

Before you buy, ask The Guy. *BL*'s own **Gear Guy** is here to answer your questions about guy gear and gadgets.

FIND THE GEAR GUY AT www.boyslife.org

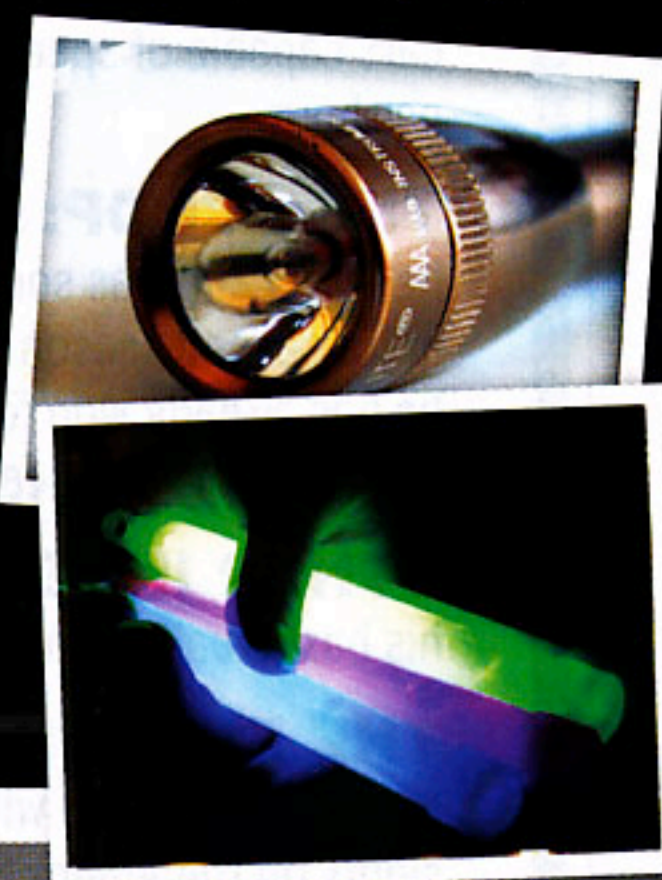
ASK THE GEAR GUY



Q. WHAT KIND OF LIGHT SHOULD I TAKE IF I'M GOING INSIDE OF A CAVE? —Caving Calvin, Rogers, Ark.

A. The short answer, Calvin: three of them. Whenever you enter a cave, you should always, always, always (that means every time!) bring along at least three light sources: one main flashlight plus two backups. You never know what might go wrong underground, and your life depends on having enough light to find your way out. Here's an example of three lights that would be good for caving:

- **Petzl Duo LED 5** (\$86; www.boyslife.org/links/petzl) Waterproof, halogen bulb for illuminating big areas, LED bulbs for close viewing.
- **Mini Maglite** (\$14.99; www.boyslife.org/links/scoutstuff) Small, rugged, durable, runs on 2 AAA batteries.
- **Chemical Light Stick** (\$2.49; www.boyslife.org/links/scoutstuff) Lightweight, waterproof, cheap, gives you several hours of light.



Q. ON WINTER HIKES, MY SOCKS ALWAYS SEEM TO GET WET AND SOGGY. HOW CAN I PREVENT THAT? —Soggy Sam, Fort Collins, Colo.

A. Try wearing boots, Sam. Just kidding. Actually, I know exactly what you're talking about. That annoying wetness usually comes from either water and snow or sweaty feet. First, try treating your boots with a spray-on waterproofer like McNett's ReviveX (\$7; www.boyslife.org/links/mcnett). A simple solution for sweaty feet comes to us from Eagle Scout and elite mountaineer Jeff Mathy. He recommends wearing a thin neoprene or silk liner (about \$3) next to your skin, then slipping your foot inside a plastic grocery bag (free). Yup, a grocery bag. "Sounds weird, but it creates an inexpensive lightweight vapor barrier," Mathy says. (Every time you do this, he cautions, allow your feet to dry for at least 12 hours daily — so sleep without socks — to prevent trench foot.) Finally, pull a good quality wool or wool-blend sock atop the plastic bag. Voila, dry feet!



STUFF WE LIKE

Jetboil Helios

\$150; www.boyslife.org/links/jetboil

Like the original Jetboil personal cooking system, the Helios boils water blazingly fast (one liter in three minutes) and consumes half as much fuel as conventional stoves. Just screw on the fuel canister, press the ignition button and you're cooking! The entire system weighs 28 ounces and nestles neatly inside its own two-liter pot. You can super size it for \$60 more and get an extra three-liter pot. I brought one along on a kayak fishing trip and wowed my buddies with its speed. We boiled water for three nights of freeze-dried meals and then threw a pan on the cooker to fry some catfish and made cornbread, too, all using just one canister of fuel (about \$4).



HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT GEAR? ASK THE GEAR GUY! YOU'LL FIND MORE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS — PLUS A LOT MORE GEAR! — IN THE "OUTDOORS & GEAR" SECTION OF www.boyslife.org.