



About this List

Wilderness travel means you must carry much less than you do in the regular world. Most experienced wilderness travelers will tell you that they bring about the same amount of gear on a three-day trip as they would on a three-week trip. Being comfortable on course means minimizing the weight you carry while not leaving anything necessary behind - the information below contains everything you need to strike this balance. Follow the guidelines on the list and you will be set up for success! ***Please bring everything on the list that is not specifically marked "optional."***

This list is designed to create an ideal combination of layers for very dynamic weather conditions. Because of these variable conditions each season, students might not use all of the clothing on this list. Depending on which retailer you purchase from, you may be able to return unused items. We suggest keeping tags on new purchases until worn. Please note you don't need to buy all name-brand clothing. You can shop at thrift stores, second-hand outdoor stores, or online discounted outdoor retailers to satisfy the clothing list. **The main considerations are weight, bulk, and quality.**

LAYERING

There are [three main layers](#) to understand about clothing for wilderness travel. Each layer serves a specific purpose and utilizes specific materials. Below are the layers and terms you will encounter when looking for outdoor gear. They are intended to be built on the previous layer(s), so that all can be worn at the same time if weather demands.

Base (Wicking) Layer

- Purpose: Keeps skin dry and comfortable while active or sleeping by wicking moisture away from skin
- Materials: synthetic (polyester or polypropylene blends), wool, silk

Middle (Insulation) Layer

- Purpose: Retains body heat to protect you from the cold.
- Materials: Fleece, wool, or synthetic (i.e. PrimaLoft, polyester)
- Fleece: This is a synthetic *pile* material which is a great insulator, but it's not windproof. In windy conditions, you'd wear your hard shell over your fleece to combine the wind-resistance and insulation.
- Wool: The natural material that (unlike cotton) keeps you warm when wet. As a bonus, wool is naturally odor- and bacteria-resistant.

Outer (Shell) Layer

- Purpose: Outermost layer that protects from the elements like rain, wind, and snow
- Hard Shell: These materials are waterproof, windproof and breathable. Look for items treated with a durable water repellent (DWR) finish such as Goretex, eVent, or VaporDry and labeled as "waterproof."
- Soft Shell: These are materials that are water- and wind-resistant but not waterproof. They are more breathable than hard shell materials.

A Note About Cotton: Cotton makes for comfortable clothing, but in the wilderness, it can be dangerous. Cotton dries extremely slowly and sucks away heat from the body, which can easily lead to hypothermia.



Synthetic and wool materials will keep you warm even when they are wet. *That is why we ask that most everything you bring is synthetic and nothing be made of cotton unless specifically noted on the packing list.*

Weather Conditions

Weather in the Northwest varies; most often warm, sunny days will be followed by mild nights. In the mountains, the temperature averages in the 50s with potential highs in the 60s and lows around freezing. On the river, highs in the 70s could be followed by intense but short-lived thunderstorms. Weather in northern India varies. On the Ganges River, you will most likely experience a warm and humid environment. In the Himalaya Mountains, you will see sunshine, clouds, heat, and cold. In the cities on the plains, it is a hot and humid environment. You never really know what to expect, so come prepared by obtaining all the clothing on our list.

Packing for Your Course & Personal Luggage Storage

At the beginning of course, students will pack as a group. The instructors will call off each item from the gear list and assist you in choosing which items to pack for each section of course. Some items will be used during the entirety of course; others will be set aside in totes or bags and be staged for later parts of course. Any leftover clothing and luggage will be securely stored in our base camp warehouse for the duration of course. If there are items not mentioned on this list that you feel you might need, you can bring it to the start of course and ask the instructors' opinion while packing as a group.

Cell phones and valuables will be collected at the beginning of course, and will be returned at course end. Please have your departure itinerary arranged before course, and bring a copy for reference. We will ask that you power-down cell phones before they are collected since your next opportunity to charge them will be at the airport on your way home. Please bring a power cord to use at that time. Students under 18 are encouraged to text or call their parents as soon as they get service on departure day.

