



ALASKA EXPEDITION PACKING LIST

Alaska weather can change in an instant. You'll likely experience sunny weather and warm temps, chilly rain, cloudy skies, and everything in between. One ill-prepared person can negatively affect the whole group, but this list will keep you warm, dry, and safe in the weather conditions we may face!

Please keep in mind:

- Leave your favorite clothes at home so they won't get dirty, muddy, torn, or damaged.
- Everything you bring should be packed in your daypack (carry-on) and duffel (checked).
- We review our packing lists every year; there is no need to pack items that are not included.
- **PLEASE PUT YOUR NAME ON EVERYTHING!**
- In the following pages, we provide detailed information on the packing list items. We'll also recommend certain brands, but they are not an exhaustive list, and you are not required to buy from those specific brands.
- Please do not hesitate to call us at 888-954-5555 with questions.

DAYPACK (CARRY-ON)

This is something you'll use often. We recommend using your school bookbag as your daypack; there's no need to purchase an expensive, technical daypack from an outdoor store.

Your daypack will act as your carry-on luggage for airport days. Please wear closed-toed shoes (no flip-flops) and comfortable clothes for the outdoors, and pack the following items in your carry-on:

- An ID, if you choose to carry one. U.S. citizens under 18 are not required to carry ID at the airport unless traveling internationally.
- Essential items in the event that your checked luggage is delayed: rain jacket, fleece jacket, change of clothes, toothbrush, prescription medications, contacts and glasses, sunglasses, warm hat, and any other personal essentials.
- Water bottle and headlamp.
- Cell phone, charger, other electronics, and wallet. Please pack these in a Ziploc bag labeled with your name.

DUFFEL (CHECKED LUGGAGE)

You'll pack everything else in a soft-sided duffel bag, which will be checked at the airport. Think of the duffel as your "closet" while on the trip; you'll store everything in here that you're not using that day or the next few days. The duffel will be stored in the U-Haul trailer that we tow behind our vans. A few things to note:

- Your duffel should not have wheels; they are a loading hazard.
- A bag measuring 70-90 liters should be enough space to pack everything you need.

Recommended brands for duffels: REI Co-op, Under Armour, Adidas, Patagonia, Osprey, The North Face, Mountainsmith, High Sierra

PACKING LIST

HEAD

- Wool or fleece (non-cotton) hat
- Polarized sunglasses with a secure strap
- Baseball cap or wide-brimmed sun hat
- Head net for mosquitoes

UPPER BODY

- Waterproof rain jacket
- Synthetic insulated (not down) puffy jacket
- 2 heavy non-cotton fleece jackets or pullovers
- 4 long-sleeved synthetic or wool baselayer tops
- 6 short-sleeved synthetic or wool baselayer tops
- 3 comfortable T-shirts (cotton is acceptable)
- 1 pair of fleece or soft shell gloves
- 4-5 sports bras

LOWER BODY

- 1 pair of waterproof rain pants
- 2 pairs of synthetic or wool baselayer bottoms
- 1 pair of fleece (non-cotton) pants
- 2 pairs of nylon hiking pants
- 1 pair of comfortable pants for frontcountry use
- 14 pairs of underwear
- 4 pairs of shorts; at least 2 pairs should be nylon shorts that will dry quickly if they get wet
- Pajama pants or sweatpants

FEET

- 1 pair of broken-in waterproof hiking boots
- 8 pairs of synthetic or wool socks
- 5-6 pairs of cotton socks for frontcountry use
- 1 pair of water shoes with a heel strap
- 1 pair of tennis shoes
- 1 pair of full-length gaiters

OTHER REQUIRED ITEMS

- LED headlamp with extra batteries
- Trekking poles
- 3 quart-sized water bottles OR 2 quart-sized water bottles and 1 70-oz. hydration bladder
- Bandana
- Large quick-drying camp towel
- Toiletries
- Lip balm (SPF 30 or higher)
- Laundry bag

- 5-7 nylon stuff sacks or about 20 Ziploc bags to organize your items
- Extra pair of glasses (with a strap) or contacts, solution, eye drops, and contacts lens case
- About \$150 in cash for airport food and baggage or airline fees if not prepaid

OPTIONAL ITEMS

- Crazy Creek-type camp chair without legs (strongly recommended)
- Inflatable or compressible camping pillow (strongly recommended)
- Sleeping bag liner (for those who get cold easily)
- Camera or GoPro with extra batteries
- Insect repellent and/or sunscreen
- Several mixed CDs
- Journal to remember your best summer ever!
- Swiss Army-type pocket knife
- Swimsuit
- HotHands hand warmers
- Fun, silly clothing and accessories (aka flair!)

