

Backpacking Checklist

EQUIPMENT

- ___ **Back Pack:** 3000-4500 cu. in. or so, you don't need to fill the thing up but if you do go longer or need more weight small is bad.
- ___ **Sleeping Pad:** Therma rest style & thick are nice but foam works too. Nothing requiring a pump.
- ___ **Sleeping Bag:** Appropriate for weather could be a fleece blanket could be -40 mummy bag. BTW, the bag ratings are never as warm as they allude to. Keep that in mind.
- ___ **Tent:** lightweight & appropriate for weather remember the extra tarp & string. Smaller is good but larger is nicer. I have a really light small for 30 bucks at I can't remember where. But nowhere near as cool or expensive as a North face or LL Bean but works the same.
- ___ **Small stove:** I like Brunton raptor easy, small, light (MSR good but you have to prime and play with fuel, lame!). Although make sure you purchase your fuel canisters before you go cause the local hardware store or gas station may not have them.
- ___ **Stove Fuel:** I try to cook on the fire mostly but bring as much fuel as you need. Hence stainless steel pots, pans, knives & forks. Stainless from goodwill works great
- ___ **1 medium pot w/lid & pot handle:** I prefer all metal (stainless) no plastic/wood handles so you can put it in the fire, found a pot and a bowl that fits on top like a lid at good, all stainless under \$8.00. You can lose it, abuse it or leave it and not look back with regret. Anything more expensive and I think you're wasting your money.
- ___ **1 medium bowl:** I prefer all metal (stainless) no plastic/wood handles so you can put it in the fire. Would like to add that stainless, although not completely stainless, is quite impervious to any type of stupidity despite what it looks like afterward.
- ___ **Fork, knife, spoon:** I prefer small stainless, nice if it folds together. You can pay \$20 for a titanium spork if you want to, that's your business. Regular silverware from your kitchen works fine.
- ___ **Map:** of the entire area, tell others were you are going (show them on a map they have) and when you're supposed to get back. This way they know approximately where to find the bodies, lol, just kidding.
- ___ **Compass:** make sure it works and you know how to use it before you go (cheap compasses don't work!).
- ___ **Flashlight / Headlamp:** water resistant & extra batteries. I use phoenix with head adapter \$50. You can go more expensive but why? I use Enelope batteries too, cheap, easy, rechargeable, and works in cold weather, get a hand charger and/or car charger adapter for them and you'll always have chargeable batteries.
- ___ **Sunglasses:** Mine have my prescription in them; polarized and anti-glare is what you're looking for.
- ___ **First-Aid Kit:** Ankle wrap, moleskin, painkillers (Excedrin), antihistamines, band aids, bug-bite-relief (6 most used things). Any worse and you need to get out of the woods. Emergency blankets (why?) dress for the occasion, infrared blankets not going to stop you from freezing to death especially when you could have brought a real blanket. Fishing string & hook why(?) and good luck(!) unless you planned on it before hand. Consider superglue, gorilla tape type things but don't rely on them for anything really important.

