



## Required Clothing List What to Bring on Course

### Packing for Backcountry Travel

Backcountry travel means you can and, for your comfort, should carry a lot less than you do in the regular world; most experienced backcountry 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.

### Your COBS Packing List:

- Colorado Outward Bound School provides other necessary equipment not on this list, including **stoves, sleeping pads, sleeping bags, backpacks, cookware, sleeping tarps, ropes, dry bags, and lifejackets.**
- There are no additional fees for the use of our equipment, but if our equipment is lost or damaged beyond normal wear and tear, you will be charged for the replacement.
- Pack your clothing and gear in a duffel bag or suitcase. You will keep personal items such as clean clothes (for your return trip home) and valuables (cell phones, electronic devices, and wallets) in your bag or suitcase while you are on course. These items are kept at our base camp facility in a locked storage area while you are on course. Please leave unnecessary items at home.
- Once on the course, your instructors will help you select from your luggage the best combination of items for you. They will take into account your personal gear and the group gear you will be required to carry, and then balance it against your pack weight, physical size, and the average temperature for the time of year.
- Since this list must accommodate ALL the weather conditions you may encounter and the wide range of individual preferences and body temperatures of our students, it is very likely you will not use every single item on this list. One option is to leave the tags on any items you purchase for this course in the event they were not used on the trip and you would like to return them but please note your retailers' return policies!
- **Please bring everything on the list!** If there are items not mentioned on this list you feel you will need, or you have concerns about cost and want help strategizing for less expensive options, call and ask your course advisor.

### Clothing Systems:

- **Layering:**
  - *First layer*—This layer is worn next to your skin. Synthetic and wool materials pull moisture away from your body so your sweat won't cool you down too much and make you cold.
  - *Mid layer(s)*— the insulation layer (warm tops, socks, fleece pants). This should be thick fluffy sweaters and jackets that will trap and store the heat your body is producing to keep you warm.
  - *Outer layer*—the shell layer (jackets, pants, rain gear). Adding an outer wind and/or waterproof layer makes sure that the wind does not steal all that built up heat and all your insulating layers do not get soaked.
- **Hard Shell:** These are materials that are waterproof, windproof, and breathable and generally worn when it's raining, snowing, or really windy.
- **Soft Shell:** These are materials that are water and wind resistant, but not always waterproof. They are more breathable than hard shell materials.
- **Fleece:** Great insulator and dries quickly, but not always wind proof. In windy conditions, you'll often wear your hard shell over your fleece to combine the wind-resistance and insulation.
- **Wool:** Natural material that, unlike cotton, keeps you warm when wet. It's a bit heavier than some of the synthetic fabric. As a bonus, wool is naturally odor and bacteria resistant.
- **Synthetic:** Most items listed here should not be cotton, because cotton absorbs water, dries slowly, and steals your warmth when wet. Recommended non-cotton options are wool, capilene, poly-propylene, polyester, fleece, acrylic, rayon, Polartec, Thinsulate, COOLMAX, and nylon.



## Medications:

- All prescription medications must be listed in the applicant's medical record, must be approved by your course advisor prior to course, and must accompany the participant on course. Participants may not be permitted to begin their course without their required medications OR with new medications not approved by your course advisor.
- All medications (prescription, non-prescription, and OTC) must be in their original containers with the prescription label intact. The prescription label is documentation of the dosage directions. If possible, bring a double supply.

## What to Wear While Travelling:

We recommend you wear course clothing and boots while travelling and bring all essentials (prescription meds, insurance card copy, cash) in a small accessible bag. Being dressed for course will also further the efficiency on your first day.

## Items Not Allowed On Course:

- Electronics—cell phones, iPods, etc. These may be brought for travel to and from course but will need to be stored at the base before going into the field.
- Deodorant, makeup, shampoo, conditioner, perfume, cologne, etc.
- Illegal drugs, marijuana, alcohol, vaporizers, and tobacco products of any kind.
- Any prescription drugs not cleared by your course advisor.
- Weapons of any kind.

