

## Shmanners 173: Camping

Published July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2019

[Listen on TheMcElroy.family](#)

**Travis:** Hey, do you want some mores?

**Teresa:** Some more what?

**Travis:** Some more Shmanners!

[theme music plays]

**Travis:** Hello, internet! I'm your husband host, Travis McElroy.

**Teresa:** And I'm your wife host, Teresa McElroy.

**Travis:** And you're listening to Shmanners.

**Teresa:** It's extraordinary etiquette...

**Travis:** For ordinary occasions! Hello, my dove.

**Teresa:** Hello, dear.

**Travis:** How are you?

**Teresa:** I think I'm good.

**Travis:** Did you enjoy that chocolate you just ate?

**Teresa:** I did. It was very good.

**Travis:** Yeah? Give you a blast of endorphins? Dopamine?

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Chocolate's a dopamine inducer, right?

**Teresa:** Yeah, I think so.

**Travis:** That seems about right. Right? Oh, it's summer.

**Teresa:** It is summer.

**Travis:** Ah, we're deep into it. Deep into summer. We talked about family vacations.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** We've talked about... let's see, in the past, we've talked about like, road trips.

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** Talked about flying on an airplane. I think we did cruise ships at one point.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** But I think that was before we'd actually been on a cruise ship, which feels like a missed opportunity.

**Teresa:** No, wait a second. You had been on a cruise ship.

**Travis:** Had I? I thought we went together.

**Teresa:** I thought so. Did we? Both times? Yeah. Y'know, you're right.

**Travis:** Baby, we're everywhere all the time. I've never gone anywhere without you in my entire life.

**Teresa:** [laughs] That's not true. You just got back from San Diego Comic Con, and I did not go.

**Travis:** But you were with me. You were with me in my heart.

**Teresa:** Awww.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Awww.

**Travis:** Awww. I am very sweet. But this week, we're talking about camping!

**Teresa:** Yes!

**Travis:** Now, let me ask you a question. And I feel like I should know this. Is your family a camping family?

**Teresa:** [laughs] My family? No. But...

**Travis:** Your dad?

**Teresa:** No.

**Travis:** Your mom?

**Teresa:** [sighs] Will you let me talk for a second? [laughs]

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** Both of us older girls were heavily involved in Girl Scouts.

**Travis:** Ah, right, right, right.

**Teresa:** And my mom was troop leader for a while, while we were young. I mean, we were in different troops, 'cause we're different ages. But my mom was my troop leader for a little bit, and so, we went "camping." Um, here's... here's my experience with camping.

We learned certain camping skills.

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** Um, we learned how to make a Dutch oven.

**Travis:** Yes. You just fart under the covers. [laughs]

**Teresa:** [laughs] No! With...

**Travis:** I'm not proud of myself. I did a quick math problem in my head of like, "This is still PG language. Okay." Maybe that's adult situations. [laughs]

**Teresa:** [laughing] No, you make a fire, and once the fire has turned to embers, you can bury your food. And I mean, you can actually just do it in foil. But we would often bring, uh, an actual Dutch oven cast iron with us. And we—

**Travis:** It's a good way to make baked potatoes.

**Teresa:** Yup. And we put the embers on top. You kind of bury it in the fire.

**Travis:** Mm-hmm.

**Teresa:** Anyway. We learned sewing skills, and knot tying skills, and how to build the fire, and... and different trail skills, and things like that. But when you're at a Girl Scout camp, there are certain things that they all have. Usually, there's a large, concrete pad that may be covered. Maybe even enclosed.

**Travis:** Mm-hmm. Or it may have a helicopter on it.

**Teresa:** Nooo.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Usually, there are picnic tables on this concrete pad. Um, at the... at some camp sites, there's even like, a little kitchenette inside of it.

**Travis:** Oh, wow.

**Teresa:** Um, usually, they have a little bit of electricity. Like, you're not gonna be able to like, run a hairdryer or whatever. But they sometimes have a mini fridge. Usually a sink as well. And some basic cooking utensils, pots and pans, wash basins, things like this.

**Travis:** I see. Yes.

**Teresa:** And then, as far as like, the sleeping arrangements go, they can vary from, um, kind of wooden platforms with three sides, right? And a little, like, tent lean-to top. Sometimes they have cots, sometimes they don't.

