



Camp Fircom

Welcome to Camp!

2024



Preparing For a Successful Camp Fircom Experience

Fircom is a fun place full of friends, adventures, and opportunities to develop new relationships and skills. For some campers, this might be the first time they have spent several nights away from home! This welcome package will help make the transition from home to camp a stress-free experience for everyone.

We hope that you and your child(ren) will read it thoroughly together so that you will be prepared and comfortable with the routines and expectations of camp. Please ensure you have read this package in its entirety and followed our instructions. If you cannot find the answers to your questions here, feel free to contact us by email at info@fircom.ca This welcome package will offer a general overview of what to expect.

Specific information pertaining to your program will be shared with campers two weeks prior to the start date of the camp session.

Camp Activities

Over the course of a week at camp, you and/or your child(ren) (herein referred to as "campers") will be exposed to a wide variety of activities and experiences. Campers will receive individual instruction in the development of new skills, take part in small-group activities, and participate in games and theme events involving the entire camp. Our environmental-based programming places an emphasis on creativity, imagination, hands-on experiences, and adventure in a safe, fun-filled atmosphere designed to encourage personal growth and development.

Activities at Fircom are guided by the philosophy of 'challenge-by-choice'. Campers will never be forced to do an activity but will be encouraged by staff to try new experiences. Camp staff endeavour to design and deliver program options which are safe, active, meaningful, engaging, and appropriate to the age and interests of each camper. Activities are structured to allow time for everyone to assess their own level of comfort, proceed at their own pace and accomplish their own goals within the timeframe of the session.

A Day in the Life of a Fircom Camper

There is never a dull moment at Fircom! In our aim to make our programs a thrilling experience for everyone, each day of our week-long summer camp programs is balanced between regularly scheduled activity blocks and loosely structured free time. Each morning and afternoon, a range of different programs are offered in 1-2 hour segments, giving campers time to engage in lots of different activities. Each afternoon also includes a block of free time in which campers have the chance to enjoy swimming at Canoe Cove, playing games in the field or heading over to the Tuck Shop for some tasty snacks fresh from our kitchen. On most nights, we gather together as a full camp to close the day with the whole community at a campfire full of songs, stories and laughter. After that, campers

and their counsellors settle into their cabins for some quiet reflection time and optional reading, drawing or another quiet activity of their choice after they get ready for bed. Please note that this schedule is just a sample schedule of how a day of camp *could* look. For each camp offered, there is a specified schedule which will be made available once you are up at camp!

7:30am	Wake Up!
7:45am	'Rad Risers' Morning Dance Party & Polar Bear Dip
8:15am	Morning Gathering & Announcements
8:30am	Breakfast
9:30am	Cabin Clean
10:00am	Morning Activity Block
12:30pm	Lunch
1:30pm	B.O.B (Bodies on Bunks/Rest Hour)
2:30pm	Afternoon Activity Block (including snack!)
4:00pm	Free Time and Open Swim
5:30pm	Dinner
6:45pm	Campwide Game
7:45pm	Dessert & Campfire
8:45pm	Evening Reflections
9:00pm	Junior Bed Time/Senior and Teen Extra Programming

Food at Camp

For Kids, Teen & Polaris Camps, you DO NOT need to send any food with your child, and if you do, please be careful not to include nuts- **we are a nut-aware site.** During these camps, campers receive 3 meals, 1 snack and 1 dessert per day.

During our family camps (i.e., Mom, Kids & Teens, Dad, Kids & Teens, etc.), 3 meals and 1 dessert are offered each day, and there are Tuck Shop treats and refreshing drinks available to purchase for families to enjoy. Families are welcome to bring snacks so long as they are brought in airtight reusable containers and stored in cupboards or in the secure containers supplied to cabins and Sibley tents, so that they do not attract critters. As always, **no nuts** are allowed.

Almost all dietary restrictions (i.e., gluten free, dairy free, food allergies, etc.) can be accommodated by our kitchen if we are notified at time of registration. If you

have already registered, and did not include that information, please contact us at info@fircom.ca so we can make the necessary preparations.

Lost and Found

Summer camp is a busy time! While moving between activity areas, cabins and the dining hall, certain things are bound to be dropped or forgotten. Make sure to label as many items as possible with your child's first and last name, so we can return items with greater ease. If an unlabeled item is found at camp, it is brought to our lost and found station. On the last day of each camp week, all of the week's lost items will be shown at breakfast to be reclaimed. If your child returns home without something, you can contact us to let us know, and we will check our lost and found items.

Luggage

The ideal combination of bags is very simple but important to each camper's experience. Use one large bag to hold all clothing, sleeping bag, toiletries, books and whatever else you pack, as campers can have one easily accessible place to keep all belongings. A small backpack or draw-string bag is also great to have at camp. Kids will spend most of the day out of the cabin, and having sunscreen and water at all times is very important in the summer heat.