WE WILL PROVIDE:

- Insect repellent and sunscreen
- Mess kit (cup, bowl, spoon) and cooking equipment
- Sleeping gear (tent, sleeping bag, sleeping bag), large backpacking pack, and other technical activity gear

WE WILL HOLD ONTO:

- **Cell phones and electronics.** Bring your phone for the flight and for several short calls home during the trip. We'll store it for safekeeping otherwise.
- **Medications.** We provide over-the-counter medications (like ibuprofen and antihistamines), so there's no need to pack these. We will collect prescription medications and distribute privately to each student as needed.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE NOT ALLOWED:

- Handheld electronic devices
- Weapons, fireworks, firearms
- Tobacco products, alcohol, vape pens, illegal or non-prescription drugs
- Food (including candy, gum, and mints)

Please leave all valuables, jewelry, and makeup at home.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A huge factor affecting the safety and success of any trip is equipment. If you bring the proper gear, we'll teach you how to use it. An instructor will double-check every student's clothing and equipment on the second day to make sure they have the appropriate gear before departing for the first backpack.

Here are a few key points to help you sort through the overwhelming options available.

- **Price.** Don't break the bank and compare prices; sometimes you'll want to spend a little more at the outdoor store, and some items you can find more economically at Target.
- **Function over fashion.** Proper fit is more important than how something looks. Try items on to make sure they fit properly. Make sure that warm outer layers fit well over your baselayers.
- **Cotton.** A popular backcountry saying is "cotton is rotten." Cotton doesn't provide insulation when wet and can take a long time to dry, but it's more comfortable when relaxing in camp. By bringing both synthetic clothing and cotton clothing, you'll be warm and comfortable no matter the conditions. Please pay special attention to items marked synthetic or wool—do not pack cotton or cotton-blend items in place of these.
- **Waterproof/breathable raingear is required.** Double-check that you are buying a waterproof, not water-resistant, rain shell and pants.
- **Break in your boots.** This will help prevent blistering and stress fractures. Try to walk at least 20 miles total in your boots to break them in (it doesn't have to be all at once). We'll say it again: **BREAK IN YOUR BOOTS!**
- **Laundry.** We'll do laundry at least once, and we'll provide quarters and detergent. We use commercial washer and dryers and are unable to wash or dry any items on delicate cycles. Please wash and dry your clothes at least once before your trip to make sure no drastic shrinkage occurs.
- **Extra batteries.** For any items that require batteries (like cameras or headlamps), please pack extra batteries as we won't be able to recharge devices.

FOR YOUR HEAD

Wool or fleece hat (aka beanie or toboggan): A warm hat will keep you toasty; you'll probably wear this often.

Sunglasses, eyeglasses, and contacts: Bring polarized sunglasses; these kinds of lenses dramatically reduce sun glare from water and snow/ice. For those who wear contacts, have no fear—it's easy to maintain contacts in the backcountry, and you'll always be able to wash your hands before you touch your eyes. Please bring solution, a case, extra pairs of contacts, and glasses just in case. Bring a leash/strap (like Croakies or Chums) for any water activities to keep glasses attached to you.

Baseball cap or wide-brimmed sun hat: You'll need some type of hat for sun protection.

Head net: Purchase an inexpensive head net with a brimmed hat underneath. They may look dorky, but they're essential in buggy areas. This small investment (\$5–\$15) can make a buggy experience significantly more fun.

