



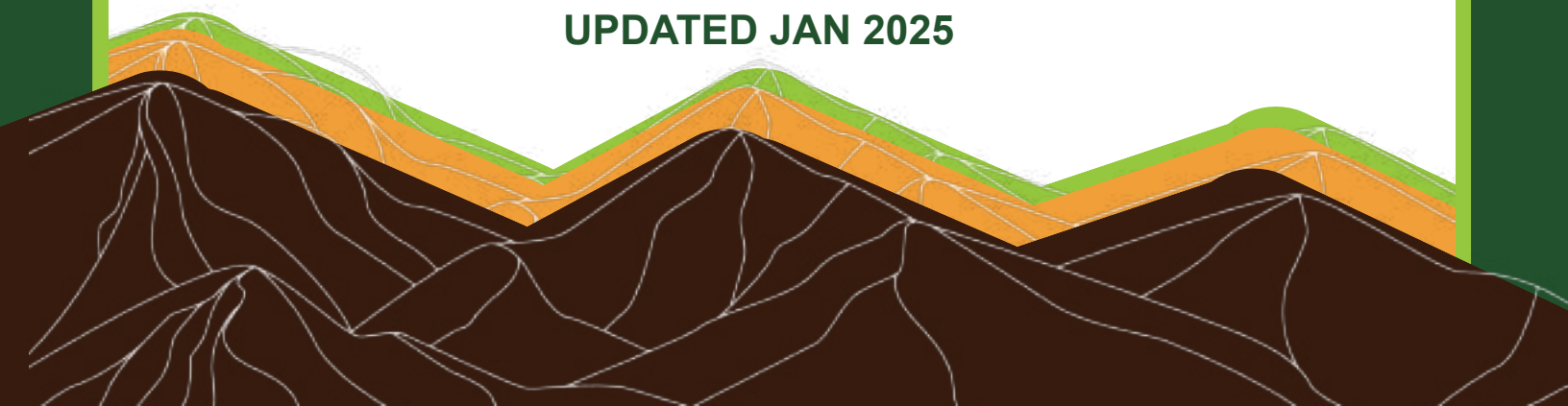
THREE SEASON BACKPACKING GEAR LIST

**for trips guided by
ADK's Education Dept.**

for use in spring, summer, fall



UPDATED JAN 2025



while packing, please note

LEVELS OF IMPORTANCE

REQUIRED = MUST HAVE TO PARTICIPATE

Recommended = highly desirable

Optional = users' choice

***Some item levels vary by season.**

Please read this guide thoroughly.

The items labeled “required” constitute ADK’s best assessment of the personal equipment necessary to reasonably minimize the risks of such a wilderness activity. Because of this, **only participants prepared with the required equipment items will be allowed to participate on ADK trips.** For the safety of the group, the guide reserves the right to deny participation, without reimbursement, to any individual deemed inadequately equipped.

Please contact ADK Education staff members with any questions.

This three season clothing list covers a wide range of potential weather conditions.

There is considerable variation in weather through the summer and shoulder seasons.

While we do our best, the weather is impossible to predict with 100% accuracy.

These recommendations are our best estimate of what is necessary for most trips.

Please also note that layering is an art, and everyone has different preferences. All layers should be comfortable and easy to move around in when worn together.

Items will be slightly different depending on the season—please read this list thoroughly. If unsure about an item, please bring it since any extra items can be left in your vehicle.

Your guide can provide tailored recommendations and advice closer to your trip.

This list uses the following format:

**ITEM
IMPORTANCE**

Notes, tips & considerations

FOOTWEAR

MATERIALS MAKE A DIFFERENCE. NO COTTON ALLOWED. SEE PAGE 11

**HIKING BOOTS
-OR-
TRAIL RUNNERS
REQUIRED**

Acceptable hiking boots are:

- WATER-RESISTANT to keep feet dry
- BREATHABLE to dry quickly
- GRIPPY from a lugged sole with good traction
- SUPPORTIVE with good laces for long days & tired feet
- COMFORTABLE from being broken-in and fitting well
- DURABLE to withstand the elements

Hiking boots vs trail runners: Some people prefer the breathability of trail runners to hiking boots. However, the above ankle height of hiking boots provides more stability. Either are acceptable, go with what is most comfortable for you!

