

BACKPACKING PERSONAL EQUIPMENT LIST

The following list comes from the 2008 Philmont *Guidebook to Adventure*. This list is for a trip lasting 10 days on the trail. For a weekend trip, some of the items could be removed or numbers reduced. Note that I have edited the list to take out or change Philmont-specific items!

<p>Packing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> backpack with padded hip belt:Capacity:external frame — 4000 cubic inches ±internal frame — 4800 cubic inches ±<input type="checkbox"/> pack cover — waterproof nylon<input type="checkbox"/> 6–12 1-gallon ZipLoc plastic bags to pack clothes <p>Sleeping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> sleeping bag in stuff sack lined with plastic bag<input type="checkbox"/> sleep clothes — worn only in sleeping bag (t-shirt & gym shorts)<input type="checkbox"/> straps to hold sleeping bag on pack (if external frame)<input type="checkbox"/> sleeping pad (closed cell foam or Therma-Rest) <p>Clothing</p> <p>Layer A (Hiking Clothes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> hiking boots — well broken in<input type="checkbox"/> lightweight sneakers or tennis shoes<input type="checkbox"/> 3 pairs heavy wool socks<input type="checkbox"/> 3 pairs lighter inner socks (polypropylene)<input type="checkbox"/> 3 changes underwear<input type="checkbox"/> 2 hiking shorts<input type="checkbox"/> 2 short sleeve shirts (not nylon)<input type="checkbox"/> 1 hat or cap — flexible with brim <p>Layer B (Cool evening)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> 1 long sleeve shirt (wool or flannel)<input type="checkbox"/> 1 long pants, cotton or nylon (not heavy jeans)<input type="checkbox"/> 1 pair insulated underwear (polypro)	<p>Layer C (Cold)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> 1 stocking cap (wool, polypro, or fleece)<input type="checkbox"/> 1 glove liners or mittens (wool or polypro)<input type="checkbox"/> 1 sweater or jacket (wool or “polar fleece”) <p>Layer D (Cold, Wet, Windy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> 1 sturdy rainsuit (A) <p>Eating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> deep bowl (small, plastic)<input type="checkbox"/> cup (measuring style)<input type="checkbox"/> spoon<input type="checkbox"/> 3 or 4 one qt. water bottles (A) <p>Personal and Miscellaneous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> small pocket knife (A)<input type="checkbox"/> matches and lighter in waterproof container<input type="checkbox"/> flashlight (small with extra batteries and bulb)<input type="checkbox"/> map of area (A)<input type="checkbox"/> compass — liquid filled (A)<input type="checkbox"/> 2 bandannas or handkerchiefs<input type="checkbox"/> lip balm or chapstick (with SPF of 25) (A)<input type="checkbox"/> soap, biodegradable (S)<input type="checkbox"/> toothbrush/toothpaste<input type="checkbox"/> small camp towel<input type="checkbox"/> sunscreen (SPF 25+) (A)*<input type="checkbox"/> sunglasses (inexpensive) <p>Optional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> camera (and film if needed)<input type="checkbox"/> watch<input type="checkbox"/> fishing equipment/licenses<input type="checkbox"/> rubber bands (large, for packing)<input type="checkbox"/> foot powder (S)<input type="checkbox"/> note pad and pen or pencil<input type="checkbox"/> day pack for side hikes (S)<input type="checkbox"/> whistle
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CODE:

(S) = Share with a buddy

(A) = Easily accessible in pack or carried on person

* According to the 2008 *Guidebook to Adventure*, sunscreen is now a “crew item”. In other words, one large supply for the crew. But I've left it here for those planning trips to other places, or those just wondering, “Where's the sunscreen?”