FOR YOUR UPPER BODY

Rain jacket: A waterproof/breathable "shell" (meaning uninsulated—no heavy ski parkas) that keeps you warm and dry. Rain jackets must have a hood and should fit over layers of fleece and baselayers. We'll reiterate: Make sure you're buying a waterproof, not water-resistant, jacket. Don't skimp on this item, but don't go overboard; \$80–\$100 will get you a fantastic jacket.

Recommended brands: REI Co-op, Columbia, The North Face, Mountain Hardwear, Outdoor Research, Patagonia

Synthetic insulated puffy jacket: Alaska's weather is finicky and unpredictable. An insulated jacket will help keep you warm when temperatures drop. This does not need a hood, and it should fit both under a rain jacket and over a fleece and baselayer. Please do not purchase a down (goose or duck) jacket; down insulation takes a longer time to dry and loses insulating power when wet.

Recommended brands: REI Co-op, Marmot, Mountain Hardwear, Outdoor Research, Patagonia, The North Face

Fleece jackets: Two heavyweight, non-cotton fleece jackets (more like a sweatshirt, less like a thin sweater) that will act as an insulating layer. One should be a higher quality name brand; the other can be from an inexpensive big box store. Be sure your jackets can fit over your baselayers and under your rain jacket.

Recommended brands: Champion, Old Navy, REI Co-op, Columbia, The North Face, Patagonia, Smartwool, Icebreaker

Baselayer tops: Light- to mid-weight non-cotton tops (aka "long underwear") made with synthetic or wool fibers that keep you warm even when wet. Many brands have different weights (or thicknesses); try on a variety to see what suits you best. Wash your synthetic baselayers before wearing, as they will retain the first odor absorbed. (Wool doesn't hold odors, unlike synthetic fibers.) Purchase both long- and short-sleeved synthetic tops.

Recommended brands: Champion, Old Navy, Nike, REI Co-op, Columbia, Under Armour, Patagonia, Smartwool, Icebreaker

Cotton T-shirts: You'll wear cotton at camp and non-cotton during most activities.

Fleece or soft-shell gloves or mittens: These will keep your hands warm and dry. Gloves allow more movement for your fingers, while mittens provide more warmth.

Recommended brands: REI Co-op, Columbia, Outdoor Research, The North Face, Smartwool

Sports bras: Make sure that the seams and straps are comfortable under a loaded backpack. Bring a dark-colored, more conservative design, as sports bras are also acceptable while rafting or swimming.

FOR YOUR LOWER BODY

Rain pants: Just like the rain jacket, these need to be a waterproof/breathable "shell" pant that will fit over your nylon or fleece pants. You might consider full side-zippers to get in and out of them more easily.

Recommended brands: REI Co-op, Columbia, Marmot, Mountain Hardwear, Outdoor Research, Patagonia, The North Face

Baselayer bottoms: Non-cotton baselayer bottoms (aka "long underwear"). See "baselayer tops" for more info.

Recommended brands: Champion, Old Navy, Nike, REI Co-op, Columbia, Under Armour, Patagonia, Smartwool, Icebreaker

Fleece pants: These should be non-cotton. Fleece keeps you warm and dry under rain pants and when it's chilly.

Recommended brands: Champion, REI Co-op, Nike, Under Armour, Patagonia

Nylon hiking pants and shorts: Nylon is durable, lightweight, often weather-resistant, and helps provide protection against mosquitoes. Some students choose to bring convertible pants that zip off into shorts. At least

one pair of shorts should be knee-length to provide extra skin protection. If you choose to wear yoga leggings, please bring thicker pairs.

Recommended brands: REI Co-op, Prana, Columbia, Under Armour, The North Face, Outdoor Research, ExOfficio, Mountain Hardwear, Royal Robbins

Underwear: We recommend a mix of cotton and synthetic or wool underwear. We'll be doing laundry twice during the trip; make sure to bring enough to last you two weeks without washing.