**Travis:** So I'm getting the picture here. The question is, did you ever like, set up tent on dirt camp?

**Teresa:** Yes. Just once.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** When I was in high school, one of my last camping trips with my Girl Scout troop was the real deal roughin' it. Um, I shared a tent with a friend. We slept on the ground. I brought an egg crate. Uh, foam mattress. [laughs]

**Travis:** Yes. I assumed not a literal egg crate.

**Teresa:** Um, we didn't have to dig latrines. So I mean, there was like, a little outhouse situation. So even though I understand the idea of burying your own waste, I've never had to do that.

**Travis:** See, my family went camping a lot. Like—

**Teresa:** Like camping camping.

**Travis:** Yeah. Like tent, build a fire. But like, always at a camp ground.

**Teresa:** Okay.

**Travis:** Where there was like, y'know, you could pump some water. You could uh... there was like a kind of... not port-o-potty. It was like a public restroom kind of deal.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Um, for like, two or three days, y'know? We'd go and stay. Um, and I wish... it's one of those things that I know how to do, and I've done before, and I have zero desire to do now.

**Teresa:** Yeahhh.

**Travis:** Y'know, the story—

**Teresa:** Tell—tell that—yes. Tell that story.

**Travis:** The story I tell all the time is, when I was working at Best Buy...

**Teresa:** I love this story. I actually recently... I've been going back and listening to old Sawbones, and I heard this story on the Sawbones that I listened to this morning. [laughs]

**Travis:** So here's what happened. Enough preamble. I was working at Best Buy, and I was really sick of like, people and technology. So I said, "I'm

going to go camping by myself. Ahh, I can do it, just me out in the woods. My side of the mountain.”

**Teresa:** A real outdoorsman you fancied yourself.

**Travis:** And here’s the thing, Teresa... I technically am. I could have done it.

**Teresa:** [laughing]

**Travis:** But I am a physical outdoorsman, and not, it seems, a psychological outdoorsman.

**Teresa:** [laughs louder]

**Travis:** Because I did fine during the day. But as soon as the lights went out, by which I mean, the sun...

**Teresa:** Right.

**Travis:** Uh, my overactive imagination assumed every sound in the woods was a serial killer coming to murder me in my tent. So at which point, I would call my brothers and say, “Oh, y’know what would be cool? If we all hung out at the camp.” I made them drive like, the 45 minutes to come basically sleep in the tent with me, and then leave in the morning, and I’d spend the day by myself, and then call them and make them come back and...

**Teresa:** On Sawbones, Sydnee spoke as if she was there. Did she—

**Travis:** Yes. Sydnee came with them as well.

**Teresa:** She came as well?

**Travis:** Yeah. Teylor came and hung out for a while, too. Maybe even Rileigh. Like, the more the merrier. I just assumed the woods were full of like, I don’t know, killer clowns or whatever? You know.

**Teresa:** You know.

**Travis:** My overactive... could've been zombies or dragons, or whatever, as far as my brain was concerned.

**Teresa:** Now, I do want you to discuss, uh, your run-in with a ranger, perhaps?

**Travis:** Oh, yes, that also happened. I brought, uh, some beer.

**Teresa:** Yes. Alcoholic beverages.

**Travis:** I lugged said beer from the car to my tent. Which was a good, solid walk before the ranger stopped me at the tent and said, "Well, you gotta dump that out." And it was very sad. Because it was like, a state park.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Uh, maybe even a national park. And I was not supposed to have alcohol there. So I had to dump it all out, get some earthworms really drunk, I assume. It was very sad.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** But now, here's the thing. Here's what I've learned about myself. I like nature. I don't necessarily need to camp. So I'm way into like, glamping.

**Teresa:** Yeah!

**Travis:** Or staying in a cabin. This, I enjoy. Like, the times we've done like, the MaxFunCon, where it's been like, up in the woods and you stay in a cabin.

**Teresa:** Oh, yeah, in, uh... so, we did MaxFunCon West.



**Travis:** Mm-hmm. And east. We've done both.

**Teresa:** Well, and east. But east was held in more of a hotel deal.

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** But west was kind of like a summer camp.

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** We did enjoy.

**Travis:** And I've done summer camp, too. That I'm totally fine with. Staying inside a building? Totally cool.

**Teresa:** And that's why the Girl Scout stuff was not... is not what I consider quite camping.

**Travis:** Y'know, we've been talking about our experience camping for eight and a half American minutes.

**Teresa:** Oh my goodness.

**Travis:** So tell me more.

**Teresa:** Okay. Well, um, our lovely research assistant, Alex, found this fantastic quote from Jim Gaffigan, and I would like to start it out with that. "Camping was a tradition in everyone's family, until they invented the house."

