

THREE SEASON
DAY HIKING

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 9

**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 9 for material notes)

Two pairs are required: one pair to wear and one pair to pack. Hiking socks are typically durable, breathable and may be accompanied by a pair of thin liner socks to prevent blisters. A third 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.

**LINER SOCKS
OPTIONAL**

Thin liner socks can help prevent blisters when worn under hiking socks. NO COTTON ALLOWED.

CLOTHING

MATERIALS MAKE A DIFFERENCE. NO COTTON ALLOWED. SEE PAGE 9

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 highly 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 is required. Baselayers are particularly helpful when conditions are chillier than expected, such as on windy summits.

BASELAYER PANTS *REQUIRED

*Required in Spring & Fall, recommended in summer. Baselayers are long pants that are warm, breathable, and moisture-wicking.

INSULATING TOP *REQUIRED

*Required in Spring & Fall, recommended in summer. 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 9

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, usually early spring/ late fall.

LINER GLOVES

***RECOMMENDED**

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

BUG NET

OPTIONAL

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

NECK GAITER

OPTIONAL

Neck gaiters provide an additional layer of warmth and are multifunctional. Many are breathable and can offer UV and bug protection for the summer months.

GENERAL GEAR

DAYPACK REQUIRED

A daypack is typically around 30L. Any pack should be durable, comfortable, and large enough for food, water, gear, insulating layers, emergency equipment, and more.

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 RECOMMENDED

A water filter 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 to act as a backup, having your own filter or other system is helpful!

FOOD REQUIRED

Please bring a lunch and your favorite snacks! All food should be quick and easy to eat.

HEADLAMP REQUIRED

One headlamp with spare batteries* is required.

A backup headlamp is highly recommended.

*See materials notes on page 9

MORE GEAR

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 facilities if needed. Most kits include a trowel, toilet paper, menstrual products, a small bag for trash, and hand sanitizer.

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.

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 a patch kit, batteries, duct tape, scissors, and paracord.

TREKKING POLES

RECOMMENDED

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

BUG SPRAY

RECOMMENDED

Insect repellent is especially helpful during blackfly season in late May, June, and 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.

CHECKLIST

FOOTWEAR

- ☐ Hiking Boots
- ☐ Hiking Socks
- ☐ Gaiters
- ☐ Liner socks*

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*

GENERAL GEAR

- ☐ Daypack
- ☐ Waterproof Pack System
- ☐ Water Storage
- ☐ Water Purification
- ☐ Food
- ☐ Headlamp
- ☐ Whistle
- ☐ Bathroom Kit
- ☐ Emergency Blanket
- ☐ Navigation Equipment
- ☐ First Aid Kit
- ☐ Repair Kit
- ☐ Trekking Poles
- ☐ Bug Spray
- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ Sit Pad*
- ☐ Personal Items*

*optional items

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