**HIKING SOCKS
REQUIRED**

NO COTTON ALLOWED (SEE PAGE 11)

Three pairs are required: one pair to hike in, one pair for camp, and one backup pair. Hiking socks may be accompanied by a pair of thin liner socks to prevent blisters. A fourth pair of socks for additional backup is recommended.

**GAITERS
RECOMMENDED**

Gaiters are helpful to keep debris and water out of boots. Gaiters are particularly useful in wetter terrain such as trails/paths that traverse streams or are notoriously muddy.

**CAMP SHOES
RECOMMENDED**

Lightweight closed toed shoes to wear around camp.

CLOTHING

MATERIALS MAKE A DIFFERENCE. NO COTTON ALLOWED. SEE PAGE 11

HIKING TOP REQUIRED

Hiking clothes should be quick drying, breathable, durable, and comfortable. While t-shirts are more breathable, long sleeves can provide sun and bug protection. Long sleeves are recommended for spring & fall trips where colder weather is more likely.

HIKING PANTS REQUIRED

Hiking pants should be quick drying, breathable, durable and comfortable. Shorts are more breathable, while pants protect against bugs and scrapes. Pants are recommended for spring & fall trips where colder weather is more likely.

RAIN JACKET REQUIRED

Must be waterproof and allow for enough room to fit over all insulating layers. Rain jacket must have a hood and be durable. Other helpful features include ventilation zippers and breathable fabric. *Note: ponchos are not acceptable since they are not durable enough for our terrain.*

RAIN PANTS *REQUIRED

*Required for Spring/Fall, recommended for Summer. Must be waterproof and allow for enough room to fit over all insulating layers. Even if no rain is in the forecast, weather is unpredictable. Also a great additional layer to protect from bugs & cold.

BASELAYER TOP REQUIRED

A long-sleeve top that is warm, breathable, and moisture-wicking. Baselayers are particularly helpful when conditions are chillier than expected, such as on windy summits.

BASELAYER PANTS REQUIRED

Long pants that are warm, breathable, and moisture-wicking. Baselayers are particularly helpful when conditions are chillier than expected, such as on windy summits.

INSULATING TOP REQUIRED

One midweight warmer layer is required. In warm weather, this may be an additional heavyweight long sleeve style top, while in cool weather a fleece or wool sweater is ideal.

MORE CLOTHING

MATERIALS MAKE A DIFFERENCE. NO COTTON ALLOWED. SEE PAGE 11

INSULATING PANTS

***RECOMMENDED**

*Recommended in Spring & Fall, optional in summer. Midweight insulated pants provide an additional layer of warmth. Like an insulating top, weight will vary by season.

SPARE INSULATING TOP

***RECOMMENDED**

*Recommended in Spring/ Fall. Having a spare insulating layer to pack can be helpful in case one gets wet or conditions are colder than expected.

SUNHAT

RECOMMENDED

Wide-brimmed hats or baseball caps protect the eyes and the face from the sun. Also, hats may protect the head from rain or insects.

SUNGLASSES

RECOMMENDED

Glasses offering 100% UV protection are recommended. A hard case is suggested, as with prescription glasses.

WINTER HAT

***RECOMMENDED**

*Recommended for cold weather conditions, early spring/ late fall.

LINER GLOVES

***RECOMMENDED**

*Recommended for cold weather conditions, early spring/ late fall.

BUG NET

OPTIONAL

An insect headnet can help reduce the stress of insects in bugger months and wetter areas.

NECK GAITER

OPTIONAL

Neck gaiters provide an additional layer of warmth and are multifunctional.

GENERAL GEAR

BACKPACK REQUIRED

****Packs are available to borrow upon request***

Packs should be spacious enough to hold all required personal equipment as well as an equitable share of group gear. For most people the minimum adequate volume is 65L. Internal frame packs perform best. Please make sure there is space for around 5L of group gear (for ex. one pot). It is important to practice carrying a full pack before your trip!

