

# What to Bring Backpacking

- **You are responsible for bringing adequate personal-gear on the trip.**
  - Bringing footwear suitable for all-terrain hiking and cold temperatures is critical.
  - Read this list carefully and contact us with any concerns about bringing the proper items.
  - Preparing yourself fully is essential to the well-being of everyone on the trip.
- **Items available to borrow free of charge on departure day are marked with a Bruin bear:**
  - Overnight bags, day packs, sleeping bags, ground pads, headlamps, and water bottles are available to borrow free of charge.
  - While we encourage you to bring your own clothing wherever possible, waterproof layers, warm tops, broad-brimmed hats, and gloves are available to borrow free of charge.
  - We provide all eating-ware (e.g., dishes, utensils), so please do not bring these items.



**Important note:** *If you do not bring adequate personal-gear, you will not be allowed on the trip and a refund will not be available.*

- **Hiking footwear:** On hikes, we usually encounter uneven, slippery terrain as well as mud, puddles, and stream crossings during which we wade through the water. Expect your footwear to get wet, muddy, and dusty. Hiking footwear should be sturdy, closed-toed, closed-heel, preferably with ankle support and without a mesh exterior. Inexpensive options are available at sporting-goods stores. If you buy new footwear, make sure to use it plenty beforehand to avoid break-in blisters on the trip.



- **Camp footwear:** Wearing non-hiking footwear at camp helps minimize our impact on the land and maximize comfort. Since hiking footwear is often wet and muddy after hikes, changing into camp footwear can help you stay warm. Street shoes (e.g., sneakers, Vans, Converse) or supportive sandals with warm socks underneath can work well. However, if your feet get cold easily, non-mesh footwear made of a thick material (e.g., leather) or with insulation (e.g., lining, down) is critical. Sandals must have a heel strap; flip-flops are not acceptable.



- **Backpacking backpack:** A large pack with a frame—external or internal—and a robust belt that distributes weight to your hips. A capacity of a minimum of 4,000 cubic inches or 65 liters is required.



- **Day pack:** A small backpack to carry water, sun protection, warm layers, raingear, a headlamp, and some of the group gear on day hikes.



- **Sleeping bag:** Mummy-style (i.e., tapered at the bottom, rather than rectangular, to minimize air pockets and maximize warmth) and rated at least to 0°F or -18°C. If your sleeping bag does not have a rating printed on it, it probably is not warm enough.



- **Ground pad:** Closed-cell foam is best. Most yoga-mats are not acceptable because they are generally open-cell foam which does not provide adequate insulation from the ground. Inflatable ground-pads are only acceptable when you are prepared to patch them effectively in the field.



- **Headlamp:** Hands-free light with a full set of extra batteries. A cell phone is not acceptable.



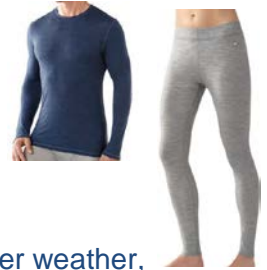
- **Water containers:** Reusable and durable to carry a minimum of 2 quarts or 2 liters.



# Clothing Guidelines

- **Wool or synthetics** are the best materials because they dry quickly and provide insulation even when they are wet. Avoiding cotton garments is best because they stay wet for a lot longer and do not provide insulation when wet.
- **Stay covered:** A lot of people new to outdoor recreation imagine that wearing shorts, a t-shirt, or a tank top is ideal for hiking. However, staying covered by wearing lightweight pants and a lightweight, long-sleeved shirt is vastly preferable for a variety of reasons, including:
  - Preventing sunburn: The trip usually involves being in the sun for many hours a day.
  - Staying cleaner: Wearing short sleeves and sunscreen—especially when you start sweating— attracts excess dust and dirt, whereas staying covered and using sunscreen only on your hands, face, and neck keeps you cleaner.
  - Staying cooler: Having a lightweight layer over your skin and a broad-brimmed hat on your head has the counterintuitive effect of keeping you feeling cooler in sunny weather.
  - Protecting against insects: Having a physical barrier over your skin minimizes contact by mosquitoes, ticks, and other insects.
- **Fit and quantity:** Clothes should be comfortable for activities like hiking, crouching, and sitting on the ground. Wearing many layers of clothing to stay warm in cold temperatures is often necessary, so bring plenty of clothing. Having extra clothing is not a problem because it can be left in the van.