## Weather During Your Course:

Despite any recommendations of what is "normal weather," our course environments are characterized by unpredictable weather. Please check the weather prior to your course for Leadville, CO at [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com) to have an idea of what to expect, but please bring everything on this list since weather patterns can change quickly.



## Required Items - PLEASE BRING ALL ITEMS IN THIS SECTION

**\*\*Some items on the list are suggested for certain sections of the course and will not be used as much during other sections, while other items will be used during each section of the course\*\***

**!** An exclamation point, “!” in the left column indicates a high priority item, worth investing more money in, even if that means spending less money on other items. See “Cost Saving” notes on page 1.

**2nd** A “2nd” in this column means it is a likely item to find at a second hand or consignment store.

**#** = How many of an item to bring. A “+” indicates you can bring more if you’d like.

Top Layers - Required				
!	2nd	#	Item	Description
		2+	Sports Bra	Synthetic is preferable to cotton.
	2nd	5+	T shirts – Synthetic & Cotton	At least 2 Merino wool or synthetic (poly-pro) t-shirt for use as a base layer and hiking in the mountains. At least 3 other t-shirts (synthetic or cotton) to be used for time spent traveling or time spent at base.
	2nd	1	Long Sleeve Base Layer	Thin synthetic or merino wool shirt.
	2nd	1	Long Sleeve Mid Layer	Medium weight wool or expedition weight polypropylene / Capilene®/ 100 weight fleece, etc.
	2nd	2	Long Sleeve Sun Shirt	Loose, light colored for sun protection at rock camp, on the river, in the canyons, and on travel days. Instructors prefer sun hoodies or
	2nd	1	Fleece/Softshell/thin Puffy Jacket	200 or 300 weight Fleece; or a thin synthetic puffy jacket, Example: the Patagonia Nano Puff <a href="#">Women’s</a> and <a href="#">Men’s</a> . Different options provide different warmth- to-weight ratios, durability, and costs. No matter your choice, a hood on this layer is great!
		1	Puffy Jacket	Expedition weight Synthetic or down thick puffy jacket. Sometimes called belay jackets, we recommend synthetic.
!		1	Waterproof/Breathable Jacket	Must fit over all your other layers. We recommend a high quality, waterproof breathable fabric. The best balance of cost and performance we’ve found is the REI XeroDry GTX Jacket <a href="#">Women’s</a> and <a href="#">Men’s</a> . **See more detailed notes on rain gear



Bottom Layers – Required				
!	2nd	#	Item	Description
		6+	Underwear	For males, we recommend briefs or boxer briefs. Synthetic recommended, but cotton is okay. For females, we recommend at least one pair of cotton nighttime underwear (for breathability); the rest can be either synthetic or cotton.
		2	Shorts	Quick drying; for potential swimming days, and river section.
	2nd	1	Travel Pants	For travel days. Jeans, slacks, etc.
		1	Base Layer Bottoms	Thin long underwear – synthetic.
	2nd	1	Medium Weight Pants	Medium weight wool or 200 weight pile/fleece – for hanging around in camp at night when it is cold.
!		1	Softshell Pants	Medium weight (i.e. REI Co-op Activator V2 <a href="#">Men's</a> & <a href="#">Women's</a> ). The most used on the entire list – for hiking,
!		1	Shell Pants	Similar to your rain jacket, we recommend your rain pants be waterproof breathable. The REI Co-op Rainier <a href="#">Men's</a> and <a href="#">Women's</a> pants have the added bonus of full side zips. **See more detailed notes on rain gear
	2nd	1	Insulated Pants	These pants can be down, fleece, or synthetic insulation Full side zips on these pants are useful in the backcountry. Example: <a href="#">Mountain Hardware Compressor Pants</a> or <a href="#">REI Co-op Teton Fleece Pants</a>

### \*\*More info on Rain/Shell Jackets and Pants\*\*

Your shell layers are water and wind resistant outer layers (jacket and pants). After footwear, shell clothing is the most critical part of your clothing system. It can make or break your experience. If you have to cut costs elsewhere to invest more in your shell jacket and pants, we recommend doing that. All of the options below are under \$400 each, but you could easily spend up to \$600 for a rain jacket.

