



## ST. ELIAS ALPINE GUIDES, LLC

# Mountaineering Equipment List

### INDIVIDUAL EQUIPMENT LIST ALPINE CLIMBS, FIRST ASCENTS AND MOUNTAINEERING TRIPS

The following is a complete list of the equipment members must supply on the Alpine Climbs, Mountaineering Courses, First Ascents and High Altitude Mountaineering Expeditions. Since a good amount of outdoor equipment does not hold up under the stress of an expedition, we do make some recommendations for particular brands or items.

If you are concerned about a type or brand that we have not recommended, please call us and we will discuss the specific item. Your guide will inspect all personal items before the expedition leaves McCarthy. Any unsuitable items will not be allowed into the field and you will be required to purchase or rent the appropriate items. Although there are good gear shops in Anchorage (i.e. AMH), there are no stores in McCarthy, so PLEASE be sure you have all the proper equipment before coming to Alaska.

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**CLIMBING BOOTS** - For all expeditions, plastic climbing boots are required. They are light, warm, and most importantly, very stiff which makes cramponing easier to learn and more enjoyable during arduous ascents. Models such as the Scarpa Inverno, Asolo AFS 8000, or the Koflach Degre perform well. Lowa's Civetta GTX Extreme are also very good. Your boots should fit very well with a pair of heavy wool socks. Good footwear is extremely important and unique to each person – you should be comfortable and self-sufficient, with everything you need on hand.

**OVERBOOTS or SUPERGAITERS** - For high altitude Mountaineering Expeditions, a high quality overboot or supergaiter is required. For the First Ascents Expeditions a supergaiter is recommended. For the Glacier Seminar and General Mountaineering a normal, durable, to-the-knee gaiter will do. 40 Below makes the finest overboot on the market, so if you are serious about high altitude mountaineering, you may want to invest in a pair. Climb High makes a standard, reasonably priced pair of supergaiters.

**SNOWSHOES or SKIS** – These are for your approach. We can supply you with snowshoes. If you would like to approach on skis, please make sure that your skis have ski crampons. If you hope to get in some turns, you will need to bring a beacon, probe, skins and shovel as well. We do not allow clients to climb in alpine ski boots or leather telemark boots – you must have plastic tele or AT boots. Telemark skiers should bring an extra cable and any parts necessary to fix their skis as a precaution.

**HIKING SHOES** - Lightweight hiking boots are used around base camp and for approaches on the Glacier Seminar and some First Ascents.

**SOCKS** - Outer socks should be high-quality wool or a synthetic blend. We recommend bringing at least two pairs that you will be active in, and a third pair to wear while sleeping. We also recommend bringing one or two pairs of polypro or wool liner socks, which should fit comfortably beneath your heavy socks. Many climbers also use vapor barrier socks for high altitude climbs, as they keep your boots dry and feet warm. Remember, wearing anything too tight reduces blood flow and therefore your ability to stay warm. SmartWool, Thorlo and Dahlgren make excellent socks.

**T - SHIRT** – Polypro or some other synthetic.

**LIGHT- OR MID-WEIGHT LONG UNDERWEAR (2 SETS)** – This includes long underwear top and bottoms. All long underwear must be polypropylene, capilene or wool. We recommend bringing two sets of long underwear, one set to be active in and one for sleeping. We also recommend that at least one of your tops be a turtleneck.

**HEAVY or EXPEDITION WEIGHT LONG UNDERWEAR** – Once again, polypropylene, capilene or wool. A good medium or heavy wool shirt, a wool sweater, or a light fleece jacket or pullover can be used as well.

**FLEECE JACKET** - A good fleece jacket is required and wind-resistant fleece is especially good. This can be a pullover, but a zippered jacket allows more versatility for controlling your temperature. On the Glacier Seminars, a lighter fleece jacket is suitable.

**PANTS** - On the Mountaineering expeditions a pair of fleece pants or wool pants are recommended. Soft shell pants (e.g. pants made of Schoeller fabric) work great as well. On Glacier Trekking seminars, and lower elevation climbs, a pair of good hiking pants is acceptable. They should be roomy and allow freedom of movement.