What to Bring to Camp

It is important that campers make sure to pack all of the appropriate clothing and gear for their camp sessions. It can help to include your child as much as possible in the packing process, so they know what they have with them, and feel comfortable in their transition from home to camp.

Packing tips:

- Camp is all about the great outdoors. Pack clothes that are comfortable, durable and that can get dirty. Choose functional clothing, and only pack what can stand to be lost, damaged or muddy.
- Bring a variety of clothing layers. We cannot be sure that every day of your and/or your child's week at camp will be 24° and sunny. Rainy days happen, as do evening activities, where your child may need a sweater, jacket, boots or a toque. Even if an item ends up not being used, it is better to pack it just in case.
- Cotton is not ideal for rainy days, kayaking and canoeing. As it absorbs and holds water, it can make a camper cold quickly and keep them cold until they change into a different article of clothing. Some cotton is fine, but try to include polyester blends if you can.

- Please label as many pieces of clothing as you can with first AND last names. Do the same for water bottles, bug spray, hats, sunscreen etc. Lots of kids come to camp, and many kids have the same hats and bottles.
- Include a day pack that your child can carry comfortably while walking around. Something simple to bring bug spray, a hat, sunscreen and a water bottle is all they will need. A school backpack works great!

Most Important Items:

- **Water Shoes:** Our beaches are rocky! Shoes are mandatory for swimming and boating.
- **Cold Weather Clothes:** A cozy hoodie and toque for evenings.
- **Bedding:** A sleeping bag (or warm blanket), fitted sheet and a pillow.
- **Headlamp/Flashlight:** For walking in the dark!
- **Toiletries:** Toothbrush, toothpaste, retainer case, etc.
- **Sturdy Shoes:** Footwear for running in the field or hiking a trail. Sandals are fun but some activities require closed-toe shoes for safety and comfort.

Full Packing List

Below is a list of all that campers will need to be fully equipped for a great week at Camp Fircom. Please keep in mind that the needs of each camper change based on the program they participate in. Program-specific packing information will be shared with families approximately two weeks prior to the start date of the camp session.

Toiletries <i>Please choose biodegradable/eco friendly options if possible</i>	Clothes & Footwear <i>Quick drying options are best if available</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toothbrush & Toothpaste • Shampoo & Soap • Sunscreen (50FPS+ recommended) • Menstrual Supplies • Medication (in original packaging with name and dosage info) • Hair Brush/Comb 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T-shirt & Shorts • Long Pants • Sweater • Warm Jacket • Warm Socks (wool if possible) • Underwear • Swimwear • Rain Jacket • Pajamas • Sun Hat • Toque • Sturdy Water Shoes (not flip flops) • Closed-toe Running Shoes • Sandals with Ankle Straps
Luggage, Bedding & Other Items	Optional Items

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duffle bag/suitcase • Sleeping Bag & Fitted Twin Sheet • Pillow • Towel • Water Bottle • Flashlight/Headlamp (and extra batteries) • Sunglasses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camera & Waterproof Case • Small Games (Mad Libs, Cards etc.) • Rain Pants • Boots • Book(s) • Journal • Bug Repellent
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What NOT To Bring

The following items should not be brought. Some of these items are prone to being lost or damaged, others are unsafe for campers to have in their possession. In either case, they are better left at home.

- Cellphone (Kids, Teen and Polaris Camps)
- Money
- Jewelry
- Tablet/Portable Game Device/iPod
- Special Clothes (that you do not want damaged/dirty)
- Knives (including swiss army knives)
- Matches or Candles
- Drugs, Tobacco, Alcohol

Please note: Staff reserve the right to search baggage and confiscate prohibited items. In some cases, the items may be returned at the end of the week at the discretion of staff.

Additional Packing Notes

Rain Gear: It is rare in the summer weeks for rain to be in the forecast. That being said, Mother Nature isn't always predictable and it is entirely possible for unforeseen weather conditions to arrive. Sending your child with the necessities for rain will let them fully participate in scheduled camp activities in comfort regardless of weather. If you do not have rain boots on hand, a second pair of running shoes can be helpful to stay warm.

Zero Waste: Camp Fircom is located on a remote island with no garbage or recycling services. We at camp use sustainable products whenever possible and compost all food waste on site. We ask our campers to partake in the philosophy of zero waste to the best of their ability. If you pack snacks, please bring them in tupperware or other reusable containers. If you have access to biodegradable hygiene products, we would appreciate you making use of them while at our site. All the water drained from showers and sinks goes directly into the ocean, so

products that are less impactful on the environment are great to have. Many are affordably priced at outdoor supply stores such as MEC.