All rainwear should be a **WATERPROOF AND BREATHABLE** fabric, not merely water resistant. It must have a hood. Gore-Tex, a brand name fabric that many manufacturers use, comes in differing layer amounts, from 1 to 3-layer. 3-layer is the waterproof version, and the most expensive. For this course, 2.5 layers or 3 layers are recommended. Many companies make their own version of this waterproof, breathable fabric that is of high quality. For example, REI uses eVent; Patagonia uses H2no; and The North Face has Hy Vent. Please call your course advisors if you have any questions regarding proper rainwear for your course.

Here are some examples of acceptable rain jacket models, and approximate retail prices:

- [Outdoor Research Foray Jacket](#) - \$215
- [REI XeroDry GTX Jacket](#) - \$160
- [Outdoor Research Guardian II Jacket](#) - \$199

Here are some examples of acceptable pants, and approximate retail prices:

- [Marmot Precip Eco Pants](#) - \$100
- [Outdoor Research Foray Pants](#) - \$175
- [REI Rainier Pants](#) - \$90
- [Arc'teryx Beta SL Rainpants](#) - \$299

For more rainwear info: <http://www.rei.com/learn/expert-advice/rainwear-how-it-works.html>



Head & Hand Layers - Required				
!	2nd	#	Item	Description
	2nd	1	Warm Hat	Wool or fleece – no tassels or brims as it must be able to fit under a helmet.
	2nd	1	Neck Gaiter or Balaclava	Synthetic. Buffs work well.
	2nd	1	Baseball Cap or Visor	Necessary for sun protection; full-brimmed hats do not work well with backpacks. We recommend a crushable synthetic visor.
	2nd	1	Liner Gloves	Synthetic or wool - for hiking, and doing fine-motor skills while in camp. Example: <a href="#">The North Face FlashDry Glove</a> Liners
!		1	Midweight Glove	Should be insulated and weather resistant. To wear when the temps are a little colder when hiking and in camp. Example: <a href="#">The North Face Apex+ Gloves</a>
!		1	Heavy Gloves or Mittens	For wearing while mountaineering in snowy, cold conditions. Waterproof outer shell that can be worn over your gloves or mittens, such as the <a href="#">Outdoor Research Meteor Mitt</a> .
!		2+	Face Mask Fabric style	To be worn at course start, during social distancing, during travel days, while preparing food, while in close proximity to others, and when requested by COBS staff. Should be washable, consist of at least 2 layers of fabric and securely cover the mouth and nose. N95s can also be brought to supplement washable masks.
		2+	Face Mask – Tubular style (buff type)	To be worn when close to others during activities. Carried on the wrist throughout course for accessibility.

Footwear Layers - Required				
!	2nd	#	Item	Description
		2	Heavy-weight Mountaineering Socks	Heavy Wool or Synthetic – important for very cold days. Make sure you fit new boots with the thickest socks.
		4	Medium Weight Hiking or Ski Socks	Wool or Synthetic – base hiking sock; ski socks are nice because they pull up to the knees and provide extra warmth.
		5+	Cotton Socks	For Rock Camp, hot days in the desert, and town time.
!		1	Approach Shoes	Shoes made for scrambling on rock and in the canyons – MUST have “sticky rubber” on bottom and be durable (i.e. <a href="#">La Sportiva Boulder X</a> ).
!		1	Boots	The most essential piece of clothing or gear that you will purchase. Please see the additional boot document for more guidance.
!		1	River Shoes	River sandals such as <a href="#">Teva</a> or <a href="#">Chaco</a> sandals are ideal. Any boating shoe must have an ankle or heel strap. These shoes will be wet daily. Old sneakers will also work great. Flip-flops, Clogs, Crocs, and Aquasocks are NOT acceptable.