**Travis:** Ahhh.

**Teresa:** Haaa.

**Travis:** I get that.

**Teresa:** Thanks, Alex. Thanks, Jim. Okay.

**Travis:** Thank you, Jim, for making that joke for our show.

**Teresa:** [laughs] So, back, y'know, the way back times, when people were nomadic, when people, uh, lived in tribes, um, they probably camped all the time. Right?

**Travis:** I bet they didn't consider it camping at the time, though.

**Teresa:** Right, it was just living.

**Travis:** Yeah. They probably weren't like, "Ahh, how nice to get away from it all." Because there was no 'all.'

**Teresa:** Right. There was no 'all,' and uh, you traveled and went where the food source was. So you would set up your camp, and then once the food source moved on, you would move on with it. Um, but what about... so that's like the camping—the origin of camping. But let's talk about recreational camping in the United States.

**Travis:** Now, I know... the earliest reference point I have is from where we went to the Greenbrier recently, and they talked about people like camping there in like, 1780. They would set up like, tents around the springs.

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** To like, chill out. But I assume it's probably before that, right?

**Teresa:** Well, it really became a recreational activity... now, that was probably for health reasons, right?

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** So you would get away from the pollution of the city...

**Travis:** And you'd take the waters.

**Teresa:** And you'd take the waters, perhaps. But as a recreation, it wasn't really like, sanctioned?

**Travis:** Uh-huh.

**Teresa:** Until the 1800s.

**Travis:** Okay. So people would camp...

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** But it wasn't like, a vacation thing.

**Teresa:** Exactly. I mean, certainly during, um... during different wars, different conflicts and things—

**Travis:** Yes. Because I was going to say, you know in the Revolutionary War, they were sleeping in tents.

**Teresa:** Oh, they definitely were. Sometimes, not even did they have tents.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Uh, Revolutionary War, different conflicts with Mexico, different uh, the Civil War.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Things like that. But again, that's considered necessity.

**Travis:** Yeah. Yes. I would agree that wherever they slept in the Civil War, they probably weren't like, "Ooh la la!"

**Teresa:** [laughs] "The scenery!"

**Travis:** "Ooh! Did you see this tent? This is nice!"

**Teresa:** "The hiking trails! What a lovely brook!"

**Travis:** "Shall we go riding later?"

**Teresa:** [laughs] So recreational camping. Um, in 1861, the first like, built, this is a campground...

**Travis:** Uh-huh?

**Teresa:** Was Gunnery Camp, and it was in Washington, Connecticut. That's funny, right? Washington, Connecticut.

**Travis:** Sure.

**Teresa:** Anyway.

**Travis:** I imagine there's lots of places called Washington. He was a pretty popular dude.

**Teresa:** That's true. And it was founded by Frederick Gunn, who also owned a local boys' school. So, it was kind of opened as like, y'know, like an annex or an adjunct sort of property, where he would take his students on a two week trip over the summer, and they would do, y'know, learning things.

**Travis:** Educational fire.

**Teresa:** Educational fun.

**Travis:** How to skin a fish? I think it's called clean a fish. How to clean a fish.

**Teresa:** Scale... de-scale. Scale a fish, right?

**Travis:** Scale? Well, you gotta gut it, too.

**Teresa:** Sure.

**Travis:** Clearly, we're experts.

**Teresa:** [laughs] We're so good at it, by the way.

**Travis:** You gotta wash the fish... dry the fish...

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** And then send it on its way.

**Teresa:** Um, so then, like we mentioned at the very beginning, this became kind of a national pastime, right? Post-Civil War, like we spoke about how that was more of a necessity. Not really camping.

**Travis:** Yeah, but y'know, I guarantee—'cause I think even like, up to when we were kids, I think that it was always a learning with fun kind of thing, right? Like, I felt like when I—

**Teresa:** Well, sure.

**Travis:** When I was a kid, like, nine, ten especially, there was a certain like... now I'm gonna teach you—not my dad.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** But family friends who were, y'know, capable would like, "I'm gonna teach you how to build a fire." Y'know? Like, that's the reason I feel like scouts exists, and like...

**Teresa:** Right, exactly.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Post-Civil War was really when these institutions—sorry, the Boy Scouts of America and the Girl Scouts of America, really kind of like, fostered this love of, y'know, roughin' it in the woods, right?

**Travis:** And I also grew up doing, uh, Awanas. I think that's just a southern Baptist thing. But it was basically like Boy Scouts, but even more religious.

**Teresa:** I see. Okay.

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** And one thing that made it even easier and more... not glamorous, maybe, but patriotic?

