

LEADERTREK

EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING LIST



Overview:

On your trip, you will be traveling through a remote mountain environment where temperature and weather can change quickly. During the temperatures generally range from 25°F in early mornings to 60 or 65° F in the afternoons. But, it could turn colder and even snow, so we have to prepare for perfect weather and more challenging weather.

Your clothing and shoes play a considerable role in your comfort and safety while in the mountains.

Please only make purchases specifically for your trip after thoroughly reading this list. Please do not hesitate to contact us with questions regarding any purchases.

Do not add to this list. The more you bring, the heavier your pack! In addition to the weight of your personal gear, you will have group gear, personal food, water and essentials. The lighter your pack the easier it is. Your backpack it should not weigh more than 35 lbs with everything including water!!!

Purchasing gear: If you, buy, then buy **good** quality. It will last for years. Cheap stuff breaks quickly.

Pre/post trip suggestions for travel to and from Montana.

We have 2 full days in Montana before we backpack. Bring a set of clothes for before and after the trek. You will be able to leave these items with the house before departing on your trip.

Making sure you have the correct high country clothing and equipment.

Clothing layering system: high country clothing is divided into two main categories: insulating and non-insulating, for both the upper and lower body. We use a layering system where different clothing items are worn together or separately to achieve optimum body temperature control, especially when it is wet and cold. Beyond typical underwear, you will need *at least* 2 insulating layers for the top and 1 insulating layer for the bottom. A final wind-proof layer on both your top and bottom will keep out the cold air. These layers must fit comfortably over each other so they can all be worn at the same time in cold, wet and windy conditions.

Weight of gear: Bringing unnecessary clothing and items can weigh you down!! Remember this as you are packing, even with undergarments. As silly as it might sound, many of our participants have commented that 2-3 pairs of underwear are more than sufficient for your backpacking trip. Even underwear can weight you down if you bring too much. Trust us. Think carefully about every item. Make sure your Bible is small and not a heavy.

Clothing materials: When cotton gets wet, it loses all of its insulating properties and causes a considerable reduction in body temperature. For this reason, **cotton garments are not suitable for the mountain environment.** Please look at your clothing labels carefully to insure they are not cotton.

Here are some example pictures and specifications on the gear you should bring:



Short-sleeve shirts (2): These shirts must be with a synthetic *wicking* material such as polyester. A wicking material quickly absorbs or draws liquid off of your skin.



Insulating base layer (1): Look for 100 percent *polyester* or another synthetic fiber or wool (not cotton). You will be wearing this when active or sweating, so cotton will not work. This is a long-sleeve garment that is worn next to the skin for warmth.



Insulating top layer (1): Pack a fleece jacket or pullover of Polartec 200+ weight. This should not be super thin. A wool sweater is an option. Even in the middle of summer it can get quite cold in the mountains. If your not sure how warm it should be, think of a cold and rainy early November day in Beijing/Shanghai. Mornings in the Siguniang Mountains or LaoJun Mountains can be below freezing. If hiking in May or October it can be -10C to 15C.



Down vest (1): This can be good additional layer if you tend to get very cold. With new technology, a down vest or an ultra-thin down jacket can be compacted into a very



Rain Shell (1) or Rain Poncho: Bring a durable, roomy, waterproof/breathable garment that will fit over your insulating jacket. This garment should come well below your waist. *Gore-Tex* type (waterproof/breathable) rainwear is strongly preferred. Sweating that occurs while wearing non-breathable rain gear will make you wet from the inside. A quality rain jacket is great, but can be expensive. If you don't have one and aren't interested in making the investment, please consider a rain poncho. If you choose to bring a poncho instead of a rain jacket and rain pants, then you should at least bring a windproof jacket. A windproof layer is important for keeping you warm when you summit a peak.



Hat and lightweight gloves: Fleece or a non-cotton material like wool is preferable for a hat. Gloves should be lightweight.



Nylon Pants: One pair of loose fitting nylon pants. Consider lightweight pants with zip-off legs that can be used as shorts. Please, **NO JEANS**; they tear easily and can get REALLY heavy when wet. Synthetic (not cotton) hiking pants are great. You want them to be lightweight and durable. These are the perfect choice both for protection and cold weather.



