



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, 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 carry-on. This will minimize the inconvenience in the unlikely event your luggage is delayed in transport. Being dressed for course will also further the efficiency on your first day, especially since front country bathrooms and private changing areas are rarely available.

Items Not Allowed On Course:

- Electronics—cell phones, iPods, etc. These may be brought on the plane or bus 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, including pocket knives.

Weather During Your Course:

Expect daytime temperatures ranging from 40-80 degrees (Colorado) / 55-80 degrees (Utah) with nighttime temperatures ranging from 15-40 degrees (Colorado) / 30-45 degrees (Utah). Despite these recommendations of what is "normal weather," our course environments are characterized by unpredictable weather. Please check the weather prior to your course for Leadville, Colorado and Hanksville, UT at 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

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.

A "2nd" in this column means it is a likely item to find at a second-hand 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 Bras	Regular bras have clips that are uncomfortable under a pack.
	2nd	3	Wicking Short Sleeve T- Shirts	This T-shirt is made out of wool or synthetic fabric that moves moisture away from your skin and allows maximum airflow.
	2nd	1	Long Sleeve Sun Shirt	Loose, lightweight, light-colored for sun protection. Instructors prefer old oxford or button-down men's dress shirts from thrift stores.
	2nd	2	Long Underwear Top	Should be synthetic or wool. Should be "form fitting", but not restrictive.
	2nd	1	Light Insulating Jacket	Fleece or wool mid-layer. A hood on this layer is a luxurious plus. Should fit snugly over long underwear top, but not baggy.
	2nd	1	Mid-weight Insulating Jacket	Heavier fleece or a lightweight synthetic puffy jacket. (Down insulation is not appropriate for this layer due wet conditions). Should fit over long underwear and light-weight jacket.
!		1	Puffy Parka	Expedition weight synthetic or waterproofed down puffy jacket.
!		1	Waterproof/Breathable Rain Jacket	Must fit over all your other layers. We recommend a high quality, water proof breathable fabric. The best balance of cost and performance we've found is the REI XeroDry GTXJacket Women's and Men's . **See more detailed notes on rain gear

Bottom Layers - Required

!	2nd	#	Item	Description
		4+	Underwear	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	Long Underwear Bottoms	Wool or synthetic leggings, "form fitting", but not restrictive.
	2nd	1	Quick Dry Shorts	Synthetic. If your pant legs zip off to become shorts that works.
	2nd	2	Quick Dry Hiking Pants	Lightweight, synthetic and quick drying. Soft shell pants are the best option. Light nylon pants are next best.
	2nd	1	Lightweight Synthetic Belt	Something that will fit smoothly under your backpack belt. Even if your pants fit now, you might be slimmer day by day.
	2nd	1	Warm Long Pants	Medium weight synthetic fleece pants. Should fit under your rain pants.
!		1	Waterproof Breathable Rain Pants **See additional notes below	Similar to your rainjacket, we recommend your rain pants be waterproof breathable. The REI Co-op Rainier Men's and Women's pants have the added bonus of full side zips.



	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: Mountain Hardware Compressor Pants or REI Co-op Teton Fleece Pants
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****More info on Rain Pants and Jackets****

After footwear, rainwear 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 rainwear, we recommend doing that. In general, you get what you pay for in rain gear.

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. Must fit under a helmet, so no poms/tassels.
		1	Neck gaiter or balaclava	Wool or synthetic. Bufs 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, but any old ball cap will work. Cotton is okay here.
	2nd	1	Liner Gloves	Synthetic or wool – for hiking and doing fine motor skills while at camp. Example: The North Face FlashDry Glove 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: The North Face Apex+ Gloves
!		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 Outdoor Research Meteor Mitt .
		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.

Foot Layers - Required				
!	2nd	#	Item	Description
!		1	Boots	The most critical piece of clothing and gear. Please see corresponding Boot Document for more guidance.
		4+	Medium Weight Hiking or Ski Socks	Wool or Synthetic – base hiking sock; no need for thin liner socks. ski socks are nice because they pull up to the knees and provide extra warmth.
		2	Heavy weight mountaineering socks	Heavy Wool or Synthetic – important for very cold days. Make sure you fit new boots with the thickest socks.
	2nd	1	Athletic Shoes.	Something comfortable and that you can be active in and don't mind roughing up. Athletic running or tennis shoes are fine.

Personal accessories – Required (if pertinent to you)				
!	2nd	#	Item	Description
		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.



