



2-5 Day Backpacking Guide

Troop 118

What Should I Bring Backpacking?

- This is a **general** guide on what to bring and how to pack for a multi-day, three-season trip where temps are above 32 degrees.
- The weather, length of trip, access to water and level of support will affect your gear choices. Ask a leader if you are unsure about what to bring.
- **You don't need to buy new gear** for our weekend trip. We have gear available to be borrowed. It's also fun to...
- **...Be creative!** You don't need to spend a lot of money on gear and backpacking specific food, especially if you're only out for a day or two near your home base.



Pack Light to Have More FUN!

Backpacking is fun! It's exciting to explore the outdoors carrying everything that you'll need to survive for days or even weeks.

But...Backpacking can be hard work and sometimes painful if done wrong. It's simple: The more you carry, the harder you have to work and the slower you go.

Going slower means you need more water and food and more fuel to cook that food. That means you need a bigger (and heavier) pack and more supplies. Now your pack will be heavier; and you will hike even slower!

Don't be this guy!



Pack with Purpose & a Plan

- **Use the checklists included in this document,** or make your own.
- **Pack for your specific trip - not an imaginary trip across Middle Earth.** A weekend trip lasts 2 nights with car support. Take only what you expect to use plus items to cover the contingencies and conditions specific to your trip.
- **Be prepared, but not over-prepared.** If you think you might not need something, you probably can leave it behind.
- **Plan on backpacking in patrols.** Don't duplicate gear. Plan meals together.
- **Shared gear** will be distributed so larger, older or fitter scouts carry more weight.
- **You'll hike together as a patrol.** Older scouts don't run ahead; younger scouts don't fall behind.



Backpacks

There's no need to go out and buy a backpack for this weekend. We have backpacks available for scouts to borrow! First year scouts will only carry a day pack with the day's food and their personal gear.

If you are carrying more than 15 pounds, you'll need a pack with some sort of frame (external or hidden internally) and a padded hip belt. The frame transfers weight to the padded belt so that you carry the weight on the bones and large muscles of your hips and buttocks - not the soft tissue of your shoulders.

By adjusting the straps and hip belt, you can transfer the load between your shoulders and hips to stay comfortable throughout your hike.

Book Bag



25-35 Liters < 15 lbs
no padded hip belt

Day or Overnight Packs
minimal or no frame



35-45 Liters - 15-35 lbs

Multi-day frame (3-7) Packs

External Frame



Internal Frame



45-65 Liters - 25-50 lbs

Expedition Sized Frame Pack



80+ Liters - 50-90 lbs

Sleeping Bags & Pads



- **For our weekend trip you do not need to buy a new sleeping bag.** Try to bring your smallest and lightest bag that will keep you warm at the temperatures expected. Don't bring your klondike derby bag if lows are only 50 degrees! Whether you are a warm or cold sleeper effects how warm of a sleeping bag you need.
- Down-filled bags are light and pack small, but they are expensive and don't do well when wet. The temp ratings on bags are usually the "keep you alive" rating, not "cozy-warm rating" so a 20 degree bag may only be comfy from 25-32 degrees. If the bag is old or is kept in a stuff sack all the time, the filling will compress and not be as warm.
- **Sleeping pads are required.** Your body compresses the sleeping bag under you and the cold earth will drain your body of warmth. An inexpensive closed cell foam pad (1/2-3/4" thick) will keep you warm. Kids can cut off the end to make it exactly their size. Inflatable pads (like a thermarest) have foam inside to keep you warm, but it's open celled so it compresses nicely and provides more cushioning.

10 Tips to Stay Warm at Night (without bringing a heavier sleeping bag)

1. **Make your bed** as soon as you make camp. Unroll your sleeping bag and shake it to make it fluffy again. Roll out your pad and give it time to inflate before bedtime (if it's inflatable).
2. **Change into fresh clothes** – The clothes you hike in will be damp – even if they don't feel like it!
3. **Wear a stocking cap.**
4. **Keep your nose and mouth OUTSIDE of the bag.** Moisture from your breathing can dampen your bag.
5. **Keep off the ground** by sleeping on an insulated sleeping pad. **This is ABSOLUTELY REQUIRED.**
6. **Fire up your engine** – Do some jumping jacks or other exercises to get warm right before climbing into your sleeping bag. Your body will act like a furnace and heat up your bag.
7. **Fuel up** – Non fatty, sugary bedtime snacks stoke your engine.
8. **Hydrate** – It's hard to stay warm if you're dehydrated. But don't drink so much you need to get up in the middle of the night!
9. **Sleeping bag socks** – Keep an extra thick pair of socks in your bag.
10. **Still cold? Put on your spare clothes - the dry ones.** Still cold? **Put on your jacket(s).** Do not put on your boots in your sleeping bag ;)



How to Pack it!



- Heavy stuff needs to be close to your back, centered on you body, nearer to your shoulders than your waist.
- Light stuff at top and bottom.
- Lunch, raingear, camera – things you need during the day - should be easy to access at top or in belt or outside pockets.

A Few Packing Tips

- Line your pack with a garbage bag to keep gear dry.
- Put your spare clothes in their own waterproof bag like a big ziploc.
- Remove packaging from food. It's just stuff to carry in and garbage to pack out.
- Keep your shared food together in one bag, separated into meals.
- Keep your snacks and lunch for the day in another, easy-to-access zip-loc bag.
- Keep fuel bottles away from food. Preferably in an outside pocket.
- Water is the heaviest item you carry so only carry what you need to get to the next refill spot.
- Try to keep everything INSIDE the pack, not dangling on the outside.
- When you stop - on the trail or at the end of the day - you'll cool down and will want to add a layer of clothes to stay warm. Have warmer layers packed on top within easy reach.