Realize that the previous list is a maximum, not a minimum, amount of personal equipment. There are a number of things on the list that I feel are not necessary or redundant. So, for those of you who are asking, here is what Kevin Mahoney takes with him on a backpacking trip:

<p>Packing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Gregory internal frame backpack, Capacity: 6000 cubic inches ± top pocket of pack turns into a day pack for side hikes <input type="checkbox"/> Gregory custom pack cover — waterproof nylon <input type="checkbox"/> 6 1-gallon ZipLoc plastic bags to pack clothes <input type="checkbox"/> a number of smaller size ziplock and nylon bags to pack other items <p>Sleeping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> sleeping bag in <i>waterproof</i> stuff sack inside <i>waterproof</i> backpack under <i>waterproof</i> pack cover (catching my drift here? — the one thing you absolutely cannot afford to get wet is your sleeping bag) <input type="checkbox"/> Therma-Rest sleeping pad — 3/4 length <p>Clothing</p> <p>Layer A (Hiking Clothes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> hiking boots — well broken in <input type="checkbox"/> Teva sandals <input type="checkbox"/> 3 pairs hiking or heavy wool socks <input type="checkbox"/> 2 hiking shorts with liner to dispense with the extra weight and bulk of underwear <input type="checkbox"/> 2 cotton t-shirts <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Gore-tex “Seattle Sombrero” hat (made by Outdoor Research) <p>Layer B (Cool evening)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 long sleeve wool shirt or polar fleece sweater <input type="checkbox"/> 1 pair sweat pants <p>Layer C (Cold)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 wool stocking cap <input type="checkbox"/> 1 pair polypropylene glove liners 	<p>Layer D (Cold, Wet, Windy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Gore-Tex rain jacket <input type="checkbox"/> Gore-Tex rain pants <p>Eating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> deep bowl <input type="checkbox"/> stainless steel cup <input type="checkbox"/> lexan plastic spoon <input type="checkbox"/> 2 one qt. water bottles and 1 one pt. water bottle all made by Nalgene <p>Personal and Miscellaneous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> small pocket knife <input type="checkbox"/> lighter <input type="checkbox"/> Mini-Mag flashlight (with extra batteries and bulb — bulb stores in end cap of flashlight)* <input type="checkbox"/> map of area <input type="checkbox"/> compass <input type="checkbox"/> 2 bandannas <input type="checkbox"/> lip balm (with SPF of 15+) <input type="checkbox"/> soap, biodegradable (Camp Suds) <input type="checkbox"/> toothbrush/toothpaste (sample size) <input type="checkbox"/> small towel <input type="checkbox"/> sunscreen (waterproof SPF 30) <input type="checkbox"/> sunglasses <p>Optional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> digital camera (+ extra battery and storage card(s)) <input type="checkbox"/> watch <input type="checkbox"/> small personal first aid kit with bandaids, moleskin, Neosporin, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> small repair kit with pack parts, rubber bands, duct tape, nylon twine, etc. Fits in a 35mm film can <input type="checkbox"/> foot powder <input type="checkbox"/> note pad and pen or pencil
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* Although I think I'll be using an LED bulb flashlight from now on since they are so much easier on batteries as well as the bulb(s) not being nearly as fragile or susceptible to burning out.

Again, this is a maximum, not minimum, list. If I am going on a hot, humid, midwest weekend trip obviously the cool and cold layers (B and C) don't go with me. The rain-gear in Layer D then does double/triple duty as both cool evening/morning wear and wet weather clothing. And I'll cut down on the other clothing as well; maybe taking only one change of clothes.

Things to remember about your personal equipment:

- Keep it light
- Keep the bulk down
- Multi-use (i.e. rain jacket is used as a regular jacket, rain pants are used as long pants, sweat pants become long underwear, etc.)
- Share certain items with a buddy — everyone doesn't need to bring foot powder; you can share other items such as soap, sunscreen, flashlight.....