Getting To & From Camp Fircom

Hopping on the Horseshoe Bay water taxi is the exciting start to your Fircom journey! Be sure to arrive at least 30 minutes early so you have plenty of time to locate the dropoff location, sort luggage and complete check-in. To find us, look for Fircom Staff shirts near the playground in Horseshoe Bay. Other important things to keep in mind on boat days are:

- We will be meeting in the park near the entrance to the public dock in Horseshoe Bay. Make bags as easy to carry as possible to help make onloading and offloading the boat easier (we prefer two small bags instead of one huge heavy one).
- Campers should be able to carry their own bag(s), as they will need to bring them to the end of the dock in Horseshoe Bay, and may need to carry them around camp.
- All campers must check in at the sign-in table.
- It can take several trips to get all the campers on/off the island. The second run leaves approx. one hour after the first run. Please be patient as we ensure everyone travels safely.
- *Kids, Teen & Polaris Camps*: Once signed in, campers will stay with their counsellors and meet their cabin-mates.
- *Family programs*: After checking in, all families MUST return to the sign-in area 15 minutes before boarding.

Horseshoe Bay Parking

Horseshoe Bay is a very busy place in the summer, so give yourself extra time to find parking! There are short-term parking lots available, as well as several streets that offer 1-3 hours of free parking. Other options are the BC Ferries Parking Lot (\$17-\$22 per day) or the Lions Tiddlycove Parking Lot (\$10 per day from Friday-Sunday).

Transit Options

The 250 and 257 bus routes arrive directly to Horseshoe Bay. Both routes are accessible from downtown Vancouver on Georgia Street, a short walk from the Granville Skytrain Station (Expo Line) or Vancouver City Center Station (Canada Line).

Camp Fircom Bus-- Available for Kids & Teen Camp

Check the details for your session's bus schedule on our website fircom.ca.

In order to facilitate the process of getting to camp, Fircom provides every Kids & Teen Camp session with bus pick-up and drop-off spots at two different locations. It is important to note that there is a maximum number of campers that can make use of this service for every session, so if you would like to make use of it be careful to select this service during registration for your camp session. A charge of \$20 + GST applies for a one way trip, \$40 + GST for round trip.

The bus ride from our pick up locations to Horseshoe Bay will be facilitated by Fircom staff who will ensure that the boarding and drop off process runs smoothly.

East Vancouver pick-up/drop-off:

Lakeview United Church 2776 Semlin Drive, Vancouver (check-in location will be in parking lot across Semlin Drive).

West Vancouver pick-up/drop-off:

St. David's United Church 1525 Taylor Way, West Vancouver (check-in location is the church's parking lot).

Check In & Out of Camp-- Kids, Teen & Polaris Camps

It is very important that on the first day of camp you (or a predetermined guardian) check your child in during either the bus pick-ups in East or West Vancouver, or at Horseshoe Bay. It is also very important that each camper is checked-out of camp on the last day.

On the first day of camp there will be an area clearly marked with signage where the camper is responsible for placing luggage once they have been checked-in with staff. It is best if luggage is clearly labeled with names to avoid confusion during the unloading and distribution of luggage once at camp.

After checking in, campers will get to know their cabin-mates as well as one of their camp counsellors for the week, as they wait for all campers to arrive. Staff will tell campers when it is time to help bring their luggage down to their assigned water taxi and when it is time to board the boat.

Health and Safety at Camp

During registration, you should have filled in information regarding all your camper's important health requirements (i.e., dietary, physical or medical). If anything was missed during registration, please send us an email (info@fircom.ca) and let us know a minimum of two weeks **prior to camp**. This gives us enough time to update each camper's profile information and make the necessary adjustments. If you are not able to do so before the drop-off day, please inform staff during check-in on the first day of camp, who will then convey the information to the relevant staff members.

Please be sure to include any issues campers could experience while at camp (i.e., side effects of medication, susceptibility to heat stroke, sensitivity to mosquito bites, problems with anxiety and homesickness, etc.). The Summer Camp Director or Camper Support Coordinator may touch base with any campers who have special health requirements to ensure that each camper is feeling safe and adequately supported for the duration of their stay at camp.

Medication and Medical Concerns

Please ensure all medication is given to staff during check-in on the first day of camp. Although it is unlikely to be needed, it is recommended for you to pack extra medication in a separate container for your camper as a contingency.

For life-threatening allergies, please make sure to connect with staff during check-in on the first day of camp. If it is deemed necessary, a camper using allergy-related medication can see the Camp Nurse once at camp to develop a plan for reliable accessibility, such as if your child has an Epi-pen or other medication for a life-threatening allergy.

If your child regularly takes behavioral medication, we recommend that they continue to take this medication while at camp. Camp is **not** a good place to go off of medication, as this type of alteration in medication should be closely monitored by a trained health professional ideally in a familiar environment.

