



ST. ELIAS ALPINE GUIDES, LLC

## Mountaineering Equipment List

Individual Equipment List for Mountaineering trips and courses

The following is a complete list of personal equipment required for our mountaineering expeditions and courses. We do make some recommendations for particular brands or items, but if you are unsure of any items you own or intend to purchase, please contact us.

If you need to purchase items on this list, please make those purchases well in advance. While Anchorage has quality gear shops, consider them only as backup for emergency or last minute items (unless you are from Alaska), as they may not have the item you need in stock. **There are no gear stores in McCarthy or Talkeetna.**

Rentals: We have a limited supply of rental equipment available. Please make arrangements with us in advance. Most outdoor stores offer rental equipment as well.

Be sure you have all of the proper equipment before coming to Alaska. If you have any questions about any of these items, please give us a call and we'd be happy to discuss it.

At the end of this list you'll also find a section on lunch food.

### PACKS & BAGS

- Large duffel bag:** 120 liters+, used primarily for transporting your personal equipment (ex: Patagonia Black Hole Duffel).
- Backpack:** 70-95 liter internal frame pack (ex: Mountain Hardwear BMG or Osprey Aether 85).
- Day pack (optional):** 35 to 45 liters, for day trips from base camp (ex: CiloGear 45 or Black Diamond Speed 40). Recommended for Courses and First Ascents. Not required for expeditions.
- Sleeping bag:** Down or synthetic. Waterproof exterior fabric such as Event or Gore-tex is a plus. Keep in mind that manufacturer's temperature ratings are subjective and serve as guidelines.
  - Expeditions (May & June): -15° to -30° F
  - Late Season Expeditions: 0° to -10° F
  - Mountaineering Courses: 0° to 10° F
- Inflatable pad:** Full length (ex: Thermarest Prolite Plus).
- Closed cell foam sleeping pad:** Full or 3/4 length (ex: Cascade Designs Ridgerest).

### TECHNICAL GEAR

- Ice axe with leash:** 60-70cm mountaineering axe with a steel head (ex: Black Diamond Raven). A simple leash can be made from 9/16" flat webbing.
- Second ice tool (optional):** 50cm, hammer or adze. Recommended for First Ascents and Technical Mountain Course.

- **Crampons:** 12 point steel mountaineering crampon. Avoid waterfall ice crampons with fully rigid frames and vertical front points, as well as older crampons with leather straps. Make sure that your crampons are compatible with your boots (ex: Grivel G12, Black Diamond Serac).
- **Harness:** Alpine harness with adjustable leg loops (ex: Black Diamond Couloir). For safety, your harness needs to be less than 10 years old and in good condition.
- **(4) Locking carabiners:** Pear shaped biners recommended (Petzl Attache).
- **(5) Non-locking carabiners:** Wire gate biners recommended (Black Diamond Oz).
- **(2) Cordelettes:** 6mm or 7mm nylon static cord, each 5-6m (15'-20') in length.
- **Extra rigging:** Bring 30' of 5 to 6mm cord or 9/16" tubular webbing.
- **Climbing helmet:** Needs to be climbing specific (ex: Petzl Elios).
- **Transceiver:** Modern, single frequency [457 khz] transceiver, preferably less than five years old. A digital 3-antennae model is highly recommended (ex: BCA Tracker 2, Mammut Pulse Barryvox, Peips DSP).

#### OTHER GEAR

- **Poles:** Ski poles or trekking poles with powder baskets (ex: Black Diamond Traverse).
- **Snowshoes:** (ex: MSR Denali Evo Ascent).
- **Skis with touring boots & bindings:** Possible alternative to snowshoes depending on your trip. Please call us to talk about the options.

#### FEET

- **Mountaineering boots:** Arguably the most important piece of gear on this list, boots can be a deciding factor in the success of an expedition. It is important that your boots are specifically designed for mountaineering with a fully rigid sole and ample insulation.

***Fit:** Different manufacturers model their boots on different lasts (molds). In choosing boots to purchase or rent, make sure you try on boots from more than one company. First and foremost your decision should be based on fit. Err on the roomy side, and consider sizing up a half or whole size.*

***Types:** Plastic boots have long been the standard for mountaineering – they're warm, durable, and economical. Modern hybrid/leather boots offer the same level of warmth with increased range of motion and lighter-weight; however they tend to be more expensive and are not quite as durable.*

- Expeditions (May & June): Expedition boot. A warm double boot with a removable liner is essential. (Plastic: Scarpa Inverno with High Altitude Liner, Hybrid/Leather: La Sportiva Spantik or Baruntse).
- Mountaineering Courses and Late Season Expeditions: Four season mountaineering boot, hybrid/leather or plastic (La Sportiva Nepal or Batura Evo, Kayland M11+).

