

Wilderness Leadership

Expedition Packing List 2024



Please take the time to carefully read through this WLE Packing List. Every item on the list is **necessary** for you to experience a safe and comfortable wilderness expedition. Please do **not** bring additional equipment as it will contribute to a heavier and slower trip experience. Before departure, all equipment will be reviewed by instructors to determine whether it meets or exceeds our requirements.

For any required clothing or equipment that you do not have, we suggest either borrowing from friends or family; buying used from a thrift store, Marketplace or Kijiji; or buying new (e.g MEC, SAIL, Canadian Tire, etc.). Coldwater also has a small selection of equipment and clothing that we let students rent or borrow if they are missing items but sizing is limited. If you wish to borrow an item please make sure to contact us at least 2 weeks prior to the trip to make sure we have what you are looking for and reserve it for you. When you arrive, we will issue you a canoe pack, a sleeping pad and a ground sheet. Your canoe pack will fit all of your personal clothing and equipment along with some group gear.

LAYERING SYSTEM

We divide our backcountry clothing into three main categories: base-layer, mid-layer and outer layer. Using this layering system allows clothing items to be worn together or separately, achieving optimum body temperature control. **Please do not bring any cotton products on this trip.** When wet, cotton offers no insulation, draws heat away from the body and takes a substantial time to dry. Instead, find synthetic (polyester 'fleece', polypropylene, capilene, nylon, lycra, etc.) or natural fibres (wool, leather, canvas). These materials dry faster and maintain insulation when wet. To reiterate: **NO COTTON**

CLOTHING		
BASE LAYER		
The innermost layer is critical because it is in direct contact with your skin. Base layers should transport moisture away from the skin and disperse it to the air or outer layers where it can evaporate. Because water is a good heat conductor, damp garments draw precious heat away from your body. Cotton holds water while synthetics and wool allow moisture to pass through. These are light and strong, absorb very little water and are quick to dry. Base layers should fit snugly without being constricting.		
Socks	6-8 pairs	Mid-weight wool or synthetic socks (NO cotton) You can also bring liner socks to wick away moisture and prevent blistering.
Underwear	5-7 pairs	Synthetic required
Sports Bra	2-3	Synthetic
T-shirts	2-3	Athletic or sport shirts work best.
Long Underwear	1	Wool or synthetic blend
Long-Sleeved Shirt	1	Wool or synthetic blend
MIDDLE INSULATING LAYERS		
The mid-layer provides insulation between the base and outer layer, continuing the transportation of moisture from the inner layer. To slow heat loss, this layer must be capable of retaining the warmth generated by your body. Wool and synthetics such as polyester (fleece) or polypropylene are well suited to this. As with the inner layer, this layer should be snug but not constricting. Additional features, such as pit zippers and full-length front zippers, allow venting and are optional.		

Bug Shirt	1	A lightweight, loose fitting shirt that helps keep the bugs away. Old dress shirts with a collar work well or a synthetic Columbia style shirt.
Mid-weight long-sleeve	1-2	Wool or synthetic blend
Fleece Jacket or Sweater	1-2	Mid or heavy-weight fleece jacket or a wool jacket or sweater. NOT a cotton hoodie. Ex. a fleece long sleeve and a synthetic puffy.
Shorts	1-2 pairs	Athletic or nylon, quick dry. Can double as a swimsuit for men.
Long Pants	2 pairs	Synthetic blend, NO jeans or cotton sweatpants.

OUTER LAYER

The outer layer protects you from the elements and should allow air to circulate and excess moisture to escape. Since we travel through environments that are prone to severe weather, a waterproof (coated) rain jacket will be adequate. A shell made of a breathable and waterproof fabric will protect you from wind and rain and allow water vapour to escape.

Rain Gear (Hooded Jacket and Pants)	1 set	A durable, roomy, waterproof/breathable garment that will fit over your other layers. Gore-Tex or another 2-3 layer waterproof/breathable reputable fabric is recommended. Sweating that occurs while wearing non-breathable rain gear (such as yellow fisherman raincoats) will make you almost as wet as if you did not have a rain jacket on at all. We suggest sizing your rain gear to be able to wear over your other layers, and if it covers below your waist it is a plus.
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ADDITIONAL REQUIRED CLOTHING

Poly liner socks	1-2 pairs	Thin pair of liner socks for hiking. These socks will help to wick away moisture and prevent blistering
Swimsuit	1	Girls: One piece or tankini. Guys: No speedos, please. An extra pair of shorts can substitute for a swimsuit.
Bandana/Buff	1-2	Cotton is fine
Hat	1	Baseball or sun hat
Bug Head Net/Shirt	1	One that covers your head
Toque	1-2	Wool or synthetic
Gloves	1 pair	Wool or synthetic for paddling on cold days. Neoprene paddling gloves or thin work gloves work well.
Work Gloves	1 pair	Leather gloves to be worn when working around the fire and gathering wood.