Happy Feet = Happy Hike

- Leave the heavy boots at home if you pack less than 30 pounds and the you're hiking on well trod trails.
- Sneakers with knobby tread, trail runners, hiking shoes or lightweight boots should be enough support for on-trail use on our weekend hike. No sandals or court shoes with smooth treads. Lightweight street running shoes also may not work if they have super flexible soles.
- Always start the day in dry socks. A merino wool/spandex blend is best.
- Feet wet or feel a blister coming on? Change into dry socks at midday.
- Prone to blisters? Wear a silk or polypropylene liner sock under your hiking socks.
- Immediately stop when you feel a hotspot. Put tape or moleskin over the hotspot to prevent a blister from forming.
- Clean rocks and debris out of your shoes frequently.
- Wear gaiters to keep debris from getting into your shoes in the first place.



Learn all you need to know [about feet](#) (ugly foot pics btw. Minute :28 has good sock system info., Min :35 great foot care info, blisters at min. :42, blister kit at :45)

Everyone Loves Checklists!



Optional:

- Small camp pillow (or use your sleeping bag's stuff sack filled with clothes to save weight)

Learn More: [Tips for getting a good night sleep in the backcountry](#)

Checklist #1: Pack and Sleep Gear Goal Weight: 7-12lbs

Gear	Wt.	Got it?
Backpack		
Sleeping bag		
Sleeping pad		
1 gallon ziploc for current day food storage		
Sleeping bag stuff sack		
20 gallon garbage bag for pack liner		
Total weight:		



Gear Checklist #2: Worn and Carried

Goal Weight: --

Optional:

- Camera
- Hiking poles. Some like one, two, none or a stick.
- Sunglasses (high altitude, snow or desert)
- Mid-weight thermal top if it's cool.

Learn More: Backpacking is an athletic activity. Dress accordingly and LAYER. Dig deeper into what to wear with this [detailed guide to planning what to wear](#).

Gear	Wt.	Got it?
Non-cotton shirt (like the Bartle shirts)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Synthetic pants or shorts		<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-cotton socks (lightweight wool/lycra, nylon blends best)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-cotton briefs		<input type="checkbox"/>
Hat		<input type="checkbox"/>
Trail runners, hiking shoes or lightweight boots		<input type="checkbox"/>
Bandana		<input type="checkbox"/>
Map & Compass		<input type="checkbox"/>
Watch		<input type="checkbox"/>
Total Weight:		



Gear Checklist #3: Packed Clothing

Goal Weight: 3-4 lbs

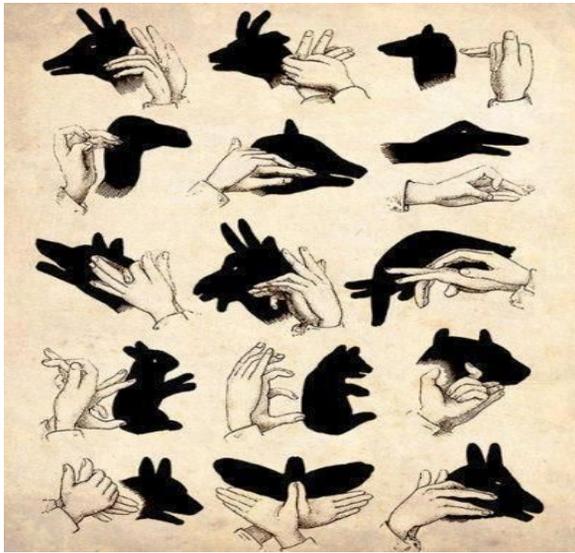
Optional depending on conditions:

- Glove liners, cold weather gloves or waterproof shell gloves/mitts to wear over your glove liners
- Shell bottoms (breathable rain pants for rainy day hikes)
- Sleep clothes (required in wet weather). Also can use base layers to sleep in.
- For longer trips: camp sneakers/sandals, extra briefs, 3rd pair socks (required in wet weather)
- Spare shorts/pants for messy campers or wet weather. Zip-off hiking pants are a nice option.
- Insulated jacket if it's really cold.

Learn More: [Learn the basics of layering at REI](#), [Raingear Fundamentals](#), [Sleeping Clothes](#)

Gear	Wt.	Got it?
Spare t-shirt (non-cotton is best)		
Synthetic base layer shirt (if cooler than 45)		
Synth. base layer bottoms (if cooler than 45)		
Spare briefs (non-cotton is best)		
Spare socks		
Stocking cap		
Puff/fleece vest, pullover or jacket		
Rain shell (or poncho in warm weather)		
Waterproof bag (large ziploc) to keep clothes dry		
Sleep socks (keep in your sleeping bag)		
Total Weight:		

Ultra-Lightweight Entertainment!



Learn More

[BSA Backpacking Merit Badge Pamphlet](#) (2007 edition here) - Goes into more detail of topics covered in this document plus good info on safety and leave no trace practices. And the requirements for the badge of course!

[Philmont Shakedown Guides - Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#)

[The Ultimate Hiker's Gear Guide](#): Lightweight Tools & Techniques to Hit the Trail by Andrew Skurka or visit <http://andrewskurka.com/>

[Allen & Mike's Really Cool Backpackin' Book](#), also "Lighten Up" and "Ultralight Backpackin' Tips" - 3 fun books with cartoons!

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