- ___ **Pocket Knife & MultiTools:** Some sort of multitool or pocket knife thing. I have a Swiss champ & leatherman. Only bring one unless your into them. I prefer the leatherman (got from a bum for \$5) because it has a pair of full sized pliers on it. Multitool with knife, pointy poker and screw drivers works wonders. More complicated is extra crap.
- ___ **Bowie Knife or Saw:** Some sort of multi-tool and a large bowie knife (sharp) for wood processing. Do NOT prefer hatchets, dangerous, not as light or versatile as a large bowie and not as good as an axe and an axe is too much. Hardware store saw can be good too. Those lighter ones with replaceable blades for cutting down small trees or tree limbs.
- ___ **Fire starter:** 2 different waterproof ways to start a fire (water proof matches, flint & steel, or fire-steel) one always on you the other (usually the bulkier one) somewhere in the pack. You can get magnesium fire steel stick but remember you need a knife to use it same with the regular fire steel stick and flint both of which will also need small tinder to catch the sparks.
- ___ **Water/Filter/Bottles:** 3 liters on average a day for non active types I use a steripen (batteries work w/flashlight AA) and a clear stream but this is Wisconsin/Michigan (know how to find water). Also water bags instead of bottles is a great idea when backpacking, saves space. I also like stainless water bottles, can defrost in fire or boil in bottle and they're tough, not like nalgene plastic cracks easy when dropped, can't be around fire, also no seepage. I have 2-3 24oz stainless steel bottles and they rock!
- ___ **Whistle:** loud communication device (I bring a coyote call but not necessarily a good idea in wolf territory) also have hand held radio *Midland gxt1000 GMRS/FRS* something, 32miles weather channel, etc... don't forget your charged cell phone as an alternative to a radio if it gets reception.
- ___ **Insect clothing or repellents:** 100% deet, just use less and a head net even better than deet on the face.
- ___ **Sunburn preventatives:** Depends on the weather and your skin type.
- ___ **Shovel/trowel:** Depends on conditions a trowel is needed for pooping. A shovel may work for snow as well. Trowel is light, shovel starts getting heavy.
- ___ **Hand Sanitizer:** Any type of hand sanitizer could work the gel stuff etc... I like 91% isopropyl alcohol, I have also made a stove out of soda cans that burns 91% isopropyl alcohol but I don't really use it much cause it's not as practical for cooking better for warming things up.
- ___ **Toilet paper:** Leaves work well but sometimes you like knowing you're clean. Also, baby wipes score high in that area. Remember you have to properly dispose of whatever shit you create.

CLOTHING

- ___ **Underwear/Socks:** Synthetic, spandex, you know what you like. Cotton sucks when wet and I would bring extra pairs cause underwear & socks are light to carry and you want to be comfortable.
- ___ **Pants:** Synthetic, pants that zip off into shorts awesome, preferably cargo. I like tactical pants or milspec type stuff. Cotton sucks when wet.
- ___ **Shirt:** Under armor type is best, if I can get away with long sleeve and loose will cause it will stop mosquitoes tight shirts don't. If its hot short sleeve may have to do. It has to have sleeves though otherwise backpack straps chafe shoulders. \$50+ dollar shirts are silly, unless it's for show or your climbing Mt. Everest but in Wisconsin you can find the same thing cheaper? At Kohls I got 96% polyester 4% spandex shirt = almost the exact same thing as Under Armour, paid \$9.00 for a single shirt (Fila brand).
- ___ **Thermal underwear top:** I like wool and poly mix, cotton sucks when wet. Remember you don't have to wear it just have it with.
- ___ **Thermal underwear bottom w/socks:** I like wool and poly mix, cotton sucks when wet. Don't forget the wool socks and synthetic liner sock for comfort. Again wool will chafe in a boot and could rash or irritate the skin.
- ___ **Gloves:** I bring work type gloves but also dependent on the weather. Could be skiing gloves or wool mittens if it's cold. You get what you pay for with gloves.
- ___ **Boots:** Hiking or otherwise depends on weather & terrain. Don't cheap out on your feet \$80+. Make sure they're broken in before you go and have a high ankle. Traditional/Military boots are questionable not always as nice as a pair of hikers. Skis if going cross country but Snow shoes, in Wisconsin maybe Michigan? You're better off with gators.
- ___ **Sandals:** Could be a water shoe but not for hiking for getting wet or when you're done hiking and want to air out the feet. Water shoe no good for this.
- ___ **Swim gear:** whatever you need keep it to a minimum shorts can double as hiking shorts this is bonus.
- ___ **Hat:** Depends on the weather, wool balaclava (cold) or synthetic boonie (hot) are my first choices. Also, boonies are great for mosquitoes and rain if it's not cotton. Remember light colors deflect heat. Dark absorbs. Also, wool can chafe your skin and an extra layer of synthetic balaclava will keep you even warmer.
- ___ **Fleece or thermal under jacket:** Depends on weather: Don't cheap out on the warmth and dryness on this one. In this case \$150+ is NOT silly. North face, etc.. could be a regular sweatshirt if it's summer though.
- ___ **Shell:** Top and Pant if necessary. Depends on weather. Don't cheap out on the warmth and dryness on this one. In this case \$150+ is NOT silly. North face, etc..
- ___ **Para cord:** 550 cord has excellent weight, strength, size ratio. I carry at least 100ft. enough to hang your food in a tree. Also, might want to consider a bag to hang food in so your backpack doesn't have to be in the tree all night. But really the cord is key. Easy to work with, incredibly useful

