



Itinerary Overview

Fall Pathfinder - Rocky Mountains to Canyonlands – 30 Days – Ages 18-25



Welcome! You're in for an experience of a lifetime! Imagine sharing alpine meadows with mountain goats and climbing windswept peaks. Imagine scrambling down surreal slot canyons in Southern Utah, then settling down for the night under a blanket of shimmering stars. Each day you will be getting to know your expedition team, learning about the area and yourself, laughing with your crew mates, and exploring some of North America's most mesmerizing and famous landscapes. You don't need to have previous backpacking experience to fully embrace this extraordinary expedition, which combines beautiful environments and exciting activities with an emphasis on individual growth and community. In the mountains, you will learn the basics of backcountry travel and camping, as well as how to work with your team to achieve common goals. You will scale peaks high above tree line and stop to admire awe-inspiring vistas. You will employ your newly learned skillsets in the southern Utah desert as you and your crew mates take greater ownership over course.

The Pathfinder course is specifically designed for young adults searching for a direction in life. This course offers a purposeful wilderness adventure approach to develop three primary outcomes:

- **INCREASE SELF KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS**
- **IMPROVE GOAL-SETTING AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES**
- **DEVELOP PERSEVERANCE AND SELF-EFFICACY**

Your Instructors are highly qualified and dedicated outdoor educators. They will serve as teachers, trainers, and mentors as you learn the skills required for wilderness travel. Through daily discussions, they will also help you and your group to discover the larger meaning in these activities. You will discover new things about yourself: how you deal with uncertainty, stress and challenge; how you can better work with others; and your potential as a leader.

Wilderness travel is demanding. This course may be the hardest thing you have ever done. You should be aware of what you're getting into and be excited about tackling new challenges. It can literally take every waking moment to get from point A to point B. From steep mountain hiking with a heavy pack to waking up well before the sun rises, traveling in the wilderness can be hard. Past students agree that arriving physically fit and mentally prepared to take on challenges will enhance your experience and ability to do well on your course, which ultimately allows you to take full advantage of your expedition.



Course Activities

Alpine Backpacking – Alpine backpacking means moving through high mountain terrain mostly above tree line. This course teaches you smart and efficient backpacking and alpine travel techniques. You can expect to travel on and off trail over wooded and alpine terrain that can be rough, demanding, steep and exposed. You will carry a backpack on and off trail that weighs approximately 40-50 pounds depending on your weight and fitness. Additionally, you will learn Leave No Trace skills and ethics, backcountry route finding, camping, leadership types, and teamwork. You will also learn about the area's natural history and environment throughout course, including flora, fauna, geology, and ecology.

Peak Attempt – Your expedition will include at least one peak attempt. Peak attempts are major enterprises and typically require early morning starts and take all day to complete. Weather or other factors including group dynamics and physical ability, may preclude an attempt to ascend a peak.

Rock Climbing – You will spend 2 days exploring and learning the techniques and grace of rock climbing. The rock climbing instruction is for all levels and includes basic climbing techniques, helmet and harness use, climbing commands, tie-ins and climbing knots, belay techniques, basic top rope systems, and rappelling.

Desert Backpacking – This backing portion of the course will occur in the amazing landscape of southern Utah. The area you will be traveling through is famous for Ancestral Puebloan cliff ruins and rock art. Various canyons and tributaries characterize this beautiful backcountry, providing a nice contrast to the Colorado Rockies.

Wilderness First Aid Course – You will spend two days in a classroom at our high mountain basecamp, learning about wilderness medicine. You will have the opportunity to gain a Wilderness First Aid (WFA) certification during this course, which is considered an excellent baseline certification for outdoor enthusiasts.



Solo – Solo provides an important break from the rigors of both the expedition and the distractions from everyday life. This is a truly once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. With sufficient food and equipment, you'll spend 2-3 days alone at your campsite to journal, rest, reflect on the past and look ahead to future goals. Your solo site will be close enough to the sites of the Instructors in case of an emergency, but far enough removed to assure your solitude. You will not travel during this time and your Instructors will check on you occasionally, but you will be alone. Many students are initially nervous about solo, but later recall solo as one of the highlights of their entire course.



Service – Service is an integral part of the Outward Bound curriculum. We encourage service to the environment in the form of leaving campsites cleaner than we find them and practicing Leave No Trace ethics throughout the course. Whenever possible, we coordinate service projects with land managers (US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, State Parks and local land trusts, etc.) and select social service agencies (nursing homes, hospitals, etc.). You also practice daily service and compassion to your crew mates, whether that’s making hot drinks on a cold morning, or helping someone with their backpack

Final Expedition – The Colorado Outward Bound School believes that an appropriate amount of independence is a powerful educational tool. In order to deliver that benefit, our instructors purposefully and gradually transfer leadership responsibilities to the students. This progression culminates with our “Final Expedition.” Near the end of course, if you and your group have demonstrated the necessary leadership, problem solving and wilderness living skills, you may be given the opportunity to travel without your Instructors immediately present. This “Final Expedition” will range from three to five days depending on staff assessment of student abilities and terrain type. Many of our students love the independence of this phase of course, as the group learns to work together, problem solve, and accomplish a goal independently, while utilizing all the skills they have acquired. Instructors periodically check in with the group to ensure student wellbeing and coordinate travel plans. When you emerge from this final phase of course you will understand a truth: There is more in you than you know.

Challenge Event – There are no set-in-stone course end challenge events, as each challenge will be tailored to the current conditions and participants. The challenge event may take the form of a run or team challenge. This event is your opportunity to finish course successfully and with style, by embodying all the lessons you have learned during your Outward Bound course. You may be surprised by how far you can still go given the challenges you have already accomplished.

Guided Reflection and Transference – At Outward Bound we believe there is no learning without reflection. Throughout course, you will be prompted to reflect on what you’re experiencing on course, and what it means in the greater context of your life. Sometimes this is a journaling exercise, sometimes a group sharing experience, or a moment of solitude to think for yourself. You spend focused time towards course end exploring how your new knowledge, skills and attributes can apply to your life after course.





Sample Itinerary

The following is an example of what your itinerary may look like. Your actual course plan will vary according to weather, your group's skills and abilities, and your Instructors' preferences.

Days 1-2 - Course Start and Rock climbing

Days 3-12 – Alpine Backpacking Expedition

Curriculum includes:

- Basic navigation
- Basic first aid
- Backcountry camping
- Self- awareness
- Awareness of others
- Developing inclusive group culture
- Basic team decision making
- Outward Bound philosophy and history
- Applied leadership practice
- Conflict resolution
- Personal resilience

Days 13-14 - Wilderness First Aid Course and Certification

Day 15 - Transition to Utah

Day 16 - Community Service Project

Days 17-24 - Canyonlands Backpacking and Solo

Curriculum includes:

- Advanced navigation
- Advanced decision making
- Goal setting
- Time management
- Peer leadership
- Self-Awareness
- Transference to home life

Day 25-28 - Final Expedition – Apply all you've learned to a final group challenge

Day 29 - Personal Challenge Event, Course End Celebration

Day 30 - Departure Home