**PARKA** - For mountaineering expeditions starting at lower elevations (e.g. Mt. Drum) and general mountaineering courses, a Primaloft parka is preferable. For high altitude expeditions (e.g. Mt. Bona), a heavy weight down or thinsulate parka is required. For a First Ascents trip (e.g. Mt. "your name here"), either a down or Primaloft parka is recommended. For the Glacier Seminar, and lower elevation adventures, a heavy fleece jacket and Gore-Tex shell is adequate.

**WIND PARKA & WIND PANTS** – Gore-Tex or an equivalent is required (wind proof soft shell jacket and/or pants are acceptable). Make sure your parka and pants are not so old and abused that they no longer shed water or block the wind! Bibs are great for the Mountaineering and First Ascents Expeditions.



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\_\_\_\_\_ **WARM HATS (2)** – One to sweat in and one to use around camp and while sleeping. Fleece is standard, but many fabrics to choose from.

\_\_\_\_\_ **BALACLAVA** - A balaclava is a hat that can be pulled all the way down over the head to the shoulders. It completely covers the head except for an opening for the eyes. It provides excellent protection of the chin, ears, neck and nose. A thin polypro balaclava is great in conjunction with a Gore-Tex insulated hat.

\_\_\_\_\_ **SUN HAT** - A baseball type hat is great.

\_\_\_\_\_ **GLOVE LINERS** – Preferably polypro - great for handling gear while climbing.

\_\_\_\_\_ **FLEECE GLOVES (2 PAIR)** – Wind-resistant fleece is best, but standard fleece and wool are acceptable. Two pair is a good idea in case of loss or wetness.

\_\_\_\_\_ **WARM SHELL GLOVES** – A good modular glove which includes a matched pair of insulating gloves and a pair of water-resistant shells offers excellent protection. Good models are made by Outdoor Research, Black Diamond and Mountain Hardware. If your hands tend to get cold, you may want to bring some self-heating hand warmer packets, to place inside your shells.

\_\_\_\_\_ **MITTENS** - Thick wool or good synthetic mittens are recommended.

\_\_\_\_\_ **OVERMITTS** - A high quality Gore-Tex overmitt is required. These should fit over your shell gloves – remember that for high altitude mountaineering, your warmest combo should protect you down to -20 degrees Fahrenheit (-30C).

\_\_\_\_\_ **BOOTIES** - These are great to have along on the Mountaineering or First Ascents Expeditions. They should be synthetic (or down with a waterproof shell) and have a durable bottom. We highly recommend putting an extra layer of closed cell foam below the soles of your feet – usually cutting up an old sleeping pad does the trick.

\_\_\_\_\_ **SLEEPING BAG** - For high altitude Mountaineering Expeditions, a bag rated from -20 to -10 degrees Fahrenheit (-30 to -23C) is recommended. For the First Ascents Expeditions, a -10 or 0 degree bag (-23 or -18C) is recommended. For the Glacier Seminar and General Mountaineering a 0 to 10 degree bag (-18 to -12C) is sufficient. Your sleeping bag should be a mummy bag with synthetic fill, or down fill with a Dryloft shell. If using a down fill bag on a High Altitude climb, you may want to consider a vapor barrier liner. Our favorite sleeping bags are Marmot, Feathered Friends, and Western Mountaineering.

\_\_\_\_\_ **FULL LENGTH SLEEPING PADS (2)** - Duralite, Ensolite or any good closed cell mat will do. We recommend bringing two pads, unless you are doing a long, lower elevation approach. With two pads, you can keep one in the tent to sleep on and one to work with and sit on during meals. You can also bring a Therm-a-rest as one of your pads – they are more comfortable to sleep on although not as warm as closed cell foam.

\_\_\_\_\_ **ASSORTED STUFF BAGS (3 or 4)** - These should be waterproof and in assorted sizes.

\_\_\_\_\_ **EXPEDITION PACK** - Size and style of pack depends on the adventure that you will be going on. You will need a large capacity (5,000+ cubic inches) internal frame pack for the High Altitude Expeditions, most General Mountaineering, some First Ascents, and any expedition requiring moving camp more than once. Recommended packs would be the Gregory Whitney, Arc'teryx's Bora 95 or the Wild Things Andinista for the minimalist. A smaller internal frame pack (3,500 plus cubic inches) is suitable for basecamp-style trips. Remember your pack must be comfortable, durable, and roomy. If you are purchasing your pack for this expedition, make sure that you give it a thorough test, fully loaded.

