



ALASKA EXPEDITION PACKING LIST

Alaska weather can change in an instant. You'll likely experience sunny weather and warm temps, chilly rain and 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:

- **PLEASE PUT YOUR NAME ON EVERYTHING!**
- Everything should be packed in your daypack (carry-on) and duffel (checked).
- Leave your favorite and nicest clothes at home so they won't get damaged.
- We review our packing lists every year; there is no need to pack items that are not included below.
- Detailed information is included in the follow pages. 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 most days. We recommend using your school bookbag as your daypack; there's no need to purchase an expensive, technical daypack from an outdoor store. If you're flying, this will be your carry-on luggage on opening and closing days. For opening day, please pack the following items in your daypack:

- An ID, if you choose to carry one. (U.S. citizens under 18 traveling domestically are not required to show an ID to get through security and board their flight.)
- At least one cloth face covering (thick enough that you can't see through it).
- Essential items in the event your checked luggage is delayed: rain jacket, fleece, change of clothes, toothbrush, prescription medications, contacts and glasses, sunglasses, warm hat and baseball cap, and any other personal essentials.
- Water bottle and headlamp.
- Cell phone, charger, other electronics, and wallet/money; please pack these in a Ziploc bag labeled with your name.
 - » Please pack a debit/credit card or about \$150 in cash for unexpected baggage or airline fees or food on the way home (we do send students to the airport with a bag of snacks).

DUFFEL (CHECKED)

You'll pack everything in a soft-sided duffel bag. 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 80–100 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
- Bandana or neck gaiter
- Head net for mosquitoes
- 2 reusable cloth face masks (thick enough that they're not see-through)

UPPER BODY

- Waterproof rain jacket
- Synthetic insulated (puffy) jacket
- 2 non-cotton fleece jackets or pullovers
- 4 long-sleeved synthetic or wool baselayer tops
- 6 short-sleeved synthetic or wool baselayer tops
- 4-5 comfortable T-shirts (cotton is acceptable)
- 4-5 sports bras
- 1 pair of wool or fleece gloves or mittens

LOWER BODY

- 1 pair of waterproof rain pants
- 2 pairs of synthetic or wool baselayer bottoms
- 1 pair of fleece pants
- 2 pairs of nylon hiking pants
- 1 pair of comfortable pants for frontcountry use
- 4 pairs of shorts; at least 2 pairs should be nylon
- Pajama pants or sweatpants
- 14 pairs of underwear

FEET

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

OTHER REQUIRED ITEMS

- Crazy Creek-type chair without legs
- LED headlamp with extra batteries
- Trekking poles
- 2 liter-sized water bottles and 1 hydration bladder
- Large quick-drying camp towel
- Toiletries (including lip balm of SPF 30 or higher)
- Laundry bag
- 5-7 nylon stuff sacks or about 20 Ziploc bags
- 1 clean outfit for your return trip

- Extra pair of glasses (with a strap) or contacts, solution, eye drops, and contacts lens case
- \$150 for airport food and baggage or airline fees

OPTIONAL ITEMS

- Inflatable or compressible camping pillow (strongly recommended)
- Camera or GoPro with extra batteries
- Insect repellent and/or sunscreen
- Journal to remember your best summer ever!
- Swimsuit
- Fun, silly clothing and accessories (aka flair!)

WHAT WE PROVIDE

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

WE'LL HOLD ONTO:

- **Cell phones and electronics.** Bring your phone for traveling to and from and for several short calls home during the trip. We'll store it for safekeeping otherwise.
- **Medications.** Our instructors carry over-the-counter medications (like ibuprofen and antihistamines), so there's no need to pack these. We will collect prescription medications on opening day and distribute privately to each student as needed.
 - » If your child uses an OTC allergy medication like Claritin or Zyrtec, please pack enough for the entire trip so we can best support and alleviate any specific allergy symptoms.

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

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

Here are a few key points to consider:

- **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, and make sure that warm outer layers (fleece & rain jacket) fit well over your baselayers.
- **Cotton vs. synthetic/wool.** 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 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. Read more about cotton vs. synthetic [here](#).
- **Waterproof/breathable rain gear 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).
- **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.

Adventure Treks has a [Pinterest page](#) with links to outdoor clothing and equipment that our directors and instructors have personally used or recommend.

FOR YOUR HEAD

Wool or fleece hat (aka beanie or toboggan): A warm hat will keep you toasty on chilly nights.

Sunglasses, eyeglasses, and contacts: Bring polarized sunglasses; these kinds of lenses dramatically reduce sun glare from water and snow/ice. ([Goodr](#) makes great, inexpensive polarized glasses.) For those who wear contacts, it's easy to maintain lenses 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 on hot days for sun protection.

Bandana or 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

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

Face masks: Please bring two reusable cloth face masks for use on travel days and potentially at other times throughout the trip. These are in addition to one bandana or neck gaiter, and they should not be see-through.

FOR YOUR UPPER BODY

Rain jacket: A waterproof/breathable “shell” (meaning uninsulated—no thick, heavy ski parkas) that keeps you warm and dry. Rain jackets must have a hood and should fit comfortably over 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, Marmot, Mountain Hardwear, Outdoor Research, Patagonia, The North Face

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

Non-cotton fleece jackets or pullovers: One heavyweight fleece jacket and one lightweight fleece jacket for insulating layers. We recommend a full-zip for the heavier fleece, but your lightweight fleece can be a quarter-zip or hoodie-style. Be sure your fleeces fit over your baselayers and under your rain jacket.

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

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 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 as much as 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 shirts at camp and non-cotton shirts during most activities.

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.

Wool or fleece 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

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.

Fleece pants: These need to be non-cotton and will keep you warm and dry 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.

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

Pajama pants or sweatpants: Bring comfortable pants for hanging around camp and sleeping.

Underwear: We recommend a mix of cotton and synthetic or wool underwear.

Recommended brands: REI Co-op, ExOfficio, Icebreaker, Patagonia, Smartwool

FOR YOUR FEET

Hiking boots: TRY THEM ON! BREAK THEM IN! We cannot emphasize this enough. Purchase three-quarter-height 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 backpacking, plus several pairs of cotton socks to wear with your tennis 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, Field and Stream, Fox River, REI Co-op, Smartwool, Icebreaker

Water shoes/sandals: These need to have a heel strap so they stay on your feet; no flip-flops or Crocs.

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, and for playing field games. For safety's sake, students are very rarely 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 straps.

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

OTHER REQUIRED ITEMS

Crazy Creek-type camp chair: This is a lightweight "chair" that supports your back and makes sitting on the ground much more comfortable. Do not bring a chair with legs.

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

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

Liter-sized water bottles: Bring two liter-sized bottles and a 70-oz. hydration bladder. (There's no need to bring an accompanying backpack with the bladder.)

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

Camp towel: Bring a large or extra-large thin pack towel (that feels like a microfiber chamois), and leave your large, thick bath 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 lip balm (SPF 30+), 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.

Laundry bag: A mesh or fabric bag.

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

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

OPTIONAL ITEMS

Pillow: 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, ThermoRest

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. Students love GoPros because they 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.

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. Nylon shorts work great for swimming.

Flair! Otherwise known as your "summit outfit" or costume for fun occasions, flair can include sequin tops, feather boas, crazy sunglasses, and 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. These tents have a large vestibule so shoes and wet gear can stay outside the tent but will still be protected from the rain.

Backpack: Though you will bring a duffel and daypack, we will provide a Deuter backpack for the backpacking section. If you choose to bring your own, it should have a sturdy, padded hip belt and 4000–5000 cubic inches, or about 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: You'll use 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.

All technical, activity-specific gear