WATERPROOF PACK SYSTEM REQUIRED

A system for keeping gear dry is mandatory, regardless of anticipated weather conditions.

Acceptable methods include:

- Pack liner (recommended): A contractor bag or thick garbage bag is a great way to waterproof any pack.
- Dry bags: having a smaller, dedicated waterproof bag to store essential emergency gear will help keep it protected. Also, small bags can help keep gear organized

Pack cover: pack covers are a great addition to keep off precipitation. HOWEVER, moisture may still breach the pack through the uncovered areas of a pack. If using a pack cover, an additional waterproof bag to protect essential emergency gear is still necessary.

WATER STORAGE REQUIRED

A water storage method to carry 2–3L of water is necessary for a successful trip.

Hard-sided water bottles work best. Bladder bag systems can work as well, however, at least one hard-sided bottle should be taken in case the bag rips or leaks.

WATER PURIFICATION REQUIRED

A system for water purification protects you from water-borne illness or the potential of running out of water. Any water gathered from the field must be treated. While your guide will carry purification tablets as backups, having your own filter or other system is necessary.

SLEEPING GEAR

SHELTER SYSTEM

REQUIRED

****tents are available to borrow upon request***

A lightweight, 1- or 2-person tent typically works best. Participants will need a shelter system, regardless of if they plan to stay in a lean-to. Tents can be shared. Tarp or hammock shelters are acceptable in place of a tent.

SLEEPING BAG

REQUIRED

The temperature rating on a sleeping bag is the temperature at which the bag can keep you safe. In order to be comfortable, please bring a bag that is rated for lower than the expected weather on the trip. For most trips this means a rating of at least 20°F / -7°C. Ratings of 30°F / -1°C may be acceptable for warm trips in July and August. *Materials Notes:* *Down bags are lighter weight and pack down smaller. However, down loses its insulation properties when wet. Synthetic is bulkier but retains insulation properties when wet. We highly recommend synthetic bags for less experienced backpackers. A sleeping bag liner can also add several degrees of additional warmth.*

SLEEPING PAD

REQUIRED

A sleeping pad insulates from the cold ground. Both closed-cell foam pads and inflating air pads are acceptable. If bringing an inflatable pad, please bring a patch kit.

SLEEPING BAG STORAGE

REQUIRED

Regardless of anticipated weather, sleeping bags need to be stored in a waterproof method (dry bag/ garbage bag). This is mandatory for your safety.

PILLOW OPTIONAL

Although extra clothing can always be used as a pillow, some hikers prefer to carry a very small, very compact, inflatable pillow.

MORE GEAR

FOOD

REQUIRED

ADK provides breakfasts and dinners for the group. Some trips also include lunch (Beginner Backpacking, Teen Programs). All other trips need to provide their own lunches. Participants should plan on bringing their own personal snacks.

MESS KIT

REQUIRED

A small, packable bowl and utensil works best. A camping mug is a helpful but optional item if desired.

HEADLAMP

REQUIRED

One headlamp with spare batteries* is required.

A backup headlamp is highly recommended.

*See materials notes on page 11

WHISTLE

REQUIRED

Three blows on a whistle is an effective rescue call. Many packs have a built-in whistle on the chest strap.

BATHROOM KIT

REQUIRED

Be prepared to use the facili-trees as needed. Most kits include a trowel, toilet paper, menstrual products, a small bag for trash, and hand sanitizer.

PERSONAL TOILETRIES

REQUIRED

Due to limited space in packs and bear canisters, toiletries should be kept to a minimum. Sample-sizes are preferable. Bring only essentials: i.e., toothbrush, toothpaste, lip balm, tampons, hand sanitizer, and medications.

FIRST AID KIT

RECOMMENDED

ADK provides the necessary emergency first aid equipment, but many opt to bring a small personal first aid kit.

REPAIR KIT

RECOMMENDED

Items that can help fix things that break in the field. Common examples include patch kits, batteries, duct tape, scissors, and paracord.

TREKKING POLES

RECOMMENDED

Trekking poles can help with balance and stability, as well as provide joint support.