	2nd	2	Bandanas	This all-purpose piece of cotton absorbs sweat, cleans off trail-grime and offers a multitude of other camp and trail uses.
		1	Sunglasses with keeper strap	Sturdy & dark wrap-around style sunglasses to keep the sun and wind completely out and for high altitude. If you wear prescription glasses, make sure you bring prescription sunglasses or sunglasses that fit over your prescription pair. We recommend a higher quality pair for snow travel and a cheaper pair for daily us in the canyons.
		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 Nalgene Wide Mouth . For the rest of your course, you may use stainless steel or Aluminumwater bottles. Sigg and Klean Kanteen are reputable brands. A hydration bladder (e.g. CamelBak) may be an option for other course sections, depending on the weather. Hydration-bladders are difficult to manage in freezing temps.
		1	Headlamp + 1 Extra set Alkaline batteries per week of course (Fewer needed if you're using lithium batteries).	This is a hands-free flashlight. It is either an LED or halogen headlamp that uses a minimum of three volts (two or more AA- or AAA-batteries). Halogen bulbs are bright but consume more battery power. LED lamps are bright and consume very little battery power. Black Diamond and Petzel are reputable brands.
		2	Prescription Medications	THESE MUST BE DECLARED DURING THE APPROVAL 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 is a plus.
		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.



Travel to and from – Recommended; you won't carry this stuff in the backcountry.				
!	2nd	#	Item	Description
		-	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) and a copy of the photo page of your passport.
		-	Money: \$20 in small bills, and a credit or debit card	The first day is often long. Have cash to buy snacks along the way or bring food with you. You may also have the chance to purchase COBS souvenirs and don't forget about any checked baggage fees for your flight home. **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.
		3-4 sets	Casual Clothes	Used for travel, base camp time, and the trip home.
			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, towel, etc.



Toiletries – Required (if pertinent to you)				
!	2nd	#	Item	Description
		1	15 oz. waterproof sunscreen	SPF 30 or greater, travel size. Bring a larger bottle to refill.
		2+	Lip balm	SPF 30 or greater.
		1	Moisturizing Lotion	12oz bottle. The desert and mountains are awfully dry.
		1	Toilet Kit: Toothbrush and travel-size toothpaste	Keep in mind that you will be traveling, and we only carry essentials in the backcountry. Travel sizes are great! Certain toiletries will not be carried in
			Menstrual Products	We highly recommend bringing a Diva Cup 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, divacup.com , 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 OB brand, which do 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
		1	Insect Repellent	Small size, in unbreakable bottle. Products with Picaridan or DEET (10%-35%) are most effective.
		1	Towel and Toiletries	You will need these to clean up on the last day of course

Your clean travel clothes, luggage, cell phone and any other items not needed during your course will be stored in a secure place at our basecamp and will be returned to you at the end of course.



Optional Items

These are **NOT** required and you will be fine without them. 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 of space).

Optional Items				
!	2nd	#	Item	Description
		1	Travel Insurance	COBS strongly recommends purchasing travel insurance to protect you in the event of an emergency cancellation or early medical departure. You can find many companies that offer travel insurance. COBS travel agent (<i>Ruby Frederick/303.680.5241</i>) usually suggests TravelX. (www.travelexinsurance.com).
		1	Water Filter	COBS disinfects all wilderness water with iodine, bleach, or by boiling. Not all of these methods are effective against cryptosporidium. Immunocompromised people may wish to obtain an appropriate water filter for their course.
		1	Camera, Batteries, Memory Cards	We recommend small, light digital cameras or disposable 35mm cameras. 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. Do not count on using your phone as your camera. Most of our courses do not allow phone use.
		1	Ear Plugs	Recommended if you are a light sleeper.
		1	Lotion	If needed.
		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	Crazy Creek Chair	Crazy Creek is a popular brand. No chairs with legs can be brought! Must be lightweight and packable/rollable. These make sitting during meals, discussions, and lessons more comfortable.
		1	Water bladder or hydration system	CamelBak or Platypus are good brands; there are several others. Please bring a hard 32oz water bottle as a backup in case of breakage in the backcountry. You will not be able to use this on the winter expedition, because it will freeze.
		1	Pair of Crocs-style garden clogs.	Light, foam, with heel strap. These make an excellent camp shoe and dorm slipper. However, your athletic shoes are fine for camp shoes.
		1	Thermos or Vacuum bottle	½ liter size, maximum. Can be really nice for mid-day hot drinks.



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.