Gear List of Personal Items

Head			
Number	Item	Description	Price Estimate
1	Warm hat	"Stocking cap," wool or synthetic	\$10 – \$30
1	Sun hat	Brimmed hat such as a baseball hat	\$10 – \$20
2	Sunglasses w/keeper strap	100% UV protection. A keeper strap (such as Croakies brand) is necessary to keep your sunglasses from falling off	\$25+
1-2	Buff	<i>Optional:</i> Can be used for sun protection and added warmth	\$10-\$15
Hands			
Number	Item	Description	Price Estimate
1-2	Fleece or softshell gloves	Mid-weight synthetic fleece or softshell material. Wind-resistant material is preferred	\$30 – \$80
1	Waterproof Glove	Heavy Weight, Waterproof, Insulating Glove (no mittens: you'll need to use your fingers)	\$30 – \$80



Feet (see included shoe guide for more specifications on shoes and boots)			
Number	Item	Description	Price Estimate
4	Liner Socks	Synthetic, very light weight, designed to be worn under hiking socks to prevent blisters	\$5 – \$10
6	Hiking Socks	Mid-weight, crew height synthetic or wool	\$10 – \$20
2-3	Cotton socks	Cotton ok – for sightseeing and trip home	\$5 – \$10
1	Backpacking Boots	Backpacking boots. Please see our boot guide for details. You must break these in!	\$125 – \$200
1	Running and/or Street Shoes	Lightweight running shoes; comfortable for travel; an older well-worn pair is acceptable	\$0 – \$100
1	River Shoes	Sandals, water shoes, or old tennis shoes are all appropriate. Water or "Amphibious" shoes (brands like Astral or NRS) provide toe protection. Sandals must have an ankle strap to securely keep shoes on while swimming in whitewater (brands like Chacos, Texas, or Solomon). Meshy breathable running shoes work just fine. No Crocs.	\$0 - \$100
1	Camp Shoes	<i>Optional:</i> Must be light-weight and closed-toed. These can be the same as your running shoes. A bonus if they can be worn in the water for mountain lake swimming.	
Upper Body			
Number	Item	Description	Price Estimate
4	Sports bras	Synthetic with adequate support	\$20
5-6	T-Shirt	Lightweight synthetic or cotton	\$10 – \$30
2-3	Hiking Shirt	Lightweight synthetic. Can be a "sun hoody."	\$20-\$40
3-4	Long-sleeved top	Lightweight synthetic or wool. Used as a base layer.	\$20 – \$30
2	Long-sleeved top	Medium-weight wool or fleece	\$15-\$50+
1	Fleece Jacket	Mid- to heavy-weight synthetic fleece (full length zipper recommended).	\$50 – \$100
1	Synthetic insulated jacket	Synthetic insulated: mid-weight to heavy-weight synthetic fill. A hood is recommended.	\$100 – \$200
1	Raincoat with hood	Often referred to as "hard shell." Must be 100% waterproof (rather than only water-resistant). Waterproof/breathable fabrics are highly recommended. A hood is required.	\$125 +
Lower Body			
Number	Item	Description	Price Estimate



6	Underwear	Synthetic. Flat-stitched seams are recommended to reduce chafing. Optional: Bring an additional 1-2 pairs of cotton underwear to sleep in.	\$15 - \$20
2	Long Underwear Bottom	Lightweight synthetic (insulated leggings are okay as long as they are full length)	\$20 – \$30
1	Fleece Pants	<i>Optional:</i> Mid-weight fleece or expedition-weight long underwear bottoms	\$30 – \$75
2	Hiking/Climbing Pants	Synthetic or softshell	\$40 - \$75
2	Hiking Shorts	Synthetic. Comfortable to walk in (test for chafing on thigh or groin areas)	\$20 – \$30
1	River Shorts	Board Shorts, Swim Trunks, or Basketball style shorts (great for reducing chafing on boat material); for all genders. <i>Optional:</i> synthetic pants for while on the raft; great for sun protection.	\$20
1	Rain pants	Often referred to as “hard shell.” Must be 100% waterproof (rather than just water-resistant). Waterproof/breathable fabrics are highly recommended. Full side-zips are highly recommended.	\$30-100
Toiletries			
Number	Item	Description	Price Estimate
n/a	Prescription Eyewear	Contacts, solution and glasses. Be certain to have a backup to your primary eyewear (if you wear contacts, you must bring glasses)	n/a
n/a	Prescription Medications	MUST be declared during medical screening process. Students will not be allowed on course with undisclosed prescription medication. All prescription medications must be in their original containers. No loose medications please!	n/a
1	Menstrual Products	An ample supply. Changes in diet, schedule and exercise can unexpectedly induce menstruation on course	n/a
3	Toothbrush & Toothpaste	Travel-sized toothpaste	\$3
2	Lip Balm	SPF 20+	3
4	Sunscreen	Small tube, water/sweat-resistant, SPF 30+; no aerosol	5
2	Hand sanitizer	Alcohol based, 60%+ alcohol, 8oz	\$3
1	Bug Repellent	Smallest available; no aerosol	3
1	Shower Supplies	Small sizes for base days and travel	n/a
1	Small towel	Optional: A small towel for bathing before international travel	n/a
2-3	Baby wipes	<i>Optional.</i> Smallest package available.	
1	Lotion	<i>Optional.</i> Small bottle, unscented.	
1	Chafing Balm	<i>Optional</i> for those who chafe. A small tube or stick is	



