



Barbara Bryan with daughters Samantha and Brooke.

THE MUST-HAVE EQUIPMENT TO MAKE THE FAMILY CAMPING ADVENTURE A SUCCESS

Gear up for fun

OUTDOOR TIPS

PATRICK TADROS

There's nothing many Australians love more than getting out in the great outdoors. And it's something that is growing in popularity as more and more people put on their hiking boots and head off for a family camping holiday this Australia Day.

Bunnings outdoor living category

manager Mick Heanue says camping chairs, gazebos and coolers have been some of the top-selling essentials this summer.

"Customers are holidaying more domestically and exploring their own backyards as they are unable to travel internationally," he says.

A family camping trip is a perfect way to get out and be close to nature without breaking the budget. But before setting out, there are some important things to consider.

Heanue says organisation and the right equipment are key to having a

good experience. Many caravan parks and national parks have shared cooking equipment, which may help cut down on what you need to buy or pack.

Besides the tent, campers also will need something to protect themselves from the elements outside sleeping time. "Always remember to pack sunscreen and repellent to protect yourself and your family from the elements," Heanue says.

Barbara Bryan, @letsgomum on Instagram, has been travelling around Australia with her two

daughters Samantha, 13, and Brooke, 15 for the past few years.

"It's so much fun discovering new places and meeting all the wonderful Australian wildlife you come face-to-face with, particularly when camping," she says. "But make sure you buy good quality gear that is going to last — and make your time in the great outdoors comfortable and weatherproof."

We've found the best camping gear and accessories to make sleeping in the outdoors as cosy as possible after a long day of adventures.

FAMILY FIRST-AID KIT

Keep your family safe with this 98-piece kit. Includes swabs, bandages, cleansing wipes, tweezers, an emergency blanket and more. **\$74.99 from bcf.com.au**

SPINIFEX BASE HOODED SLEEPING BAG

The possession pocket stores your valuables and gives you peace of mind while you sleep. Also features a drawstring hood for extra warmth and insulation. **\$89 from anaconda.com.au**

GASMATE 2 BURNER PORTABLE STOVE

Ideal for camping, caravanning and picnicking. Sturdy design yet still folds down to the size of a brief case. **\$55 from bunnings.com.au**

6-PERSON 2-ROOM TENT

Ideal for those who love to camp and travel. Includes flysheet wall, mesh, three fibreglass poles, 21 steel poles, four guy ropes and carry bag. **\$139 from kmart.com.au**

POWERTRAVELLER HARRIER 25 WIRELESS POWER PACK

Keeps your compatible devices such as smartphones and GPS fully charged as you go on thrilling escapades. **\$174 from harveynorman.com.au**

SOLAR POWERED BUG ZAPPER AND LANTERN

Up to 20 hours run time and can be charged in about two hours with a USB

power supply (USB cable included). **\$77.99 from bcf.com.au**

20-PIECE BBQ AND KITCHEN SET

Ideal for the serious outdoor chef, with all the essential tools, including steak knives and forks, tongs, spatula, bottle opener, chopping board and more. **\$39.99 from tentworld.com.au**

20L BLUE WATER JERRY CAN

Perfect for carrying a reliable supply of potable water to wherever your travels take you. **\$18 from bunnings.com.au**

1.39L THERMOS STAINLESS STEEL FOOD JAR

Its double-walled body and lid help retain proper food temperature, keeping your soup warm or salad cool for hours. **\$69.99 from kitchenwarehouse.com.au**

85CM FOLDING CAMP TABLE AND FOUR CHAIRS SET

For convenient and enjoyable outdoor dining during camping trips. Easy to open and fold up, with no assembly needed. **\$84 from harveynorman.com.au**

FJALLRAVEN HIGH COAST ROLLTOP BACKPACK

Light and waterproof with taped seams — perfect for summer activities. The roll-top closure protects your belongings. **\$179.95 from fjallraven.com.au**

KIDS FISHING ROD SET

Featuring a spinning reel and a telescopic rod, this beginner's fishing pole is ideal to encourage your child's interest in fishing. **\$79.98 from kathmandu.com.au**

PET VET

DR MAGDOLINE AWAD



EVER had an itch you just could not scratch? The feeling is not only stressful but can become all-consuming and unfortunately, our pets can get this too.

Greencross Pet Company chief vet Magdoline Awad tries to get to the bottom of what could be causing this reader's poor pup to keep chewing his foot.

GNAWING AT PAWS

Our little Westie won't stop gnawing his paw. I have had him vet-checked and we were given antibacterial and cortisone creams to help and neither have stopped the gnawing. I'm worried it's become habitual. Is there a natural solution I could use on his paw to deter him? Could I put hot mustard on it?

There are many reasons dogs gnaw their paws, and many dogs are commonly presented to veterinarians with this problem. While habitual behavioural patterns are possible, other conditions such as allergies, nail bed infections, sore arthritic joints or migrating foreign bodies (such as grass seeds) also need to be considered as a cause.

West Highland Terriers are predisposed to a condition called atopy, where airborne environmental allergens, such as grasses, pollens or moulds, cause intense itching of the feet, and sometimes the face, ears and other areas of the body.

As there may be many reasons your dog may be gnawing at his paw, it is important to make a follow-up appointment with your vet as they are best placed to make a diagnosis. Please do not apply hot mustard or any other deterrent to the paw — these may cause direct irritation to the skin or cause harm if licked or ingested.

HOW TO TREAT ATOPY

Atopy is an allergic reaction to airborne pollens or particles from grass, trees, dust, cleaning products, or mould. Treatment options include:

- **Avoidance:** Try your best to avoid airborne allergens such as grass, weeds, pollen and household dust, although this option is almost impossible.
- **Hyposensitisation:** Talk to your vet about this process, which involves desensitising your pet to the things it is allergic to through a course of injections with purified extracts. It can take up to six months for benefits to appear.
- **Medical therapy:** If not using hyposensitisation, the most useful agents to control allergy are cortisone-based drugs. These can have negative side effects.
- **Topical therapy:** Bathe your pet once a week to remove pollen from its coat. Use topical cortisone lotion in localised areas.
- **Flea control:** Thorough flea control in your atopic pet is important.

SOURCE: Greencross Vets With Vanessa Croll

GOT A PET QUERY?

Email **smartdaily@news.com.au**