

Wilderness Leadership Expedition Packing List



COLDWATER
— CANADA —

Please take the time to carefully read through this WLE Packing List. Every item on the list is **necessary** for you to experience a safe and comfortable wilderness expedition. Before departure, all equipment will be reviewed by instructors to ensure that it meets or exceeds our requirements. Please do **not** bring additional equipment as it will contribute to a heavier and slower trip experience.

For any required clothing or equipment that you do not already have, we suggest either borrowing from friends or family, purchasing used from a thrift store, Marketplace or Kijiji, or buying new from stores like MEC, SAIL, Canadian Tire, etc.. Coldwater also has a small selection of equipment and clothing that we let students rent or borrow if they are missing items but sizing is limited. If you wish to **borrow** an item please make sure to contact us at least two weeks prior to the trip to make sure we have what you are looking for and can reserve it for you. Before your trip, you will be issued a canoe pack, ground sheet and sleeping pad (if required). Your canoe pack will fit all of your personal clothing and equipment, along with some group gear.

LAYERING SYSTEM

We divide our backcountry clothing into three main categories: baselayer, midlayer, and outer layer. Using this layering system allows clothing items to be worn together or separately, achieving optimal body temperature control. **Please do not bring any cotton products on this trip.** When wet, cotton offers no insulation, draws heat away from the body and takes a substantial time to dry. Instead, find synthetic (polyester ‘fleece’, polypropylene, capilene, nylon, lycra...) or natural fibers (wool). These materials dry faster and maintain insulation when wet. To reiterate: **NO COTTON** unless otherwise specified.

CLOTHING

BASE LAYER

The innermost layer is critical because it's in direct contact with your skin. Base layers should transport moisture away from the skin and disperse it to the air or outer layers, where it can evaporate. Since water conducts heat, damp clothing draws heat away from your body. Cotton holds water, while synthetics and wool allow moisture to pass through. These layers are light, strong, absorb very little water and are quick to dry. Base layers should fit snugly without being restrictive.

Socks	6-8 pairs	Mid-weight wool or synthetic socks (NO cotton) You can also bring liner socks to wick away moisture and prevent blistering.
Underwear	5-7 pairs	Synthetic required
Sports Bra	2-3	Synthetic
T-shirts	2-3	Athletic or sport shirts work best.
Long Underwear	1-2	Wool or synthetic blend
Long-Sleeved Shirt	1	Wool or synthetic blend

MIDDLE INSULATING LAYERS

The mid-layer provides insulation between the base and outer layer, continuing the transportation of moisture away from the inner layer. To help retain body heat and slow heat loss, this layer must effectively trap warmth. Wool and synthetic materials such as polyester or polypropylene are ideal for this purpose. Similar to the inner layer, the mid-layer should fit snugly without being restrictive. Optional features such as pit zippers, quarter length or full-length front zippers allow for added ventilation.

Bug Shirt	1	A lightweight, loose fitting shirt that helps keep the bugs away. Old dress shirts with a collar work well or a synthetic Columbia style shirt.
Mid-weight long-sleeve	1-2	Wool or synthetic blend
Fleece Jacket or Sweater	1-2	Mid or heavy-weight fleece jacket, wool jacket or sweater. NOT a cotton hoodie.
Shorts	1-2 pairs	Athletic or nylon, quick dry. Can double as a swimsuit for men.
Long Pants	2 pairs	Synthetic blend, NO jeans or cotton sweatpants.

OUTER LAYER

The outer layer protects you from the elements, allowing air to circulate and excess moisture to escape. Since we travel through environments that are prone to severe weather, a waterproof rain jacket is recommended. A shell made of a breathable and waterproof fabric will protect you from wind and rain, and allow water vapor to escape.

Rain Gear (Hooded Jacket and Pants)	1 set	A durable, roomy, waterproof and breathable garment that will fit over your other layers. A 2-3 layer jacket with taped seams made of a reputable waterproof fabric is recommended (such as: <i>Gore-tex</i> , <i>Pertex</i> , <i>Omni-Tech</i> , etc.). Wearing non-breathable rain gear (such as yellow fisherman raincoats) can lead to sweating, which can leave you as wet as if you weren't wearing a rain jacket at all. We suggest sizing your rain gear to comfortably fit over any insulating layers. If it extends below your waist that is an added benefit.
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ADDITIONAL REQUIRED CLOTHING

Poly liner socks	1-2 pairs	Thin pair of hiking socks that help to wick away moisture and prevent blistering
Swimsuit	1	Girls: One piece or tankini. Guys: No speedos, please. An extra pair of shorts can substitute for a swimsuit.
Bandana/Buff	1-2	Cotton is fine
Hat	1	Baseball or sun hat
Bug Head Net	1	A mesh headnet with a cinch around your neck
Toque	1-2	Wool or synthetic
Gloves	1 pair	Wool or synthetic for paddling on cold days. Neoprene paddling gloves or thin work gloves work well.
Work Gloves	1 pair	Leather gloves to be worn when working around the fire and gathering wood.