FOOTWEAR

Shoes (Flimsy and unsupportive “water” shoes and “skate” shoes are NOT acceptable)	3 pairs	1 pair of “wet” shoes. These will be worn the majority of the time while you are paddling and portaging. Old running shoes that allow water to drain work best, and they must be closed toed and supportive.
		1 pair of “dry” camp shoes. These will be kept dry to wear at campsites and on hikes. Must also be closed toed; running shoes or trail hikers work well.
		1 pair of midweight hiking boots are recommended but hiking shoes will be accepted. These will be worn the majority of the time, should have ankle support,

		good traction and fit you well. The more time you spend in the shoes before the trip the better.
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PERSONAL ITEMS

Mummy Sleeping Bag	1	Temperature rating of at least -7 degrees Celsius with a mummy hood . Please note that down fill bags are not suitable for the wet conditions we encounter. Coldwater can issue you a quality sleeping bag if requested at programs@coldwatercanada.org
Sleeping Pad - Closed-Cell Foam or Inflatable	1	We recommend that you bring a small inflatable sleeping pad for comfort while sleeping. It should compress smaller than a sleeping bag. If you do not have one, you may borrow a closed-cell foam sleeping pad from Coldwater.
Toiletry Items	1 each	Toothpaste, toothbrush, lip balm, biodegradable soap - additional items might include: facecloth, wet wipes, feminine hygiene products
Moleskin	1 pkg	Blister protection and treatment for feet
Sunscreen	1	Small tube, SPF 30+
Headlamp	1	Headlamp is preferred over handheld flashlight
Batteries	3 sets	1 set for your headlamp, 2 spare sets (all sets mandatory)
Towel	1	Non-cotton quick dry towel, microfibre cloth or synthetic car shammys work well
Bible	1	Preferably small with Old and New Testament
Journal/ Notebook	1	Bring 2 pens/pencils to write with
Durable Spoon	1	Could be a camping spoon or a metal one from your kitchen
Plastic Travel Mug	1	Used for hot drinks and must have a lid
Small Folding Knife	1	10 cm max folding blade length
Nalgene Bottle	2	At least one bottle needs to be 1L wide mouth to fit our filtration system. If you do not have one, we have Coldwater Nalgenes available for purchase
Sunglasses	1	We recommend bringing a retaining strap so they do not get lost

PACKING AND STORAGE

Backpack	1	65L or larger with an internal or external frame to fit all your personal items and group gear.
Stuff Sacks	2-4	Helpful for organizing clothes. One large stuff sack (approx 30-40 L) can be used to hold all of your clothes. Smaller stuff sacks are great for organizing smaller clothing items.
Ziplock Bags	4-8	Small and large for waterproofing your Bible, journal, toiletries, camera, headlamp, extra batteries and other items
Garbage Bags	3	Heavy-duty black garbage bags for waterproofing gear. Industrial ones work well.

OPTIONAL ITEMS

Hydration Bladder	1	Most hiking backpacks have a place for this water system with a hose and can be used in addition to a Nalgene
Trekking Poles	1 set	Very helpful to stabilize you with a pack on and will reduce the strain on your knees. Collapsible poles are the best option but ski poles can work.
Backpack cover	1	Some backpacks will come with a waterproof cover built into the bottom
Gaitors	1 pair	To protect your feet and lower legs from moisture or debris
Light Nylon Windbreaker	1	If you do not have a windbreaker, your rain jacket is a good substitute.
Digital Camera	1	Bring extra batteries and a protective case. Coldwater cannot ensure the safety of this item so an inexpensive, disposable, or waterproof camera is recommended. Also bring ziplock bags to waterproof it! NO phones as a camera.
Down/ synthetic Puffy	1	For extra warmth
Vest	1	For extra warmth
Sleeping bag liner	1	Silk or synthetic sleeping bag liner that adds warmth
Small Collapsible Camp Chair	1	Like a <i>Crazy Creek</i> , <i>Helinox</i> , 3-legged stool or similar equivalent
Belt	1	If needed for your pants
Insect Repellent	1	Liquid spray or squirt bottle. No aerosol cans!
Thermacell	1	Portable mosquito repeller - highly recommended!
Earplugs	1 pair	For light sleepers

CLOSING COMMENTS

Please note that you will be asked to leave any phones, music devices, etc. at our basecamp. Your equipment and clothing help to create a safe and enjoyable trip for you and your group members. If you have any questions, or if you are purchasing equipment specifically for the course and would like more information regarding any of the items on the Packing List, feel free to contact us at programs@coldwatercanada.org