**Travis:** Sure.

**Teresa:** Was when Teddy Roosevelt, the poster child... poster person?

**Travis:** Yeah, poster person.

**Teresa:** Poster person for outdoorsmanship, um, really started like, parceling out national parks.

**Travis:** Yeah, that tracks. That does make a lot of sense.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Man, y'know... I blame a lot on Teddy Roosevelt.

**Teresa:** Oh, you do, do you?

**Travis:** But especially the whole, like, indoor kids... like, you need to get out there and take the air! I do not. I'm perfectly fine playing EverQuest. I'm totally good, my dude.

**Teresa:** That was one of his very famous points, his stories, where he cited his childhood as him being a rather sickly child. Um, and his experiences in the outdoors, uh, y'know, built his strength through hiking and climbing and taking the air.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** And became the manly man that he was.

**Travis:** Now, listen, don't get me wrong. When the apocalypse comes, I'm done for. But right now, I'm good. I'm totally fine!

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Yeah, I watched a lot of Spongebob when I was a kid. It's fiine.

**Teresa:** I would agree, today, that masculinity has—

**Travis:** Is nothing? Is a myth?

**Teresa:** Is nothing. It has nothing to do with either being inside or outside.

**Travis:** See, I would say in general. I would expand it even further to say like, being a capable person has nothing to do with like, being able to build a fire without matches. Y'know what I mean?

**Teresa:** Certainly.

**Travis:** That's just... it's just not really coming up that often. And if it does, I feel like it's a pretty big... you got other issues going on would be my bet.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm. Around this same time, um, the Industrial Revolution was really like, all over the place. Um, and so, people, like I said, living in cities in the smog, they decided that that was really... like, getting out into the wilderness was something that would build character and be "good" for them.

**Travis:** Isn't it always funny how things that are hard build character, but like, things that are fun don't build character? It's never like, "You need to build some character. Eat these cookies."

**Teresa:** [laughs] Okay, so in 1874, the YWCA opened the first women's only camp in Pennsylvania called Sea Rest. Um, and then, shortly followed thereafter by a YMCA camp in New York. And uh, the YMCA camp? Still in operation today.

**Travis:** Huh. Wow!

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Okay. So, we always talk about post-World War II era really influencing the way we live our lives today.

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** And this is when the classic family vacation expanded to include camping.

**Travis:** I imagine... I'm gonna guess, right? I'm not an anthropologist or a sociologist. But I'm gonna guess that suddenly, all these people were coming back with all of these, like, survival skills. Y'know, eating out of cans, and everything, and they're like, "I'm gonna teach my kids how to survive in case they have to go to war." I bet that was a big part of it.

**Teresa:** That makes a lot of sense.

**Travis:** Right? Doesn't it?

**Teresa:** Sure does.



**Travis:** Like, I'm gonna teach you how to survive, too, like I survived the war.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** I bet that was... yeah.

**Teresa:** Well, but this post-World War II boom really included things like an extensive freeway system, larger traveling vehicles, budget hotels, tourist attractions...

**Travis:** Airstream campers.

**Teresa:** Air—yep.

**Travis:** I bet that was a part of it, too.

**Teresa:** Campers and stuff. So, that's when I think that we find the idea of like, the campsite you talked about, where it's kind of like, we all go to this one place, and we do this one thing, and we hang out and have an educational experience. Right?

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** So that's... when I think of camping, that's what I really picture.

**Travis:** Yeah, me too. And listen, I know. Listen, I've been poo-pooing camping a little bit. But I mean it in this way. If you want to do it, you should do it.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** Just like exercise. [laughs] Um, and y'know, like, I think that just like exercise, there are some people who, every day, want to run 20 miles, right?

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** And there are some people who, it's all they can do to get out and like, walk around the block once, right?

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** I think it's the same with camping, y'know? If you want to get out there and hike the Appalachian trail all by yourself with just a backpack, totally cool.

**Teresa:** You should do it.

**Travis:** If you want to sit on your back steps as the sun goes down and just breathe in, I don't know, the outside air or whatever, totally cool, too.

**Teresa:** Agreed. So before we go onto any thank you notes and etiquette, I want to throw some numbers at you.

**Travis:** Ow! A five, a six!

**Teresa:** [laughs] Today, there are over 113 thousand. One, one, three, comma, zero, zero, zero, federally managed campsites.

**Travis:** Oh, wow.

**Teresa:** More than 166 thousand state park campsites, and an unknown number of private campgrounds in the United States alone.

