

Bedtime stories about camping.

3 stories to read aloud at bedtime, each with its own picture and a calm, sleepy ending. Written for ages 3 to 8.



The Backyard Tent

about 3 min

Campsite Sounds

about 3 min

The Living-Room Campsite

about 3 min

Reading times assume a slow bedtime pace of about 110 words a minute. Every story is also free to read online at pimlo.app/bedtime-stories/camping.



The Backyard Tent

Clara had never been camping, so Dad had an idea. "Let's practice," he said, "in the backyard." They put up the little green tent on the grass, between the apple tree and the swing. It took a long time, and Dad got tangled in a pole, and Clara laughed until she had hiccups.

Inside the tent, they rolled out two sleeping bags, two pillows and a blanket. Clara brought her flashlight and her toy owl. Dad brought a bag of popcorn. "The back door is unlocked," said Dad. "If you want to go inside at any time, we can. That's the rule."

When it got dark, they lay on their tummies with the tent door open and looked out. The garden looked different at night. The swing was a shadow. The apple tree was a shape against the sky. Somewhere, a cricket was chirping. Clara shone her flashlight on the apple tree, and a moth fluttered through the beam.

Then they switched the flashlights off and looked up through the open door. Without the lights, the stars came out, more and more of them. "I can see the kitchen window," said Clara, "and the stars at the same time." "Best of both," said Dad.

Clara zipped herself into her sleeping bag. It was warm and puffy, like being inside a cloud. She could hear the cricket and Dad's slow breathing beside her. She thought about going inside. Then she thought: maybe in a minute. And before the

minute was up, she was fast asleep in her very first tent.

The end. Goodnight.



Campsite Sounds

It was the first night of the camping trip, and Rafa was lying in his sleeping bag in the big blue tent, next to his mom and his little sister. Everyone else was nearly asleep. But Rafa's eyes were wide open. Everything sounded different here.

"Let's name the sounds," whispered Mom. "Then they won't be strangers." So they listened. The first sound was a soft crackle. "That's the campfire," said Mom. "Dad is putting it out with a bucket of water before he comes to bed." Hissss, went the fire, and then it was quiet.

The second sound was a gentle rushing, on and on. "That's the stream," said Mom, "the one we paddled in today. It keeps going all night." Rafa listened to it for a while. It sounded like someone saying shhh, very kindly.

The third sound was a zip: zzzzip. "That's the family in the next tent," whispered Mom, "getting ready for bed, just like us." Then they heard a little voice say, "Goodnight, Grandpa," and a deep voice say, "Goodnight, sweetheart," and Rafa smiled in the dark.

The fourth sound was a soft hoo-hoo, far away in the trees. "An owl," said Mom. "Keeping watch." Then Dad unzipped the tent, very quietly, and climbed in, and zipped it up again. That was the fifth sound. Fire, stream, zip, owl, Dad. Now Rafa knew them all. He snuggled down in his sleeping bag and let the stream say shhh until he was asleep.

The end. Goodnight.



The Living-Room Campsite

It was supposed to be a camping weekend. But the rain came down all Saturday, and the trip was put off until next time. Zadie pressed her nose to the window and sighed. Then she had an idea. "My animals can still go camping," she said.

She built the campsite on the living-room rug. A tea towel draped over two wooden blocks made a tent. A pile of red and orange building bricks made a campfire, and she put a small flashlight underneath so it glowed. A blue scarf made a river, winding across the rug.

Then the campers arrived: Bear, Rabbit, a plastic giraffe who was a bit too tall for the tent, and a tiny mouse who fitted perfectly. Zadie gave them each a sock for a sleeping bag. Bear sat by the campfire. Rabbit paddled in the scarf river. The giraffe had to sleep outside the tent, under the stars, but he said he liked it better that way.

When it got dark, Zadie switched off the big light, so only the little campfire glowed. She whispered goodnight to each animal. Then Mom came in with an armful of blankets and a broom. "I think there's room for one more camper," she said.

Together they made a big blanket tent over the sofa and two chairs, with cushions inside. Zadie crawled in with her pillow. Mom passed her a cup of warm milk and climbed in too, as far as she would fit. Outside, the rain kept falling. Inside, the

little campfire glowed by the toy tent, and Zadie fell asleep at her very own campsite, in the middle of the living room.

The end. Goodnight.