



ST. ELIAS ALPINE GUIDES
BACKPACKING EQUIPMENT LIST

_____ HIKING/ RUNNING SHORTS - Light weight nylon are quick drying and easy to carry.

_____ HIKING PANTS - A light wool or pile pant is required. A good combination is to wear shorts over polypro longjohns, all underneath wind/Gortex pants. While hiking this is a light and comfortable system, but at camp you will need a regular pair of wool or pile pants to pull on. Denim, canvas, or any type of cotton is NOT ACCEPTABLE. Please look at the label and make sure before arrival.

_____ LONG UNDERWEAR & UNDERSHIRT - Long johns must be polypro, pile or wool. We recommend bringing a lightweight or midweight set.

_____ LIGHTWEIGHT WOOL SHIRT - Layers are the key to comfort and warmth while hiking. This is the first layer over the polypro long underwear. It can be wool, pile, capiline, etc.

_____ LIGHTWEIGHT WOOL SWEATER - This is the next layer. It can be a wool sweater, or a lightweight pile pullover.

_____ PILE JACKET - Another layer! Make this a heavy pile jacket. A lightweight down jacket can be used here, but remember that once down is wet, it loses all insulating ability.

_____ WIND JACKET/SHIRT - I wear this item more than any other during my expeditions in Alaska. A very lightweight wind jacket such as made by Sierra Designs, North Face or Patagonia are worth their price tag. It is easy to carry and will be the perfect layer to cut the wind and not make you too hot while hiking.

_____ WIND PANTS - These can be uncoated nylon, which is what I wear over longjohns and shorts while hiking. They can also be dual purpose as rain pants if Gortex.

_____ RAIN JACKET - This is one of the most important items. Good rain gear will make your adventure much more enjoyable. In the past I recommended against Gortex. But in the past couple of years, Gortex has improved. I would recommend bringing one of the highest quality Gortex jackets (not your 10 year old standby--its just too stormy in Alaska). I carry both a wind jacket and a rain jacket. Good rain gear is made by Helly Hansen, Peter Storm and some REI products. Ponchos ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE. Wind and brush makes them almost useless.

_____ RAIN PANTS - Once again I carry both wind and rain pants. For one thing it gives my Gortex pants a longer life since I wear the nylon pant through the brush, etc. and the Gortex only if its raining.

_____ WOOL SOCKS - 3 pair of outer wool ragg type or heavy weight polypro.

_____ INNER SOCKS - 3 pairs of light wool, polypro or blend.

_____ RUNNING SHOES - These are good to wear around camp or go with on a day hike if your heavy hiking boots are bothering you.

_____ HIKING BOOTS - These should be medium to heavy leather boots. I highly recommend against the Gortex boots. This design was developed by guys in Southern California and not hiking over rocks, glaciers, through wet brush and rain! Merrill, Raichle and Vasque make good boots. You'll pay the price, but they'll last a long time. Your boots MUST BE WELL BROKEN IN BEFORE THE TRIP!

_____ GAITERS - This is an optional item. Check with us before your specific trip to see if you'll need to bring a pair.

_____ WOOL GLOVES - A must for warm hands while hiking and for use around camp. I recommend wool and NOT polypro. When wool is wet it retains all its insulating capability, and for working around camp this is a must. Polypro doesn't insulate nearly as well.

_____ OVERMITTS - These should be a lightweight pair of nylon or Gortex shells that protect the hand from wind.

_____ WOOL/POLYPRO HAT - Something to cover the ears and keep the warmth in the head!

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_____ BASEBALL/SUN HAT - One with a bill keeps the rain out too.

_____ SLEEPING BAG - It has been known to snow during any month in Alaska. A good three season's sleeping bag rated to 10 degrees is a must. The question between down and synthetic is one that you should call us up and discuss. Remember down loses its insulating ability once wet, but with careful attention to keeping the bag dry, down gives the best warmth to weight ratio.

_____ PAD - A full length pad is best. Thermarests are good, but remember they can leak!

_____ CAMERA - Bring a good one, especially with a wide angle lens.

_____ FILM - We recommend one roll for every 1-2 days.

_____ KNIFE - We recommend the old stand by - the Swiss Army knife.

_____ MESS KIT - a cup, bowl and spoon. The plastic insulated cups are the best. DO NOT BRING SIERRA CUPS. They were designed to spill, burn hands and lips and be gold plated for your study.

_____ WATER BOTTLE - Wide mouth one quart is the best.

_____ TOILET KIT : Toothpaste, toothbrush, biodegradable soap, chapstick, lotion, sun screen/block, moleskin (I highly recommend 2nd skin) personal medications (please tell us before the trip of any special medications you are taking), and personal first aid kit (with some band aids, aspirin, etc.).

_____ SUNGLASSES

_____ INSECT REPELLANT - Since the Wrangell/St. Elias has so much ice covering its surface, the bug problem is nothing like the Brooks Range or other Tundra covered regions. But there are still bugs and some good jungle juice, or BENŐs, or MUSKOL, is important.

_____ BOOK - Bring something relaxing to read just before dozing off or on rest days.

_____ BINOCULARS - An optional item of course, but nice to have for animal sightings and views of the distant peaks.

_____ STUFF SACKS - Bring an assortment of sizes to put food in and separate different clothing items.

_____ BANDANAS - Bring 2 for cleaning glasses, holding hot pots, and of course its more standard use.

_____ COMPASS - If you donŐt know how to use one, thereŐs no time like the present to learn!

_____ DAY PACK - Who wants to carry their big packs everyday? All our trips have several day hikes, and a small pack to carry lunch, binoculars, etc. is a must.

_____ BACKPACK - A good brand name external or internal frame pack is required. Kelty, Lowe, REI, North Face, Dana Designs all make fine packs. Please ask us if you have an off brand or little known pack.

_____ PACK COVER - This is REQUIRED equipment. You should buy an EXTRA-LARGE packcover. This will protect your pack from rain and wet brush, and at night you donŐt have to worry about your pack getting wet if a storm rolls in.