- **Overboots (required for expeditions to mountains above 16,000' – Mt Bona, Mt Sanford, etc.):** Provide extra warmth on a cold summit day (ex: Forty Below K2 Superlite).
- **Gaiters:** Provide a clean interface between our pants, boots, and crampons (ex: OR Crocodile).
- **Socks:** Bring at least four pairs of socks (wool or synthetic) that work well with your boots. Keep in mind that warmth comes from good circulation, not necessarily heavy socks. Your boot liners provide

*most of the insulation. If your boots are roomy, choose a heavier sock. If you don't have much extra room in your boots choose a medium sock. Liner socks are a matter of preference – they work well for some people but may cause problems for others.*

**Camp booties:** *Allow us to give our feet a break from boots when hanging around camp (ex: Forty Below Camp Booties).*

## HEAD

**Sunglasses:** *Glacier glasses or dark tinted wrap-arounds, should have full UV protection. Bring an extra pair.*

**Goggles:** *Preferably with low light lenses (amber or rose) and UV protection.*

**Warm hat:** *Fleece, wool or synthetic.*

**Sun hat:** *Baseball cap, visor, etc.*

**Buff (optional):** *Versatile protection from the sun, cold, and wind.*

**Face mask, neck-gator, or balaclava:** *For warmth and skin protection on very cold days.*

## HANDS

**Light glove:** *Fleece, softshell, or synthetic liner glove.*

**Medium glove:** *Should be a wind and water-resistant winter glove (Black Diamond Legend Glove).*

**Heavy gloves or mitts:** *For very cold days, and as emergency backups to our other gloves (Black Diamond Guide Glove or OR Alti Mitten).*

## UPPER BODY

*There are many possible layering combinations for your upper body. The goal is simply to have a system that is functional in a wide range of weather conditions, from extreme cold to intense heat, strong wind, heavy rain and snow...or beautiful sunny weather.*

**Sun shirt:** *Long sleeved, light synthetic fabric (ex: Patagonia Sun Hoody or Mountain Hardwear Canyon Shirt).*

**Baselayer top:** *Light to medium weight synthetic fabric, long sleeved (ex: Patagonia Capilene 1 or 2 or Merino Wool).*

**Lightweight insulating layer:** *Light fleece or synthetic layer (ex: Patagonia R1 Hoody).*

**Softshell or fleece jacket:** *Great outer layer for cold or windy conditions (ex: Patagonia Ascensionist Jacket).*

**Shell jacket with hood:** *Gore-tex or equivalent lightweight waterproof fabric.*

**Insulated parka with hood:** *We recommend synthetic insulation for mountaineering courses and lower elevation trips (ex: Patagonia DAS Parka) and high-fill down insulation for high altitude expeditions (ex: First Ascent Peak XV Jacket).*

## LOWER BODY

**Baselayer bottoms:** *Medium weight (Patagonia Capilene 2 or Merino Wool).*

**Climbing pant:** *Softshell pant for wearing all day, every day. Breathability is more important than weather protection, built in gaiters are a plus (ex: Patagonia Alpine Guide Pant).*

**Hardshell pant:** *For adverse weather. These should have full side zips (First Ascent Rainier Storm Shell Pants).*

**Insulated pants (optional):** *A nice luxury item for wearing around camp (ex: Mountain Hardware Compressor PL Pant).*

#### MISCELLANEOUS

**Sunscreen:** *SPF 30 or greater, no spray on (ex: Doc Martin's of Maui).*

**Lip balm:** *With SPF protection.*

**Knife:** *Small lightweight pocket knife.*

**Headlamp (not required for June trips):** *Small LED headlamp recommended (ex: Petzl Tikka).*

**(2) Water bottles:** *One-quart wide mouth bottles with a screw top work best in the mountains.*

**Hydration system (optional, not recommended for expeditions):** *An insulated tube is essential – be sure to bring regular water bottles as a backup.*