**Travis:** That's amazingly high! I would not have guessed that many.

**Teresa:** I know. Over 40 million people go camping in the US every year. And our... [laughs] Amazing research assistant, again, uh, individually Googled the weights of a graham cracker, marshmallow, and a piece of chocolate, and that makes 3,439,211 pounds of s'mores.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Assuming that each person has one s'more.

**Travis:** And only one!

**Teresa:** And only one!

**Travis:** I would say, on average, that's probably even low. Y'know?

**Teresa:** Of those 40 million people having a s'more?

**Travis:** Just one?

**Teresa:** Yes, just one.

**Travis:** Just one. I bet one in two people has two or more s'mores when they have s'mores.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** But yes. Follow me, here.

**Teresa:** But that's a lot. A lot.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** That's a lot.

**Travis:** That's s'a lot.

**Teresa:** S'a lot. [laughs]

**Travis:** Thank you. Thank you. Y'know what, on a funny joke like that, it's time to give a thank you note to our sponsors!

[theme music plays]

**Travis:** Shmanners is sponsored this week by Native Deodorant. Now, here's the thing. Let me tell you. Lean in. Lean in, kids. Native has fewer, simpler ingredients, so you know everything that's in their deodorant, and it comes in a wide variety of enticing scents for everyone! Plus, they release new, limited edition, seasonal scents throughout the year.

**Teresa:** I was very partial to the vanilla coconut scent that they sent.

**Travis:** Ooh, how summery!

**Teresa:** It was very summery. Did enjoy.

**Travis:** And there's also an unscented formula, and baking soda free formula for those with sensitivities. And you can subscribe and save 17%. So you save two dollars per stick, and have Native conveniently delivered to your door every one, two, or three, or four, or... yeah, that's it. One or two or three or four months.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** So, for 20% off your first purchase, visit [NativeDeodorant.com](http://NativeDeodorant.com), and use promo code 'Shmanners' during check out. That is [NativeDeodorant.com](http://NativeDeodorant.com), and use promo code 'Shmanners' during check out.

[music plays]

**Justin:** Hi, everybody. My name is Justin McElroy.

**Sydnee:** And I'm Sydnee McElroy.

**Justin:** And together, we're the hosts of Sawbones, a marital tour of misguided medicine. What does that mean for you, the podcast consumer? Well, it means that you're gonna get a lot of stories about how we used to do weird stuff to people in order to try to fix them.

**Sydnee:** Do you know that we used to think diseases were caused by bad smells? And that we used to eat mummies for medicine!

**Charlie:** That's super funny! I kinda like it.

**Justin:** Well, thanks. And we hope you'll kind of like our show, Sawbones, a marital tour of misguided medicine. It's available every Friday, wherever fine podcasts are sold, or at its beautiful picturesque home at...

**Charlie:** MaximumFun.org!

[music plays]

**Travis:** Okay. I got lots of fun questions.

**Teresa:** I want to say, before we start questions—

**Travis:** But—

**Teresa:** Wait, I—

**Travis:** But I—oh, I—

**Teresa:** That half of camping etiquette is also camp safety.

**Travis:** Well, yes.

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** Yes. First... man, fire safety.

**Teresa:** Oh, gosh.

**Travis:** Listen, and even if you're sitting there thinking, like, "I already know and I already do it!" Double check. Read up on it. Man, like... forest fires are devastating. Especially, listen – it's one thing, and we can have discussions, and I want to, about—well, I don't. Don't tweet at me.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** But like, there are certain forest fires that need to happen as a natural cycle. And then there's like, y'know, human created forest fires that are devastating for local wildlife and for people who live in the area. So please, please research on fire safety before you go camping.

**Teresa:** Agreed.

**Travis:** So, this question is from Sadie. "When you are near a lot of different campsites and it gets dark, when do you need to start being quiet and minimize talking?"

**Teresa:** Okay. Um, I've... half the fun of camping is staying up late. Y'know, ghost stories, or whatever. Um, but I do think that if you find yourself... if you can see the other campsites, you need to be quiet by ten.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** If you can't see the other campsites, I think midnight is okay. That means that you're far enough away...

**Travis:** Yeah. That doesn't just mean like, they put their fires out or turn off their lights.

**Teresa:** Exactly. But if you are within sight of another campsite, ten PM is when you need to start bringing it on in. Calming it down. You don't have to go to bed. I'm not telling you what time your bedtime is. But you need to start thinking about your neighbors and being quiet. Uh, but at midnight, uh, if you cannot—if you are not—if you don't have visual contact with the other camps.