Personal Accessories – Required				
!	2nd	#	Item	Description
		1	Large Duffle Bag	1 large duffle bag/suitcase to travel to COBS with. Big enough that all your gear will fit in the same one.
		1	Insurance Card	If you are covered under any medical insurance, please bring your card. The actual card is preferred, but a copy of the front and the back of the card will be okay.
		2	Bandanas	This all-purpose piece of cotton absorbs sweat, cleans off trail-grime and offers a multitude of other camp and trail uses.
		2	Sunglasses with Keeper Strap	Sturdy & dark wrap-around style sunglasses to keep the sun and wind completely out. If you wear glasses, make sure you bring prescription sunglasses or ones that fit over your regular pair. We recommend a higher quality pair for snow travel, and a cheaper pair for daily use in the canyons and at rock camp.
		1	Prescription Eye Wear + Extra Glasses	Contacts – bring more than enough and bring back up glasses. Glasses - Make sure they work with sunglasses (or are prescription sunglasses). Bring an extra set of glasses in case of loss or damage.
!		2	32 oz. Water Bottles	For freezing temps plastic bottles are better. We recommend the <a href="#">Nalgene Wide Mouth</a> . For the rest of your semester, you may use stainless steel or aluminum water bottles. <a href="#">Sigg</a> and <a href="#">Klean Kanteen</a> are reputable brands. A hydration bladder (e.g. Camel-Bak) may be an option for other course sections, depending on the weather. Hydration bladders are difficult to manage in freezing temps.
		1	Headlamp	Bring extra batteries, lithium recommended. <a href="#">Black Diamond</a> or <a href="#">Petzl</a> brands heavily recommended – cheaper models tend not to last the entire course.
		2	Prescription Medications	THESE MUST BE DECLARED DURING THE APPLICATION PROCESS. Bring 2 sets in their original containers and a Ziploc bag for storage on the trail.
	2nd	1	Watch	Must have alarm. Water resistant recommended.
		6	Large zip-lock plastic bags	Heavy duty to protect cameras, etc. from sand and water
!		2+	Personal Hand Sanitizer	Two 3oz bottles plus a larger 16oz to refill during the course.
!		1	Digital Oral Thermometer	Used to check temperature.



Toiletries – Required, If Pertinent To You				
!	2nd	#	Item	Description
		1	15 oz. Waterproof Sunscreen	SPF 30 or greater, travel size. With a larger bottle to refill.
		3+	Lip Balm	SPF 30 or greater.
		1	Insect Repellent	Small size, in an unbreakable bottle—no spray cans. Products with Picaridan or DEET (10 - 35%) are most effective.
		16 oz.	Moisturizing Lotion	For dry feet and hands
		1	Toilet Kit	Keep in mind that you will be traveling quite a bit on this course and carrying what we need in backpacks at times, so keep sizes small. Travel sizes are great! Certain toiletries will not be carried in the backcountry but can be used while base camping and in town.
			Menstrual Products	We highly recommend bringing a <a href="#">Diva Cup</a> with supplementary pads or tampons. Diva Cups reduce the amount of trash you create and have to carry. If you've never used a Diva Cup, it comes with instructions. Check out the website, <a href="#">divacup.com</a> , for more info. We recommend trying it before course. Diva Cups are available online or at CVS stores. COBS is a Leave No Trace organization so all trash must be carried with you. If you're going to use tampons, we recommend a brand that does not have plastic applicators. You are welcome to bring pads if that is the system you are most comfortable using. If you have any questions, please contact your course advisor.
			Baby Wipes	For extra cleaning and hygiene
!			Extra toiletry items	Whatever you like for traveling. This will likely be slimmed down for carrying in the backcountry to keep packs as light as possible. Soap, shampoo, etc.
!		1	Towel	For showers when not in the field

Travel to and from				
!	2nd	#	Item	Description
		-	Money: \$300 including about \$20 in small bills, and a credit or debit card for emergencies	For food, souvenirs or extra gear, and unforeseen expenses (such as Dr. visit co-pay, or prescriptions) on travel days and town days. **You will use COBS group gear for camping and cooking. This is free to use, but if you lose or intentionally break any COBS items, you'll pay for it at course end with cash, check or credit.
			Emergency contact numbers for travel delays	Carry a copy of the phone numbers to use in case of travel delays (from the travel and itinerary document)



## Optional Items

These are **NOT** required and you will be fine without them. Please only bring them if you already own these items. Please only buy them if you plan to use the items again after your course or you think they will be of great assistance to you while on course (you may be asked to leave these behind depending on weather and availability in pack).