		preferable to a large heavy one.	
<p>***If you would like to purchase the NW Outward Bound Toiletry Kit, choose the Toiletry Kit option when <u>paying online</u> or contact your Course Advisor. The kit includes travel-size toothpaste & toothbrush, hand sanitizer, bug repellent, lip balm and sunscreen.</p>			
Accessories			
Number	Item	Description	Price Estimate
1	Headlamp	LED-style only. No halogen bulbs.	\$30
4	EXTRA sets of batteries	For your headlamp. One set for every week you will be attending.	\$5
3-4	Bandanas	Cotton Bandana	\$5
3	Face Mask	Please bring at least 2 reusable masks for use on course and 1 for post-course. Must cover nose and mouth, and be secured either around the back of the head or behind the ears. These masks will be worn at different times throughout the course to mitigate the spread of communicable diseases. This is a required item. Please talk with your Course Advisor if you have any questions.	\$15
1	Watch with alarm	Waterproof and inexpensive	\$15 - \$30
2	32 oz. Water Bottles	Wide mouth and durable. DO NOT BRING DISPOSABLE WATER BOTTLES. Nalgene, Sigg, and Kleen Kanteen are great brands. <i>You may bring a hydration system such as Camelbak or Platypus in addition to 2 water bottles. Screw tops only - no flip-tops or straws.</i>	\$10 - \$30
1	Cell Phone, charger	Students will have intermittent access to their phones throughout course, but please do not rely upon it for photos or other needs.	n/a
1	Camera	<i>Optional.</i> Do not bring anything larger than a small point-and-shoot. A shared "course camera" will also be provided.	n/a
1	Sarong	<i>Optional.</i> A large cotton sarong is useful for changing in/out of your wet clothes on the river.	\$5
1	Journal/Field Note Book/Pens	<i>Optional:</i> Durable notebook for the field.	n/a
Other Necessary Items			
Number	Item	Description	Price Estimate
1	Travel Documents	Copies of your travel itinerary & personal identification. Copies of NW Outward Bound School's contact phone numbers in case of a travel delay. Passport and photo copies. Copies of your credit card contact phone numbers.	n/a



1	Travel Money	Reasons to bring cash for OB purposes: Airport snacks, checked luggage, memorabilia from the Outward Bound Student Store (hats, mugs, quote books, etc.). At course end, students are required to pay for lost or damaged gear due to neglect or abuse. Reasons to bring cash for travel purposes: memorabilia from India, personal snacks while travelling, etc.	\$50-\$100 for potential OB needs; \$100-\$200 personal
1	Money Belt	Important for keeping documents and money in a hidden location while traveling.	\$17-\$30
2	Town Clothes	Clothing for days in the city. Jeans, cotton t-shirts. Things that you would be comfortable wearing while traveling, sightseeing at heavily populated areas, and hanging out.	n/a

Gear List of Items Provided by Outward Bound

Outward Bound provides all necessary technical equipment including helmets, ice axes, ropes, wetsuits, dry suits, etc. We also provide a full sleeping system including a sleeping bag, sleeping bag liner, closed-cell foam sleeping pad, and ground sheet. Outward Bound provides backpacks, shelters, cooking equipment, and any soap or shampoo necessary for post-course clean-up before departure.