**Travis:** I would also say, like, a good just kind of mental, uh, y'know, rule is like, try to keep your voice to a level so it only carries within the circle of the campfire. And so, you're not just trying to fill up the whole woods with... maybe you have a voice like mine that carries. It's fine. Yes.

**Teresa:** [laughs] And that said, different campsites have different rules. Please do make sure that you follow whatever the individual quiet hours of your campsite may be.

**Travis:** Yes. Uh, this is from Oracle Akir. "When camping where there are other people outside of your group," like we were just talking about, "When should one put their fire out? Is it rude to keep it going well into the night?"

Now, I assume here, you mean like, staying up and sitting by the fire. And here's the thing – fires don't really carry... like, the light doesn't really carry that far. So I would say you're not really gonna keep anyone awake who is not like, right next to the fire, right? If they're ten, 15 feet away...

**Teresa:** In their tent, with their eyes closed...

**Travis:** I don't think the fire's gonna be bright enough that you're gonna keep them up. So like we were saying, y'know, midnight. Maybe not—don't keep the fire blazing huge and bright.

**Teresa:** Exactly.

**Travis:** But I don't think you have to let it go out. Especially a lot of places, at least where I used to camp, the fires were like, pits in the ground that were lined. So like, that was another reason the fire like, didn't carry that far. But, you should put your fire out before you go to bed.

**Teresa:** Yes. Because if there's no one to attend to the fire, things could, y'know, even someone maybe just traveling to go to the rest room might mistake it for something that's out and step on it.

**Travis:** Well, that's the other—yeah, if you can, y'know... a lot of campsites that I used to go to had like, grates that you could put over the fire when you weren't using them.

**Teresa:** Yeah, that's a good idea.

**Travis:** Make sure that you have done that. But yeah, put it out. Hey, when in doubt... put it out.

**Teresa:** [simultaneously] Put it out.

**Travis:** Uh, this is from Ken. "What is the best way to divvy up camping tasks without being bossy?"

**Teresa:** Oh, boy.

**Travis:** I have a good idea for this.

**Teresa:** Okay.

**Travis:** Tell me what you think.

**Teresa:** Okay.

**Travis:** I think a good way is to make a list of things that need to be done, and then ask, "Who wants to do what?"

**Teresa:** Okay. Okay. I can see that. Y'know, my mom used to do that with some of our chores that were not on our normal chore list. And so, we would each take turns picking some. And of course, the easier tasks go first. Uh, but you take turns, go in like a round robin, and figure out who's gonna do what. I think that's a good idea.

I also think that some chores, as far as like, campsites, lend to doing the other one. Y'know what I mean?

**Travis:** Yes. Oh, very much so. Like, if you're gonna collect sticks and then stack the sticks for the fire, like, that makes total sense.

**Teresa:** Right, right, right. Or, if you are going to be in charge of food disposal, perhaps you're also in charge of washing dishes.



**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** Because that is part of the food disposal.

**Travis:** I will also say this, Ken. And this is just me, Travis McElroy, saying this to you. I don't know if this is Travis speaking as a manners expert, so much as a Travis expert. Don't mistake being bossy with taking charge. Right? Because there are lots of occasions where I like it when somebody takes charge, and like, especially if you are the experienced camper, and you're with people who maybe aren't as experienced as you are, it might be that they appreciate having someone to say like, "Here's what needs to be done."

**Teresa:** Absolutely.

**Travis:** So I think, as long as you aren't being bossy – and it sounds like if you're trying to be careful, you're not – I don't think there's anything wrong with necessarily taking charge of a moment. Just try to be kind of more socially aware, and make sure you're not making anyone feel, uh, like they're being bossed around.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Uh, this is from Emma. "Would playing music live or from a speaker at a campsite be considered rude?"

**Teresa:** Um, during dark hours? Yes. I would say that that's when people tend to do the most kind of like, listening for nature, and maybe someone needs to leave the campsite at like, five AM to get hiking to their next place or whatever. Um, as long as it is light out, I would say, a respectful volume.

**Travis:** Yes, I think that's the key, right?

**Teresa:** Would be fine.

**Travis:** You're not blasting it. It's not like a bikini car wash in an '80s movie. Because that's the other thing – maybe there's people going camping

that are like, "I want some peace and quiet." Right? And like, y'know. Once again, I think it's that same of like, if you're in your area, right? And you can hear the music in your area, try walking a few feet away from where you are and see how loud it is. Right?