FOOD OPTIONS

Breakfast:

- ___ **Crap to mix into your water:** Coffee, Tea, Carnation instant breakfast, Hot chocolate etc...
- ___ **Oatmeal cream of wheat (quaker instant):** Cereal needs milk, we're not taking milk with.
- ___ **Granola, cliff, etc:** whatever, not loaded with candy type bars you like.
- ___ **Dried fruit:** whatever you like nice to put into oatmeal or cream of wheat.

Lunch:

- ___ **Gorp:** aka trail mix: nuts, seeds, dried fruit, m&ms
- ___ **Bagels:** Don't worry about food weight you can always eat your burdens away critters are always willing to help as well.
- ___ **Jerky, salami and crackers:** already dry no refrigeration.
- ___ **Peanut butter & honey:** Don't forget the bread.

Dinner:

- ___ **Instant soup** (Lipton's Chicken Noodle & Cream of Chicken)
- ___ **Freeze-dried dinners:** Mountain House, Lasagna, Spaghetti, Pasta Primavera, Chili Mac, Noodles & Chicken, Chicken Polynesian, Beef Stroganoff or anything freeze dried or ready to mix with water.
- ___ **Rice:** Whole grain, brown or Indian is the best for you but nothing taste better than Jasmine or sticky. Time consuming though consider instant.
- ___ **Instant mashed potatoes:** Great idea. Potatoes U gratin for the ambitious types. No milk though.
- ___ **Mac & Cheese:** Or any noodle with a taste powder mix with it. Remember butter is hard to bring but olive oil isn't. Or just noodles and parmesan is good.
- ___ **Salt, pepper:** onion powder, garlic powder, pre-mixed, ground dried herbs, pepper (red or black)
whatever your favorite seasonings are small container.

Good snacks:

- ___ I like going to the local European Homemade sausage deli and getting smoked sausage especially polish. No refrigeration needed and good.
- ___ Tiger's Milk Bars
- ___ Licorice Sticks
- ___ Kudos
- ___ Bear Valley Meal Packs
- ___ Power Bars (Berry)
- ___ Chewing Gum

- ___ Gatorade
- ___ Bagels, English muffins
- ___ String cheese (individually wrapped)
- ___ Chocolate & candy
- ___ Dried fruit (raisins, apples, pears, peaches, bananas)
- ___ Dried meat and fish
- ___ Giant pretzels

- ___ Raw fruit / vegetables
- ___ Nuts
- ___ Pop Tarts
- ___ Fig/Peach/Apple Newtons
- ___ Crackers

Random ITEMS

- ___ **Toothbrush:** put it in something so it doesn't get dirty.
- ___ **Toothpaste:** small container
- ___ **Biodegradable soap/scotch bright:** I'd use this for everything clothes, hands, hair, pots pans, etc.. non-scented. No, patuli doesn't count as soap.
- ___ **Medical needs:** Anything medical things you might need, like for asthma, prescriptions, allergies, conditions, etc....
- ___ **Light sticks:** 2 eight hour light sticks in case of emergency
- ___ **Towels:** small absorbent towels. Good HQ camping towels can get expensive but are nice. I just got micro fleece shammy thingies from ACE hardware. Cheap and absorb water.