

# Backcountry Essentials



While this list provides a good basis for preparing for most backcountry excursions, it is not intended to be a comprehensive inventory of the gear necessary to meet all possible contingencies. List users take full responsibility for accessing weather conditions, terrain, route hazards, and making appropriate adjustments to their personal list. When you are in doubt, check with a ranger or a professional guide. The author of this list assumes no responsibility or liability in the event of an injury or loss resulting from omissions, or contrary interpretations of the subject matter herein.

## Personal Gear:

*3 Days – 2 Weeks*

1. Lightweight backpack with hipbelt – 70-85 liters; 45-55 Lbs. capacity
2. Sleeping bag – Synthetic fill with EN rating for the coldest temperatures you expect
3. Sleeping pad – Self-inflating with an R-value of at least 5.0
4. Small flashlight or headlamp with an extra set of batteries – LED bulb is preferred
5. Wool/acrylic visor beanie
6. Sunglasses – UV protection and light polarization
7. Base layer – Thermal underwear top and bottom, polyester
8. Second layer – 1 shirt – Recycled polyester
9. Third layer – Wool/Polyester fleece jacket
10. Shell layer – Gore-Tex rain wicking jacket – Waterproof, windproof, durable, breathable (WWDB)
11. 1 pair pants – UPF of 30, convertible to shorts, durable nylon
12. 2 or 3 pairs of midweight synthetic socks – Materials like Hillofil, Thermax, or Thermastat
13. 2 or 3 pairs of sock liners – Silk is the preferred material
14. Durable hiking boots with ankle support – Be sure they are well broken in
15. Small hand towel
16. Liquid hand sanitizer, toothbrush, toothpaste, and biodegradable toilet paper
17. 2 water bottles – 32 fl. oz. each, wide mouth, durable Lexan
18. Lightweight spoon, fork, 2 cups, and a pocket knife or multi-tool
19. Basic personal first aid kit – Moleskin, Band-Aids, Chapstick, medicine, Sunscreen, Gold Bond
20. Whistle – For emergency signaling
21. Lighter or waterproof matches
22. Bug repellent
23. 2 large size zip lock bags – waste containment and moisture protection
24. Topographic map with ample route detail – Compass or GPS device

## Shared Gear – Split with Hiking Partner:

1. Water purification system – Recommend SteriPEN UV treatment for bacteria, viruses, and protozoa
2. Food – Freeze dried meals for lightweight trail travel
3. Shelter for 2 people with poles, stakes. Rainfly, guy-lines
4. Lightweight backpacking stove with at least 2 canisters of fuel – Base volume on number of trip meals
5. Lightweight cook pot for boiling water – Scouring pad for cleaning

## Optional Personal Gear:

1. Camera
2. Bear deterrent spray and nylon cord for hanging food on bear poles
3. Lightweight composite trekking poles
4. Gaiters

You should leave a clean change of clothes at your journey's end to be worn on the trip home and have additional cash on hand for unexpected expenses. Your target pack weight, with food and shared gear, is 35-45 lbs. Keep it LIGHT!



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