Optional Items				
!	2nd	#	Item	Description
	2nd	1	Vest	Fleece or other synthetic material – to be worn as an extra layer for core body warmth; some people love them, and others do not
		1pr	Gaiters	COBS will provide a basic pair of gaiters. Higher end gaiters are nice to have and are easier to use. Get them so they fit over your Mountaineering Boots.
		1pr	Neoprene Socks	Additional foot warmth that are warmer than wool or synthetic socks. Example: <a href="#">NRS Hydroskin Socks</a>
	2nd	1	Simple pocket knife or multi-tool	For kitchen and camp tasks. Lightweight, folding. Locking blade recommended. No fixed blade knives. No blades over 3.5 inches. Remember airport security considerations! Students will be taught basic knife use and safety. Any student using their knife in an unsafe or intimidating way may have their knife confiscated by instructors, and may face other disciplinary action. Knives are typically not allowed on solo experiences.
		1	Trekking Poles	These are of great assistance to those who experience knee problems or want more stability on the trail. Spring loaded, adjustable length sticks provide the best versatility and comfort. Old ski poles are an inexpensive alternative. COBS provides poles for the Colorado Mountains section of the course.
		1	Camera	Most people bring small, digital cameras or disposable 35mm cameras. Large cameras (SLRs, for example) are heavy, bulky and difficult to protect in the backcountry. Bring multiple cameras if disposable. If bringing a non-disposable camera, consider taking extra precautions like putting it in a Ziploc bag or Pelican hard case to keep out dirt and sand.
		1	Water Bladder (aka hydration system)	CamelBak or Platypus are good brands. All you need is the bladder and the tube – not the small pack that often comes with them. If you bring a water bladder, you still need to bring the 2 Nalgene wide-mouth bottles.
		1	Ear Plugs	Recommended if you are a light sleeper.
		1	Thermos or Vacuum	½ liter size, maximum. Can be really nice for mid-day hot drinks.
			Toys, Instruments, Books	You are welcome to bring hacky sacks, Frisbees, musical instruments, and other fun stuff – just know that for some parts of the course you will not have access to these things. These items can make basecamps at Rock Camp, and in Colorado more fun!
			Cell phone, chargers	You will have opportunities to use your phone and listen to music – usually during the transitions between sections of the course. You can charge in wall plugs at times, and in vehicles at times.



## Gear that Outward Bound Provides

Please note - Outward Bound provides all other equipment including but not limited to sleeping bags and pads, backpacks, and camp gear. There are no additional fees for the use of our equipment. If you have your own equipment and it meets the criteria below, you are welcome to bring it with you. Please be aware that your instructors will assess it for appropriateness and may ask you to use Outward Bound gear in lieu of your own if they do not find your gear adequate for your particular course.

If you **DO** wish to bring some of your own gear, here are our minimum standards for what MAY be acceptable for few common items.

- **Sleeping bags** – need to have a 15-degree warmth rating or warmer. Synthetic filled bags have the advantage of being warm even when wet. Down-fill sleeping bags are not appropriate for this course due to the wet conditions found in the backcountry. Should weigh less than 5 lbs. [Big Agnes](#) is a recommended brand.
- **Sleeping pads** – can be  $\frac{3}{4}$  to full size in length. They can be made of closed-cell foam or be inflatable. If you bring an inflatable pad you must bring a patch kit as well. Inflatable pads MUST have insulation. [Big Agnes](#) is a recommended brand.
- **Backpacks** – need to have a minimum capacity of 80 liters, should carry 45-60 lbs. comfortably. Side pockets are also a useful option. [Osprey](#) is a recommended brand.