EVEN MORE GEAR

EMERGENCY BLANKET

RECOMMENDED

Lightweight emergency space blankets add little weight yet provide warmth and shelter.

NAVIGATION EQUIPMENT

RECOMMENDED

While this is a guided trip, having a paper map & compass (and knowing how to use them) is the best practice for any backcountry adventure.

BUG SPRAY

RECOMMENDED

Insect repellent is especially helpful during black fly season in late May, June, & July

SUNSCREEN

RECOMMENDED

Sun protection is especially important in the summer months and above treeline.

SIT PAD

OPTIONAL

A small foam pad provides insulation and protection from the ground.

PERSONAL ITEMS

OPTIONAL

Any additional items, such as a summit journal, camera, or bandana should be kept to a minimum.

CAMP CHAIR

OPTIONAL

A small, lightweight, packable collapsible chair offers comfort at camp.

DAYPACK

OPTIONAL

Most participants simply empty out their full-sized pack and only carry the things they need for the day hikes from basecamp. However, some participants prefer to pack in a smaller daypack for this purpose. Any daypack should be durable and large enough for food, water, rain gear, insulating layers, emergency equipment, and more.

ADK PROVIDES THE FOLLOWING FOR GROUP USE

First Aid Kit

Bear Canisters

Pots/ Stoves/ Fuel/ Lighters

Navigation Equipment

Tarp

Emergency Equipment

CHECKLIST

FOOTWEAR

- ☐ Hiking Boots
- ☐ Hiking Socks
- ☐ Gaiters
- ☐ Camp Shoes

CLOTHING

- ☐ Hiking Top
- ☐ Hiking Pants
- ☐ Rain Jacket
- ☐ Rain Pants
- ☐ Baselayer Top
- ☐ Baselayer Pants
- ☐ Insulating Top
- ☐ Insulating Pants
- ☐ Spare Insulating Top
- ☐ Sunhat
- ☐ Sunglasses
- ☐ Winter Hat
- ☐ Liner Gloves
- ☐ Bug Net*
- ☐ Neck Gaiter*

*optional items

***available to borrow upon request

GENERAL GEAR

- ☐ Backpack***
- ☐ Waterproof Pack System
- ☐ Water Storage
- ☐ Water Purification
- ☐ Shelter System***
- ☐ Sleeping Bag
- ☐ Sleeping Pad
- ☐ Sleeping Bag Storage
- ☐ Pillow*
- ☐ Food
- ☐ Mess Kit
- ☐ Headlamp
- ☐ Whistle
- ☐ Bathroom Kit
- ☐ Personal Toiletries
- ☐ First Aid Kit
- ☐ Repair Kit
- ☐ Trekking Poles
- ☐ Emergency Blanket
- ☐ Navigation Equipment
- ☐ Bug Spray
- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ Sit Pad*
- ☐ Personal Items*
- ☐ Camp Chair*
- ☐ Daypack*

MATERIALS

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

CLOTHING

COTTON

Cotton absorbs and retains seven times its weight in water, drawing heat away from the wearer. For this reason, **cotton clothing is dangerous in the backcountry and is not allowed on ADK trips.**

WOOL

A favorite material of woodsmen for centuries, wool retains its insulating qualities when wet. Wool is particularly durable, and more compact than fleece.

FLEECE

Fleece is a synthetic material that draws moisture from skin without actually absorbing water, which makes for great insulation. It also retains its insulation properties when wet and can be more comfortable than wool.

SYNTHETIC

Other synthetic materials, such as polypropylene, also serve as great insulators. Polypropylene is especially effective as a moisture-wicking base layer next to skin.

DOWN

Lighter and less bulky than synthetic materials, down is another popular material. However, down loses its insulation properties when wet, so it is important that any down items are worn with a waterproof shell layer and packed in a waterproof dry bag.

BATTERIES *cold drains batteries quickly, bring backups*

LITHIUM

- ✓ longer lasting
- ✓ cold-resistant
- ✓ lightweight
- ✗ more expensive

VS.

ALKALINE

- ✓ lower price
- ✓ widely available
- ✗ replace more often