In case of Serious Injury or Illness

Quiet rest areas are available when campers become overtired or need extra care. On rare occasions, we may request that a camper leaves camp before the end of the session if they become ill and are no longer able to participate in camp activities, or represent a risk of spreading illness to other campers. If your camper is contagious, our COVID-era protocol dictates that we are more cautious than we have been in previous summers.

In the especially rare event that emergency medical treatment is required, a staff member will accompany your child(ren) to Lions Gate Hospital and our camp staff will contact you to make arrangements to meet at the hospital. Our staff member will stay with your child(ren) until a parent or guardian arrives.

Head Lice

Head lice are prevalent in our communities and we ask that you carefully check your child(ren)'s hair for evidence of lice and/or nits one week before camp begins to allow adequate time for treatment if necessary. Head lice are very contagious, and since campers live in close proximity with one other, we want to prevent outbreaks of lice.

We will be checking for lice on each camper individually upon arrival at camp. If lice are found, a parent/guardian will be notified and the camper will be treated with medicated shampoo. Camp Fircom maintains our strict "No Lice/No Nits" policy. Lice is very common, and we work hard to ensure that head lice does not prevent a child from attending camp.

Missing Home

Missing home is a very normal and natural reaction to being away from the comfort and routines of home life. It is important to talk to your child about missing home and to be positive and encouraging with the message you send them to camp with. Let your camper(s) know that missing home is normal and will pass – assure them that despite a little homesickness they will still have a great experience at camp! Talking about it in a positive and proactive manner will help prepare them in case they experience homesickness. Once at camp, our staff are trained to handle homesickness of all levels. In rare and extreme cases, our Summer Camp Director may have the camper phone home to ease feelings of homesickness.

Visitors

At Camp Fircom, we will keep campers engaged from the time they wake up until the time they go to bed (with some built-in down time, of course)! Visits and phone calls to and from family members and friends can be very distracting to a camper's daily routine and overall experience of being immersed in camp life. Therefore, there are no in-person visitors at all during summer camp. If this is your child(ren)'s first time away from home– not to worry, you'll see your happy camper in a few days' time! If they are feeling worried about being away from home for the first time and potentially getting homesick, our staff is highly trained at helping first time campers.

Sleeping Habits and Bedwetting

If there are any concerns about your child(ren)'s sleeping habits which may have been missed during the registration process, please inform our staff during check-in in order to help us ensure a positive experience for the camper.

It is our belief that bedwetting should not prevent a child from enjoying camp. We understand the hesitation and concerns that campers and their families may have about managing bedwetting at camp– to address these, our staff have been trained to handle this as discreetly as possible for campers to maximize their comfort at camp.

Behaviour Policy

Our camp staff are highly trained in providing quality care and implementing strategies to help guide campers. This also includes correcting any unsafe or inappropriate behaviour to ensure all campers are having an amazing time at camp!

In the spirit of community living, all campers are expected to be respectful and mindful of others. All behavioural expectations at camp are designed around safety and respect. Campers will be made aware of these expectations during our community meetings on the first day of camp and everyone at camp is expected to adhere to them. Please talk to your child about the following points before they arrive at camp:

- Camp is a community; as such, campers are expected to take responsibility in caring for others. This includes respecting the boundaries of other campers, respecting other people's belongings, treating others fairly, respecting differences (cultural or otherwise), and reporting (and not participating in) any incidences of dangerous or inappropriate actions.
- Campers are expected to take responsibility in caring for the environment. This includes respecting the natural life around camp (plants & animals) and making proper use of garbage and recycling facilities.
- Campers are expected to be respectful of camp equipment, accommodations, and general camp property.
- Campers are expected to take responsibility in caring for themselves. This includes wearing sunscreen, wearing weather appropriate clothing, washing hands regularly, practicing good hygiene (showering & brushing teeth), getting enough rest, and listening to instructions and directions from camp staff.

Camper Dismissal

Although camper dismissal is rare, it is important to note that the following behaviors or actions are not tolerated at Camp Fircom: bullying and/or harassment, racism, use of derogatory language, use of profanity (swearing), theft, vandalism, and aggressive defiant/disorderly conduct. In all but the most extreme cases, staff will always attempt to address the behavior before resorting to the dismissal of a camper. The Summer Camp Director reserves the right to withdraw any camper without warning who, in their opinion, compromises the physical or emotional safety of any person at camp, who is found to possess illicit substances or objects, or who is an immediate hazard to the wellbeing of themselves or others. A camper's family will be responsible for all costs associated with any dismissal due to behavioral issues and no refund of camp fees will be given.

Questions? Send us an email at info@fircom.ca!

Contact Us

Website: <http://fircom.ca>

Phone: 604-662-7756

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