Recommended brands (for synthetic or wool): REI Co-op, ExOfficio, Icebreaker, Patagonia, Smartwool

FOR YOUR FEET

Waterproof hiking boots: TRY THEM ON! BREAK THEM IN! We cannot emphasize this enough. Purchase three-quarter to full-height boots for ankle support. Boots are something you'll want to try on in the store so you can see what fits your foot best; you may need to size up slightly for the best fit. Salespeople will be able to point you toward appropriate boots for multi-day backpacking trips. (Do not purchase light or mid-weight hiking shoes; these are not as durable and don't provide as much support.)

Recommended brands: Keen, Merrell, Salomon, Vasque, Sorel, Oboz, Asolo

Wool or synthetic socks, plus cotton socks: Bring mid-weight wool or synthetic hiking socks for backpacks, plus several pairs of cotton socks to wear with your closed-toed shoes at campgrounds. Synthetic and wool socks keep your feet warm when wet, dry faster, and wick moisture away to help prevent hot spots and blisters. If you get cold easily, bring a thick pair for sleeping. Try different thicknesses on with your boots to see what fits best.

Recommended brands: Darn Tough, Fox River, REI Co-op, Smartwool, Icebreaker, Field and Stream

Water shoes/sandals: These need to have a heel strap so they stay on your feet; no flip-flops or Crocs. We'll wear these not only for swimming, but other water activities like rafting and kayaking.

Recommended brands: Keen, Chaco, Teva, Salomon, Freewaters, Astral

Tennis or running shoes: We require closed-toed shoes for cooking to provide protection against hot spills and dropped knives. We also require closed-toed shoes for playing field games and such. For safety's sake, students are never allowed to go barefoot at Adventure Treks.

Gaiters: These are nylon covers that attach to your boots to keep sand, snow, rocks, and mud out of your boots. Look for full-length (to the knee) nylon gaiters with Velcro straps.

Recommended brands: REI Co-op, Outdoor Research, Kahtoola, Black Diamond, Sea to Summit, Rab

OTHER REQUIRED ITEMS

Headlamp: Bring an LED headlamp with extra batteries.

Recommended brands: Coleman, Princeton Tec, Black Diamond, Petzl, Fenix

Trekking poles: These are lightweight, extendable/adjustable poles (not rigid ski poles) that help take pressure off your knees and improve your balance when backpacking.

Recommended brands: Coleman, REI Co-op, Kelty, Leki, Black Diamond, Mountainsmith

Quart-sized water bottles/hydration bladders: Bring three wide-mouth quart-sized bottles or two quart-sized bottles and a 70-oz. hydration bladder. (There's no need to bring an accompanying backpack with the bladder.) Label your bottles with your name, stickers, Sharpie doodles—we have about 90 bottles per trip!

Recommended brands for water bottles: REI Co-op, Nalgene, CamelBak, HydroFlask, Klean Kanteen, Coleman, GSI Outdoors. Recommended brands for hydration bladders: Osprey, CamelBak, Gregory, Platypus, HydraPak

Bandana/neck gaiter: This will be one of the most versatile pieces of gear you'll have, providing protection from the sun, wind, and cold.

Recommended brands: REI Co-op, Buff, Smartwool, Outdoor Research

Quick-drying camp towel: Bring a large or extra-large thin pack towel (they feel like a microfiber chamois), and leave your large, thick bathroom towel at home. Some "medium-sized" towels are more like hand towels, so make sure the one you purchase is big enough.

Recommended brands: REI Co-op, Matador, PackTowel, Sea to Summit, Nomadix, Rumpl

Toiletries: Because we don't shower every day, you don't need full-sized bottles of shampoo, conditioner, and body wash/soap; travel sizes will suffice. However, you can bring a full-sized tube of toothpaste. Don't forget your toothbrush and travel case, floss, brush/comb, hair ties, disposable razor, unscented deodorant and lotion, astringent pads (if needed), and travel/cleansing wipes (to help stay clean between showers). These can be easily organized in Ziploc bags. Our instructors will have feminine hygiene products, but feel free to bring what you're most comfortable with.

Lip balm with SPF: Bring several tubes of lip balm with SPF 30 or higher.

Laundry bag: A mesh or fabric bag.