FOOTWEAR

Shoes (Flimsy and unsupportive "water" shoes and "skate" shoes are NOT acceptable)	3 pairs	1 pair of "wet" shoes. These will be worn the majority of the trip, specifically while paddling and portaging. Old running shoes that allow water to drain work best. These shoes must be closed toed and supportive , preferably with decent tread.
		1 pair of "dry" closed toed camp shoes. These will be kept dry in order to wear at campsites and on hikes. Running shoes or trail hikers work well.
		1 pair of midweight hiking boots are recommended but hiking shoes will be accepted. These will be worn the majority of the time while backpacking, should have ankle support, good traction and fit you well. The more time you spend in the boots before the trip the better.

PERSONAL ITEMS

Mummy Sleeping Bag	1	Temperature rating of at least -7° Celsius with a mummy hood . Please note that down fill bags are not suitable for the wet conditions we encounter. Coldwater can issue you a quality sleeping bag if requested at programs@coldwatercanada.org
Sleeping Pad - Closed-Cell Foam or Inflatable	1	We recommend that you bring a small inflatable sleeping pad for comfort while sleeping. It should compress smaller than a sleeping bag. If you do not have one, you will be issued a closed-cell foam sleeping pad from Coldwater.
Toiletry Items	1 each	Toothpaste, toothbrush, lip balm, biodegradable soap - additional items might include: facecloth, wet wipes, feminine hygiene products
Moleskin	1 pkg	Blister protection and treatment for feet
Sunscreen	1	Small tube, SPF 30+
Headlamp	1	1 durable and working headlamp
Batteries	3 sets	1 set in your headlamp, 2 spare sets (all sets mandatory)
Towel	1	Non-cotton quick dry towel, microfibre cloths works well
Bible	1	Preferably small with Old and New Testament
Journal/ Notebook	1	Bring 2+ pens/pencils to write with
Durable Spoon	1	Could be a camping spoon or a metal one from your kitchen
Plastic Travel Mug	1	Used for hot drinks and must have a lid
Small Folding Knife	1	10 cm max folding blade length
Nalgene Bottle	2	At least one bottle needs to be 1L wide mouth to fit our filtration system. If you do not have one, we have Coldwater Nalgenes available for purchase
Sunglasses	1	We recommend bringing a retaining strap so they do not get lost
Prescription Medication		If you have any prescription medication please bring it

PACKING AND STORAGE

Backpack	1	65L or larger with an internal frame to fit all your personal items and group gear.
Stuff Sacks	2-4	Helpful for organizing clothes, Bible, toiletries, utensils and other items inside your canoe pack. Various sizes will help with organization.
Ziplock Bags	4-8	Small and large for waterproofing your Bible, journal, toiletries, camera, headlamp, extra batteries and other items
Garbage Bags	3	Heavy-duty black garbage bags for waterproofing gear. Industrial contractor bags work well.

OPTIONAL ITEMS

Hydration Bladder	1	Most hiking backpacks have a place for this water system with a hose and can be used in addition to a Nalgene
Trekking Poles	1 set	Very helpful to stabilize you with a pack on and will reduce the strain on your knees. Collapsible poles are the best option but ski poles can work.
Backpack cover	1	Some backpacks will come with a waterproof cover built into the bottom
Dry Bag	1	A large dry bag (approx 30-40 L) can be used to hold all of your clothes and sleeping bag while keeping them dry. We will issue you a dry bag if you do not have one.
Gaiters	1 pair	To protect your feet and lower legs from moisture or debris
Light Nylon Windbreaker	1	If you do not have a windbreaker, your rain jacket is a good substitute.
Bug Net Shirt/Jacket	1	Full mesh shirt with a built in bug hood.
Digital Camera	1	Bring extra batteries and a protective case. Coldwater cannot ensure the safety of this item so an inexpensive, disposable, or waterproof camera is recommended. Also bring ziplock bags to waterproof it! NO phones as a camera.
Down/synthetic puffy jacket	1	For extra warmth
Vest	1	For extra warmth
Sleeping bag liner	1	Silk or synthetic sleeping bag liner that adds warmth
Small Collapsible Camp Chair	1	Like a <i>Crazy Creek</i> , <i>Helinox</i> , 3-legged stool or similar equivalent
Belt	1	If needed for your pants
Insect Repellent	1	Liquid spray or squirt bottle. No aerosol cans!
Thermacell	1	Portable mosquito repeller - highly recommended!
Earplugs	1 pair	For light sleepers

CLOSING COMMENTS

Please note that you will be asked to leave any phones, music devices, etc. at our basecamp. Your equipment and clothing help to create a safe and enjoyable trip for you and your group members. If you have any questions, or if you are purchasing equipment specifically for the course and would like more information regarding any of the items on the packing list, feel free to contact us at programs@coldwatercanada.org.