- **Base layers:** These stretchy layers are worn against the skin on the top and bottom of your body to provide a warm foundation for the rest of your layers. Bringing an extra top to keep clean for sleeping or the van ride home is recommended.



- **Sun shirt:** A lightweight, long-sleeved shirt to wear on sunny days over a t-shirt or tank-top.

- **Hiking pants:** A lightweight-to-midweight layer to wear on hikes and at camp. In colder weather, wearing hiking pants underneath other pants at night can be a good option for extra warmth.

- **Warm tops:** Bringing a minimum of three layers for your upper body in addition to your base layer is recommended. A thick, long-sleeved shirt (or two), a warm sweater (or two), and a warm jacket (or two)—or a different combination of these warm tops—can work well.



- **Warm bottoms:** Midweight-to-heavyweight pants (e.g., fleece pants; thick, insulating leggings) that can be worn over your base layer—and maybe your hiking pants, too—for cold nights at camp.

- **Raingear (i.e., Jacket and Pants):** Waterproof—rather than water-resistant—materials are required because water-resistant layers get soaked in rainstorms and do not keep you dry. In dry weather, raingear can also help keep you warmer by insulating you from the wind and cold. Make sure your raingear fits over your other layers (i.e., sometimes you have to wear a size larger than usual).



- **Socks and underwear:** A minimum of two pairs of socks for hiking and a separate pair of socks for sleeping or the van ride home are recommended. A pair of underwear per day is recommended.

- **Warm hat, warm gloves, and a broad-brimmed hat:** Keeping your head covered with a warm hat and your hands covered with warm gloves makes a big difference in the cold. A broad-brimmed hat protects your face, ears, and neck in the sun.



# Toiletries

- **Toiletries** (e.g., toothpaste, sunscreen, lip balm) are considered to have a scent that attracts wildlife, even when the toiletries are labeled as “unscented” or “fragrance-free”. Along with food, toiletries belong to a category of items we call “smellies”.
  - To avoid interactions with and to be as respectful as possible of the resident wildlife in the natural areas we visit (e.g., coyotes, raccoons, squirrels, songbirds, birds of prey, bears, snakes), proper storage of smellies is critical.
  - Smellies must either be in your possession or stored inside wildlife-proof containers called bear cans at all times, while we are in natural areas. Partly because we also store our food in these bear cans, storage space is limited. Therefore, it is important to only bring small quantities of essential toiletries.
  - To avoid bringing large containers, transferring necessary amounts of essential toiletries to travel-sized containers or purchasing travel-size versions can be good options.

## Bring on the trip:

- Toothpaste
- Lip balm with SPF
- Sunscreen
- Required medication

## Leave at home:

- Shampoo and other hair-products (i.e., showers are not available)
- Soaps (i.e., we provide soap appropriate for the outdoors)
- Perfume and cologne
- Body lotion and deodorant

# Optional Items

- **Funds** to purchase food as needed on the drives between campus and our destination.
- **Personal electronics (e.g., phone, camera):** If your personal electronics are not waterproof, develop a way to keep them from getting wet on the trip. Double-bagging in plastic bags can work well. Keep in mind that there are not outlets to charge electronics on the trip.
- **Hand towel:** A small towel made of synthetic material or wool (i.e., not cotton) can be useful for drying your hands or face in camp.
- **Swimsuit:** We may encounter bodies of water where you can take a dip in shallow water, although full swimming is not permitted.
- **Journal or reading material:** Personal time is generally built into the trip, so some people enjoy having materials for written reflection or a book to read.
- **Mosquito head-net:** On some trips, there are lots of mosquitoes (i.e., mostly on summer trips). Some people find that head nets are helpful to keep mosquitoes away from their faces.



- **Insect repellent:** Natural repellants are acceptable (e.g., citronella-based). Avoid DEET-containing repellants because the DEET can degrade synthetic gear (e.g., apparel, backpacks) and bear cans as well as contaminate the waterways (e.g., streams, lakes, ocean) in places we visit.



- **Bandanas** can be useful for many purposes.