Gallon- and sandwich-sized Ziploc bags or nylon stuff sacks: These come in handy for organizing your belongings. Some people prefer nylon stuff sacks as they're reusable; we recommend bringing about 20 gallon-sized Ziploc bags because they're see-through, inexpensive, and can be easily labeled. Pack several empty two-gallon-sized Ziploc bags for dirty items like boots and clothes for the flight home.

Recommended brands for stuff sacks: REI Co-op, Sea to Summit, Eagle Creek, Osprey, Granite Gear

OPTIONAL ITEMS

Crazy Creek-type camp chair: This is a lightweight chair that supports your back and makes sitting on the ground much more comfortable. You will not carry this in your backpack, so don't worry about the weight. It's just for frontcountry campsites. Do not bring a chair with legs.

Recommended brands: REI Co-op, Crazy Creek, ALPS Mountaineering, Kelty

Pillow: Leave your memory foam bed pillows at home and bring a lightweight and compressible or inflatable camping pillow. (If you don't want to purchase a pillow, you can fill your sleeping bag stuff sack full of clothes.)

Recommended brands: REI Co-op, NEMO, Sea to Summit, Cocoon, ALPS Mountaineering, ThermaRest

Sleeping bag liner: Even though our sleeping bags are rated to keep us warm down to 20°F, we know that some students get cold easily. Sleeping bag liners are thin and packable and add extra warmth on chilly nights.

Recommended brands: Sea to Summit, Cocoon, Big Agnes, Mountainsmith, Rab, ALPS Mountaineering

Camera or GoPro: Because you won't be able to use your phone, we highly recommend bringing a digital point-and-shoot camera or GoPro with extra batteries. Consider bringing a waterproof case for water activities, and pack whatever camera you bring in a hard-sided, crush-proof case for safekeeping. GoPros are great because they're hands-free and take both photos and videos.

Insect repellent and sunscreen: We provide sunscreen, but feel free to bring your own if you have a strong preference. We'll have DEET bug spray because we've found it's most effective in warding off mosquitoes. However, we know that some don't like its strong scent, so you're also welcome to bring your own repellent.

Mixed CDs: Yes, we're old-school! Please make 2-3 mixed CDs with appropriate content.

Pocket knife: You only need a basic knife with a blade and can opener. Make sure to pack it in your checked baggage, otherwise you'll lose it in the security line.

Swimsuits: Sports bras and nylon shorts are perfect for a swim. A one- or two-piece suit is acceptable for water activities, but you will also want to wear nylon shorts over your swimsuit while rafting so the rubber on the raft doesn't chafe your legs.

Flair! Otherwise known as your "summit outfit" or costume for fun occasions, flair can include sequin tops, feather boas, crazy sunglasses, and very loud dresses, vests, or pants. Your instructors will have them, and flair will be part of the fun during summits and other festive times.

WHAT WE PROVIDE

Tents: We will provide four-person Big Agnes tents. Sleeping is always single-gender, and we will comfortably fit three students per tent. For longer backpacking sections, students may elect to sleep four people in one tent to save weight and space in their backpacks. These tents have a large vestibule so shoes and wet gear can stay outside the tent but will still be protected from rain.

Backpack: Though you will bring a duffel and daypack, we will provide a technical Deuter or Osprey pack for the backpacking sections of each trip. If you choose to bring your own, it should have a sturdy, padded hip belt and 4000-5000 cubic inches, or 70 liters, of space. Pack your EMPTY backpack into your duffel bag (which we will store in the U-Haul when we're not backpacking).

Sleeping bag: We provide synthetic-insulated, mummy-style sleeping bags rated to 20°F (with a stuff sack). If you choose to bring your own, it should be lightweight, synthetic-insulated, and rated to 20°F. You should also have a stuff sack approximately 14" x 20" or smaller.

Sleeping pad: We provide a Therm-a-Rest RidgeRest foam pad. If you choose to bring your own, we recommend bringing something similar. You can bring a self-inflating pad, but be aware that these puncture easily if you're rough on them!

Eating utensils and cookware: We will provide an Adventure Treks mug, bowl, and spoon. We will teach you how to keep your utensils clean, and you will get to take your mug home.

Ice climbing and whitewater rafting technical gear