You will not need these items in the back country:

- fork — anything you can eat with a fork you can eat with a spoon, but the reverse isn't true
- table knife — you already have a pocket knife, remember multi-use
- deodorant/antiperspirant — it attracts bears and that's a bad thing
- shampoo — use soap instead
- pillow — use a t-shirt as a pillowcase and stuff extra clothes in it; wool, down, and polarfleece make the best “stuffing” (multi-use again)

Some other thoughts:

- The backpack sizes in the list from Philmont are almost too small — especially for the internal frame (I-frame) pack. If you are going to look for an I-frame pack I would recommend one of at least 5000 cu. in. The size requirement for external frame (E-frame) packs is not as critical since you can lash or tie stuff to the frame fairly easily without upsetting the balance of the pack too much. This is not as easily accomplished with I-frame packs.
- Make absolutely, positively, sure that your boots fit and are comfortable!!! This is critical — if your feet hurt or get blistered, your trip will not be any fun. Price and brand name is not as important as fit and comfort. Don't buy Nike just because the swoosh looks cool. If the boot from WalMart fits you better, that's the boot to get. On the other hand, if the Nike (or whatever brand) fits better, suck it up and pay the bucks. Waterproofness is a good thing as well. Wet feet, in addition to being just plain uncomfortable, are a breeding ground for blisters no matter how well your boots fit. You will realize, about the third day out, that dollars don't mean squat in the wilderness. That 3rd day is also a bad time to realize that you maybe should have spent the extra few bucks for the better equipment.
- Socks — I have always understood the theory behind having liner socks (they create another, smooth, layer between your feet and boots to reduce friction and to transport moisture away from your feet), but they just don't work for me. I have never had a problem with blisters for some reason, and can't even remember the last time I had one on a hike. Also, the newer “blended” fabric (wool/polypro) socks made by Thor-Lo and similar companies seem to combine padding and moisture transport into one sock — at least for me. If your boots fit well with one layer of socks and don't slide around on your feet, there's no reason to try and stuff another layer into them and make your feet hotter (unless you need to keep your feet warm in cold weather). Of course, all this is personal taste; if liner socks work for you by all means use them. But I have seen enough blisters on feet that were encased in liner socks to make me wonder.

Where to find it

You may be surprised that some of the above equipment can be found at discount stores such as WalMart or K-Mart. Other items can also be found online. Following is a list of stores, both on- and off-line where you can find equipment for camping — winter and otherwise:

WalMart or K-Mart

Various clothing items, bandannas, pocket knives, eating utensils, flashlights, sometimes surprisingly good sleeping bags and pads, and more. You have to know what to look for prior to going in because the minimum wage high school kid helping you surely doesn't.

Sports Authority

Some pretty decent equipment at a decent price including sleeping bags, backpacks, boots and clothing. Store employees sometimes have little or no training in how to choose or use this equipment, so take their advise with a large grain of salt.

The Alpine Shop

The St. Louis area's original high-end outdoor equipment store. Prices may shock you, but remember that you are getting the best equipment available, and it will last for many years with proper care. Any and all of the equipment in these lists can be found here. Store employees know their stuff and you can rely on them to steer you in the right, if not cheap, direction.

REI (Recreational Equipment Inc.)

Everything about The Alpine Shop also applies to REI, except for perhaps slightly cheaper prices. On Brentwood Blvd. just south of Rte. 40 near the Galleria mall. Also online at <http://www.rei.com>. Close-outs at good prices can be found at <http://www.rei-outlet.com>

CampMor

Originally a catalog company, but now online as well at <http://www.campmor.com>. Again, almost everything on the lists can be found here, but with a wide variation in quality — excellent to junk. Good buys can be had in their online "Hot Deals" section.

Bass Pro Shops & Cabela's

These really cater more to people who hunt and fish, but since camping and backpacking can be part of these pursuits they have some pretty decent equipment and clothing. Probably the same quality as Sports Authority but with more selection and variety. Both companies now have St. Louis area stores.

Bass Pro Shops is in St. Charles, first exit west of the Missouri River off I-70. Online at <http://www.basspro.com>.

Cabela's is on Rte. 370, first exit north of I-270 in the St. Louis Mills shopping area. Online at <http://www.cabelas.com>.