Shell Pants/Rain pants (recommended not required): Bring breathable, waterproof or quick-dry nylon pants that are roomy enough to fit over all lower body garments. Zippered legs are useful for putting on over boots. Rain pants are great and will make you really happy you have them on cold, wet, or windy days. If you don't have any than a poncho can work as well.



Thermal underwear: (not cotton)

This is what you sleep in and what you put on after you arrive at camp. They are warm and breathable and wick away sweat. On very cold hiking days you can also wear this.



Hiking Shoes or boots (waterproof): Due to the type and quality of terrain we will be traveling on, **lightweight hiking shoes** are acceptable for your trip. They must be fully waterproof! Heavy leather hiking boots are only recommended for participants with a history of ankle injuries.

Your shoes need to be broken in. It is very important that you wear your boots or shoes for several weeks leading up to the trip to make sure they fit your feet well.



Thick Hiking Socks: 2-3 pairs, shin length. Heavy wool or wool/polyester blend is best. **THE THICKER THE BETTER.** Trust us, we're not kidding. Thick wool hiking socks are GREAT for this type of trip. Our instructors alternate between two pairs of THICK wool socks. Lightweight and thin cotton socks are not acceptable on our multi-day hiking trips. One good brand is "Darn Tough" socks at REI.



Small Hand Towel (optional): Ultra-thin, small sized camping towels can be great for drying off at a river.



Camp Shoes: Crocs work well as camp shoes. They are light, comfortable and don't hold water. These are not shoes you'll be hiking in but shoes you'll be resting in each night. It's a treat and a must to have some dry, comfortable shoes to change into each night. Old lightweight running shoes work well also.



Hiking Poles: Most who bring them love them, and are quite helpful when carrying a pack. Poles can make the downhill easier on the knees and the uphill easier on the quads. But we recommend buying high quality because the cheaper ones will often break in one or two trips.



Day pack: Day packs are good for organizing your gear as well as using on our day hike. This is an optional piece of equipment, so don't feel the need to go out and purchase this item. You can get a lightweight hip pack or small daypack.



Headlamp: These are better than hand held flashlights because you can cook and use your hands with headlamps. Bring extra batteries.

Packing list:

If a piece of equipment is optional, do not feel like you need to purchase the item.

Upper Body Garments (no cotton)

- 2 short-sleeve wicking shirts
- 1 insulating long-sleeve base layer
- 1 insulating top layer (200+ weight fleece)
- 1 rain shell (or bring a poncho AND wind jacket)
- 1 down vest (recommended, but not required)
- 1 hat
- 1 wool/fleece hat/cap for nights.
- 1 lightweight gloves
- 1 headlamp

Lower Body Garments (no cotton)

- 1 nylon pants for hiking
- 1 insulating bottom layer
- 1 rain pants (optional if you have a poncho or other windproof bottom layer)
- 2-3 underwear (cotton is ok, but synthetic material is preferable)

Footwear

- 2-3 thick hiking socks
- 1 hiking shoes or boots
- 1 camp shoes or sandals.

Storage bags

- 5-6 zip lock bags for small items
- 2-3 nylon stuff sacks/ or large zip lock plastic bags for organizing clothes.

Personal gear

- 1 lip balm and sunscreen.
- 1 bandanna
- 1 hat
- 1 sunglasses
- 1 head lamp/flashlight and extra batteries; an extra bulb is great if you have one.
- 1 Bible (very small) in a zip-lock bag
- 1 pen/pencil
- 1 small pocket knife (optional)
- 1 camera (optional)
- 1 wrist watch.
- 1 light hip pack or small day pack.
- 1 ultra-thin, small hand towel (optional)
- 1 hiking poles (optional)

Toiletries

- 1 toothbrush and travel size toothpaste
- 1 small hand towel/ bandana
- 1 personal medications/ vitamins

- ~ **no** shampoo, conditioner, razors, shavers, shaving cream, skin lotion, band-aids.
- ~ **no** computers, ipad, ipod, or electronics of any kind.



Normally you will hike in just hiking pants and quick-dry shirt.
Only if it is unusually cold in the morning might you put on thermal long-johns.



Once you arrive in camp you change into these.





