mistakes and take things they don't really like, but there is learning in those kinds of errors. Fear not, we will always change their schedule if they are unhappy with something they have selected. It would be a good idea, however, to help them write down their choices before they come to camp. The first day of camp is pretty exciting, and leaving things to memory can sometimes go awry.

If you have any questions, please let us know. We're here to answer them and to make sure you do at camp just what you've been hoping to do. You can email us at info@friendlypines.com. You can call us at 928-445-2128.

Kevin Nissen
Co-Director

Megan May
Co-Director