**Thermos (optional):** *Half-liter size recommended.*

**Lunch food:** *See below.*

**Camera:** *Don't forget extra batteries and extra memory cards.*

**Watch:** *An altimeter is a valuable tool.*

**(3) Bungee cords (not required for all trips):** *For sled rigging. 24"-48" lengths.*

**Extra batteries:** *For your transceiver (usually AAA), headlamp, camera, etc.*

**Chemical hand warmers:** *Bring 2-3 packs.*

#### EATING UTENSILS

*Not required for the Mountain House.*

**Insulated mug**

**Bowl:** *Plastic w/lid recommended (ex: GSI Fairshare).*

**(2) Spoons or sporks**

#### PERSONAL FIRST AID/TOILETRIES

*Guides will carry a well equipped group first aid kit.*

**Personal toiletry kit:** *Toothbrush, toothpaste, dental floss, q-tips, small bottle of hand sanitizer, baby wipes, gender specific items.*

**Personal first aid kit:** *Band-Aids, blister repair, anti-diarrheal (Immodium), antacid, ibuprofen or aspirin.*

**Personal prescription medications:** *Please discuss these with us. Beyond any medications you may be taking, we recommend having the following with you: Tylenol 3 (pain-killer), Acetazolamide (Diamox) for expeditions above 16,000'.*

#### OPTIONAL ITEMS

**Ear plugs**

**Sleeping mask**

**Reading material:** *Books, magazines.*

**Journal w/pencil**

- iPod
- Pee bottle: *Clearly marked! Preferably a different shape from your water bottle.*
- Female urination device: *Only recommended if you've used one successfully prior to your trip. "They can be great, and they can be a disaster" –Female SEAG Guide.*
- Compass/GPS
- Binoculars
- Extra batteries

### GROUP EQUIPMENT

*We will provide all necessary group equipment for your trip such as tents, stoves, ropes, and rescue gear.*

### LUNCH FOOD

*Suggested amounts in weight based on length of time in the mountains. Repackaging foods helps reduce volume. Use these trip examples as guidelines for all other trips:*

**Glacier Travel Course (4 days in the mountains):** *4-5 lbs., small to medium stuff sack.*

**Alaska Mountaineering Course (7 days in the mountains):** *7-9 lbs., medium to large stuff sack.*

**Mt Bona (10 days in the mountains):** *10-12 lbs, large stuff sack.*

**Mt Blackburn (14 days in the mountains):** *15-18 lbs. Two medium stuff sacks.*

There is a saying in the mountains that, "Lunch begins after breakfast and ends before dinner." In other words, we're snacking all day long. Eating well is vital to maintaining our physical strength and mental well-being in the mountains.

- Take care when shopping for your lunch food. Make a list that you can add to as you go.
- Bring foods that you like.
- Have a good ratio of carbohydrates, proteins, and fats.
- Make sure you cover the spectrum of tastes, from sweet to savory.
- Energy bars and gels are great, but only to an extent. While clever marketing may imply that we need to eat specialized energy foods when we're outdoors, normal food provides us with just as much nourishment and usually tastes better. Limit bars and gels to no more than 20% of your food weight.
- Variety is key. Don't just bring 5 lbs of trail mix and 20 Snickers bars – bring smaller amounts of many different options. What is appetizing in the mountains is often times different from what sounds appetizing at sea level. With a good variety you'll have new things to pull out of your food bag every day, and you'll also have better things to trade with other participants.
- Plan to shop for most of your lunch food before coming to Alaska. We'll stop at a grocery store in Anchorage on the first day of your trip and you can pick up any perishables (meats, cheeses, etc) or last minute items, but try to have most of everything else purchased and packed in advance.

Lunch food ideas:

Bagels

Crackers

Tortillas

Pringles

Nuts

Dried fruits

Trail mix (nuts, raisins, M&Ms, etc)

Cheeses

Jerky (beef, turkey, buffalo, salmon...)

Hummus

Smoked salmon

Cream cheese

Salami

Pepperoni

Chocolate

Energy bars & gels (variety)

Drink mixes (Gatorade, Crystal Light, lemonade)

Peanut butter

Pesto

Cookies

Spicy mustard

Tabasco/Tapatío

Smoked oysters

Candy (fruity, sour, candy bars, hard candies, etc)

Pretzels (salted, yogurt covered, peanut butter)

Prosciutto

Chocolate covered espresso beans, raisins, nuts

Pita bread

Baby carrots, celery, etc

Avocados

Apples, oranges

Olives