If you DO wish to bring your own backpack or sleeping system, here are our minimum standards for what MAY be acceptable for these items:

- Backpacks – need to have a minimum capacity of 80 liters, should carry 45-60 lbs. comfortably and be an internal frame design
- Sleeping bags – need to be made from synthetic materials (down fill is not appropriate for our purposes) and have a 0 degree warmth rating
- Sleeping pads – can be ¾ to full size in length. Can be made of closed-cell foam (Ridge-Rest or Z-Rest) or be inflatable (Therma-Rest). If you bring an inflatable pad you must bring a patch kit as well.

If you bring your own equipment, your instructors will inspect it during course start. If it does not meet our standards you can store it in a secure location at our base camp during your course.

FOOTWEAR: WHAT KIND OF FOOTWEAR DO YOU NEED?

<p>Backpacking Boots</p> 	<p>Backpacking boots are meant to offer ankle support and rigidity in order to comfortably negotiate uneven and varied terrain. Backpacking boots have shock-absorbing composite rubber soles, injection-molded midsole/shanks/plates and soft, yet supportive, leather uppers. Through the use of state-of-the-art materials, it is now possible to purchase a boot that is at once relatively lightweight, comfortable, supportive, and weatherproof and requires only a moderate break-in period. Boots must be either full-grained leather or have a full waterproof-breathable Gore-Tex liner.</p>	<p>Examples Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● La Sportiva Pamir ● La Sportiva Omega GTX ● Salewa Mountain Trainer GTX ● Asolo Powermatic 200 ● Asolo Fugitive Gore-Tex ● North Face Verbera Backpacker ● Scarpa Kinesis Pro ● Scarpa SL Active ● Scarpa Bhutan
<p>River Shoes</p>  <p>or...</p> 	<p>River shoes come in two different categories. You can choose from either when deciding what to bring.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. River Shoes – These are favored over sandals because of their full-foot protection and amphibious nature. Their mesh materials allow rapid drying and their sticky tread offers stability from slippery terrain. 2. River Sandals – these were created for river travel. They include a heel strap to keep the shoe snug to your foot when swimming aggressively, and a sturdy sole to protect your feet when walking in shallow water on sharp, slippery rocks. <p>OR Old athletic shoes – Can be used as long as they are meshy and breathable (waterlogged shoes cause foot problems)</p>	<p>Examples Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Astral Brewer ● Astral Rassler ● Astral Loyak ● Chaco Outcross ● Salomon Techamphibian 3 ● Chaco Yampa ● Keen Clearwater ● Teva Men’s Bomber Sandal

About Boots

There is no single piece of equipment that will make a bigger difference in keeping you comfortable on course than boots. The single-most important factor in choosing a boot is the fit. They won't feel like your old, broken-in running shoes or your flip-flops, but they should be comfortable! Here are some general things to keep in mind:

- Do not buy hunting, jungle or work boots – they simply won't stand up to the rigors of course. Purchase only boots specifically designed for backpacking or mountaineering (depending on your course)
- Try to buy your boots from a store that specializes in outdoor sports, and find a knowledgeable salesperson to help you with your decision



- If you have any questions, or want to know if a boot not listed here is appropriate, please contact your course advisor

Finding the Right Fit

A quality store that sells mountaineering or backpacking gear is the best place to start. Try on a variety of boots from various manufacturers – each company's boots fit differently. Some advice:

- Wear the sock system (liner socks + hiking socks) that you intend to wear on course
- Try boots on later in the day, as your feet tend to be largest at that time
- When trying on boots, make sure to walk around a lot – uphill, downhill, on edges
- Your boots should fit comfortably, but not be so big that your feet are swimming and not so small that your toes slam into the front of the boot when walking downhill
- If your boots do not have a waterproof liner, make certain to purchase waterproofing and treat your boots before you come to course
- Consider purchasing an aftermarket insole, such as Superfeet. These may help with boot comfort and support, depending on your individual foot
- Once you've purchased your boots, wear them! Taking the time to break them in before course is **critical** to your comfort and success on course

Remember you can always contact your Course Advisor with any questions! We want to help set you up for the most successful experience possible.