**Teresa:** Right.

**Travis:** And like, I think as long as you're being conscious of it, it's probably not that bad.

**Teresa:** And like I said, after the sun goes down, it does need to be turned off.

**Travis:** And if you're by yourself, there's always headphones.

**Teresa:** Yeah!

**Travis:** Yeah. Uh, this is from—

**Teresa:** Have yourself a silent disco.

**Travis:** Right! Uh, this is from Genuine Monster Boy. "How many s'mores is too many s'mores?"

**Teresa:** Uh oh.

**Travis:** "I am a s'mores fiend, and I'm not sure when to call it quits if others aren't eating them."

**Teresa:** I mean...

**Travis:** Don't hurt your stomach.

**Teresa:** You do you. Don't hurt yourself. [laughs]

**Travis:** Yeah. Listen, here's the thing. I don't think there's such a thing as too ma—I have, many a time, brought s'mores fixin's, and nobody's wanted to break into them. Now, maybe everyone's being coy. Waiting for someone else to be the first to break into the s'mores. But I would say, like, as long as everyone's had a chance to get them, right? Like, here's what I wouldn't do.

I wouldn't like, rush to be the first from the bag, and like, grab five marshmallows and stick them on the stick, right? Like, start with one. Make one. Eat one. And if there's some left, start on your second one. Make a second one. Y'know, that kind of thing?

**Teresa:** Right.

**Travis:** Rather than just like, I'm gonna grab eight sticks and do all of them. And this is the other thing – you gotta share those sticks.

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** Especially if they're like, actual like, y'know, kind of metal with the wooden handle s'more sticks that somebody's brought.

**Teresa:** Like commercial value.

**Travis:** Yeah. Y'know, like, some artisanal, handmade, forged in the fires of Mount Doom, or whatever.

**Teresa:** [laughing] Whatever.

**Travis:** Like, don't hog the s'mores sticks, y'know what I mean?

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** Also, just a helpful hint from me to you – if you're going to make s'mores...

**Teresa:** Oh, boy.

**Travis:** Choose a fresh cut – without hurting the tree, of course – or, a fresh fallen stick that’s still a little green, still wet, so it won't burn.

**Teresa:** Mmm.

**Travis:** But in general, I say that... don't cut down, like, living trees. There's plenty of fallen trees that you can make a forest fire—no! Wait, don't make a forest fire! A campfire, I mean! That's not important. I'm an expert.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Okay. Uh, let's see. Let's do one more question here. This is from Moose. Appropriate. Uh, "I am an early riser; like, six AM early, and like to get my caffeine fix. But getting the camp stove, percolator, et cetera going can be kind of noisy. Should I not do that until everyone else is up as to not wake others, or is that their cross to bear?"

**Teresa:** I say, sun's up...

**Travis:** Guns up. Wait, no, that's not...

**Teresa:** [laughs] No, no, no. Uh, if the sun is up, you can make the noise you need to make. Now, don't go banging your pots around.

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** Trying to wake other people up. Y'know, like the dinner bell or whatever. But I think that if the sun is up, that's... that's enough.

**Travis:** And let me offer two other suggestions. Suggestion one – if you know that's gonna be the case, try to like, space out where the sleeping area is, and where you're setting this stuff up. Y'know, don't just lean outside of the door of the tent and start doing it.

**Teresa:** Sure.

**Travis:** And two, maybe start off with like, a bottle or can of cold brew? To like, start, y'know, the day until everyone else wakes up?

**Teresa:** Oh, that's very kind.

**Travis:** Thank you. I mean, it's not the same as having that piping hot cup and that Folgers moment where you're sitting there in your puffy down vest, and like, breathing steam as like, a bird lands on your shoulder or whatever.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** But, if you're trying to find a balance between being able to have your caffeine fix and be conscientious, might I recommend a cold brew?

Uh, so that's gonna do it for this episode of camping. Oh—no, wait! Teresa's giving me a sign. Go.

**Teresa:** I have some uh, very quick things that I would like to reiterate as far as safety and conscientiousness. Ness. Goes.

**Travis:** Please do. Yes.

**Teresa:** Um, you really shouldn't take anything from where you're camping. Make sure you leave it better than how you find it.

**Travis:** Take only pictures. Leave only...

**Teresa:** Only memories. No. Footprints.

**Travis:** Leave only footprints, take only pictures, feel free to carry memories with you, I think is what it is. Something like that.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Take only memories, leave only footprints, please don't feed the wildlife.

**Teresa:** And uh, it's a natural habitat, so y'know, the flowers are nice, but don't pick 'em. The rocks are pretty, but don't take 'em. Y'know, that kind of stuff.

