

# Bruin Outdoor Orientation Trip

## Backpack the Eastern Sierra



We invite incoming, first-year students to join us on a backpacking adventure in the high-elevation forests and glacial valleys east of the Sierra Crest, where networks of streams, waterfalls, and lakes grace the landscape! On our trips, we prioritize cooperation, risk management, and responsible stewardship of our environment. Our goal is to foster a supportive, active, and inclusive atmosphere in which we can enjoy each other's company and appreciate the natural history in the unique ecosystems we visit. Participants can look forward to learning skills like pitching tents securely, staying comfortable in varied weather, and practicing leave-no-trace ethics on daily hikes.





## Trip Itinerary\*

**Day 1:** We meet at the Outdoor-Adventures Center at 10:00am and perform a gear check to make sure everyone has what they need to be comfortable on the trip, including borrowing gear from us as desired. Then, we drive for an average of five hours to the Eastern Sierra, stopping for lunch on the way. Upon arrival, we establish our camp and start making dinner. In the evening, we unwind at camp before retiring to our sleeping bags.

*Dinner is included. Lunch is not included, so we recommend bringing either food or funds to purchase food as needed on the drive.*

**Days 2 and 3:** We spend these days learning about backpacking, from how to pack a pack to how to treat our drinking water, and backpacking in the Inyo National-Forest west of Big Pine and Bishop to camp in the backcountry.

*Breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks are included.*

**Day 4:** After breakfast, we break camp and begin our return hike to the trailhead. Then, we drive back to campus and stop for dinner on the way. Our estimated time of arrival at UCLA ranges from 4:00pm to 10:00pm, but can be later depending on traffic and additional variables outside of our control.

*Breakfast, lunch, and snacks are included. Dinner is not included, so we recommend bringing either food or funds to purchase food as needed on the drive home.*

\*Changes may be made to this itinerary at any time to adapt to weather, traffic, and other factors. Flexibility makes the unpredictability of outdoor trips an enjoyable adventure.

## Trip Description

**Type and Facilities:** This trip is a backpacking adventure. We initially make our camp in an established campground where our van is parked next to us and basic restroom-facilities are available. Then, we load all of our personal and group gear into our backpacks and hike into the backcountry. Restroom facilities are not available in the backcountry, so we teach everyone how to handle personal hygiene and human waste in this context.

**Difficulty:** This trip is difficult. Participants should be able to hike up to 10 miles a day with up to 40% of their body weight in their backpack. An additional layer of difficulty is presented by the fact that we hike at elevations of 7500' up to 12000'. Although we take breaks on the trail and endeavor to hike at a pace that everyone can enjoy, participants should be prepared for a strenuous, challenging endeavor.

**Weather:** The weather at the high elevations where our trip takes place can be extreme and change quickly; it has the potential to be stormy (e.g., rainy, windy, snowy) and cold (e.g., below freezing) as well as sunny and hot (e.g., above 90° F).

## Arrival and Departure

**Meeting Location:** Our trips depart from and return to the Outdoor-Adventures Center (which is co-located with the UCLA Bike-Shop) in the northwest corner of the John-Wooden Center. For drop-off and pick-up, visitor parking is available at an hourly rate in Lot 4 using the self-service kiosks.

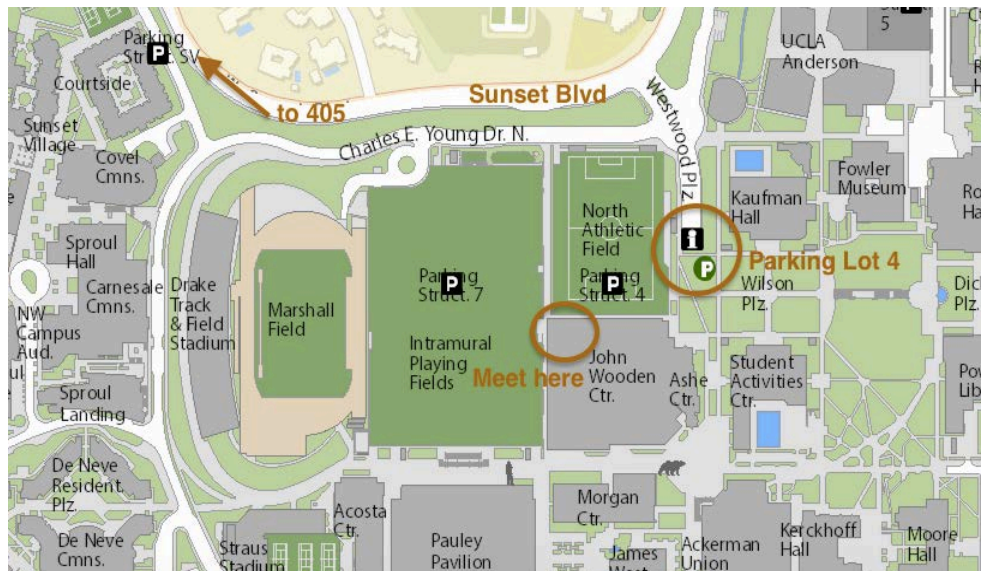
**Overnight parking:** To park for more than a full day in Lot 4, we recommend going online in advance to purchase a "Yellow / 7 Day Summer Short" permit using the [Bruin ePermit system](#). Permits may also be purchased in person using the self-service kiosks, but only for a single, full day of parking at a greater cost.

**Airport transfers:** Transportation to and from LAX is available via [public buses, private shuttles, or private ride-hailing-services](#).

**Coordinating with an Orientation:** If you are attending an Orientation session just prior to or right after your trip, you may contact [Orientation](#) directly to arrange an extra night in the dorms. Extended stay arrangements cannot be made through OA.

**Additional overnight-options:** If you need to arrive a day in advance or depart a day after your trip's conclusion, a list of accommodations is available [here](#).

**Returning to campus:** The timing of pick-up plans should be flexible, due to the difficulty of accurately predicting the return time to campus. To coordinate, cell-phone reception is available on the latter part of the drive home.



## Frequently-Asked Questions

### **I've never been camping or backpacking. Is this trip appropriate for me?**

While this backpacking trip is difficult and prior experience may be helpful, prior experience is not necessary. Our guides are excited to teach everyone about backpacking and also welcome experienced backpackers.

### **Is there a place where I may store my extra luggage during the trip?**

While we do not have completely-secure storage available, participants are welcome to leave belongings in our side office at their own risk. The office is usually occupied during the day and always locked at night.

### **Does my trip have to align with my Orientation session?**

Trips are operated independently of Orientations, so we invite you to make whichever arrangements work best for you.

### **While I am on the trip, how may my family contact me?**

Outside of when we are on the road within a few hours of campus, plan to be un-reachable by cell phone. Reception is not available in the locations where the trip takes place.

### **What will we eat on the trip?**

Taking into account food allergies noted by participants on our health form, we craft hearty, nutrient-dense meals and snacks to keep everyone well-nourished on the trail.

### **May I bring my own snacks?**

Storage space for food and toiletries is highly limited during backpacking trips, but we invite you to bring a limited quantity into the backcountry. Bringing your own snacks to consume on the drive to our destination can be nice.

### **What are the sleeping arrangements on the trip?**

We use two, 4-person tents for our 8-person trips. Participants and guides share tent space. We endeavor to make tent arrangements comfortable for everyone, so please express any preferences you have about sleeping arrangements to us before or during the trip.