**Travis:** And you need to plan appropriately for garbage.

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** This is very important. Do not underestimate raccoons or bears. If it is a campsite that has like, dumpsters and stuff, use them. There's also special, like, collapsible trash cans that you can take with you to put stuff in so that the wildlife can't get to them. Trust me, you will appreciate it when a raccoon is not waking you up at three o'clock in the morning, which happened to this guy.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** And let me assure you – raccoons are not afraid of you.

**Teresa:** No, they are not.

**Travis:** Raccoons have no fear. They will judge you incredibly harshly if you try to scare them away. They will just look at you, and then go back to your delicious garbage. Trust me, from experience.

**Teresa:** And your fire is not a garbage pit.

**Travis:** Correct.

**Teresa:** A lot of things should not be burned. Um, don't go into caves that aren't mapped out, because it's dangerous, yo.

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** There might be a bear in there. There also might be... if you go, like, spelunking in it, there might be narrow areas. There might be areas filled with water. Like, don't go in it unless there's like, a guide rail or something.

**Travis:** Along those same lines, whether you're going camping, or you're going spelunking, or you're going canoeing, or you're going kite... anything like that. Tell someone ahead of time.

**Teresa:** yes.

**Travis:** Make a plan for when you will contact them. Tell them where you will be. Give them all that information, make sure you have set check in times, so that way, should something happen, should you get, say, lost in the woods, or trapped in a cave, or anything like that, there is someone who knows, like, that you should've checked in, and they didn't hear from you, and they can start the process of finding you.

**Teresa:** Yes. And last but not least, three rules that are kind of fun from the national parks.

**Travis:** Leaves of three, let it be; don't eat the yellow snow...

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** And... look out, a bear.

**Teresa:** No.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** No drones.

**Travis:** No drums?

**Teresa:** Drones.

**Travis:** Drones! Okay.

**Teresa:** Drones.

**Travis:** I thought that was just like, a very specific, like, anti-hippie thing. No drum circles!

**Teresa:** No, no, no. No drones. No helium balloons. No panning for gold. [laughs]

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Can't do any of those things in the national parks of the United States.

**Travis:** Huh. Okay. I bet the helium balloons is like so they don't get caught in trees and stuff.

**Teresa:** Yeah. And like, they're super shiny usually, like, Mylar and stuff. Balloons are really shiny, and they attract animals and stuff.

**Travis:** Okay. Listen, that all makes sense. Alright, now it's really gonna do it for us. Thank you so much.

**Teresa:** Yes. [laughs]

**Travis:** Go check out all the other amazing shows on [MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org). Go to [McElroy.family](http://McElroy.family), check out all the McElroy content that's floatin' around there. Uh, you can also check out the McElroy family YouTube channel, which has a lot of fun stuff, including like, a cooking thing with me, and a hair tutorial by Teresa, and just a bunch of other stuff.

Thank you to everybody who came out to Comic Con. It was an absolute blast. Uh, I'm gonna be at GenCon, uh, August 1<sup>st</sup>.



**Teresa:** And so is your father, Clint.

**Travis:** And so is my father, Clint, August 1<sup>st</sup> through the 4<sup>th</sup>. You can find all those dates... I mean, I'll be tweeting all this stuff, but you can also go to TravisMcElroy.com to find that, there. My schedule will be there.

Let's see... did I already say McElroyMerch.com for all your amazing McElroy merch?

**Teresa:** I mean, McElroy.family. It's all there. Tours, merch...

**Travis:** It's all there. Oh yeah. Absolutely. Uh, yeah, that's all the plugs. What else, Teresa? What do we always say?

**Teresa:** We always thank Brent "Brental Floss" Black for writing our theme music, which is a banger, and available as a ringtone where those are found. Also, thank you to Kayla M. Wasil for our Twitter thumbnail art. You can tweet at us @ShmannersCast, and that's where we get a lot of our individual questions for our episodes. Um, and thank you to Bruja Betty Pinup Photography for our cover banner of our Facebook group. It's a fan-run Facebook group, Shmanners Fanners, where you can get and give excellent polite advice.

Also, we are always interested in taking audience submissions for topics. Please email those to us at [ShmannersCast@gmail.com](mailto:ShmannersCast@gmail.com).

**Travis:** And that's gonna do it for us. Join us again next week.

**Teresa:** No RSVP required.

**Travis:** You've been listening to Shmanners.

**Teresa:** Manners, Shmanners. Get it?

[theme music plays]

MaximumFun.org.

Comedy and culture.

Artist owned.

Listener supported.