\_\_\_\_\_ **PACK RAIN COVER** - This is an essential item to cover the pack during storms.

\_\_\_\_\_ **BANDANAS (2)** - The colorful silk or cotton kind.

\_\_\_\_\_ **TOILETRY KIT** - Toothpaste, toothbrush, and personal medications (please tell us before the trip of any medications you are taking). Other personal items to consider are: dental floss, wet wipes, a small container of waterless hand sanitizer, tampons or pads, Q-tips, lotion and the infamous “pee bottle”. Although sometimes a squeamish subject, it is a definite relief not to have to get out of the tent in the middle of the night to go pee. We recommend buying a square-shaped Nalgene (assuming your water bottles are round), so that there will be no confusion about which bottle it is. There are a variety of products for female mountaineers that enable them to pee in a bottle more easily, such as The Freshette.



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\_\_\_\_ **SUNGLASSES (TWO PAIR)**- High quality, polarized lenses with UVA and UVB protection. Glacier glasses are good but you can always make some fashionable side shields out of duct tape if need be. Wrap around sunglasses work well also. A nose guard is recommended. We suggest bringing two pairs of sunglasses in case of loss or breakage.

\_\_\_\_ **GOGGLES** – For a high altitude Mountaineering Expedition, you will want a pair of ski goggles.

\_\_\_\_ **SUN SCREEN and LIP BALM** – Both with good high-protection SPF.

\_\_\_\_ **CUP, BOWL AND SPOON** - A plastic insulated mug is best, along with a Tupperware bowl with lid or large Nalgene jar with lid, and a lexan spoon. No metal.

\_\_\_\_ **WATER BOTTLES (2)** – Nalgene wide mouth one quart.

\_\_\_\_ **POCKET KNIFE** - We recommend the "Swiss Army" knives, preferably with scissors, or a Leatherman-style multi purpose tool.

\_\_\_\_ **CAMERA AND FILM** - This item is a must! Pictures are sometimes the only way to describe what you have seen or done! We recommend one roll for every 1-2 days. Don't forget extra batteries, especially if you are bringing a digital camera.

\_\_\_\_ **JOURNAL with PEN/PENCIL** – We highly recommend scrawling down a few thoughts each evening, so that you can go back and relive your adventure later!

\_\_\_\_ **BOOK** - Bring something relaxing to read just before dozing off or for rest days. An absolute must for storm days.

\_\_\_\_ **HEADLAMP** – Good for reading or rummaging through gear during the night. A small LED headlamp is fine, like the Petzl Tikka.

\_\_\_\_ **COMPASS** – The Suunto or Silva brand with declination are the best for the money. If you don't know how to use one, here's a great chance to learn!

\_\_\_\_ **WATCH** – For synchronizing summit days.

\_\_\_\_ **FIRST AID KIT** - We will be carrying a large well equipped first aid kit, but each person should bring any special medications, a few band aids, some mole skin (we highly recommend Spenco Second Skin), adhesive tape and a lighter.

*All of the following gear can be "rented" for a nominal fee as part of your guided climbing trip (an additional \$10 per day will be added on to the cost of your trip). If you have your own, we highly recommend bringing it as it is best to get accustomed to your own equipment.*

\_\_\_\_ **CLIMBING HARNESS** - A good, high quality alpine harness is required. Adjustable leg loops are a must, so that you can go to the bathroom without unclipping from the rope. The most common is the Black Diamond Bod Harness or Alpine Bod.

\_\_\_\_ **CRAMPONS** – Preferably strap-on crampons. If they are step-ins make sure that they fit well on your boot and work well with your overboots. You should also bring a compatible spare bar.

\_\_\_\_ **ICE AXE** – A standard mountain axe with leash.

\_\_\_\_ **ICE SCREW** – Just one to secure yourself if necessary. Titanium is light.

\_\_\_\_ **CARABINERS (7 total)** – You will need 3 large, locking carabiners as well as 4 regular carabiners (preferably wiregates and/or ovals).

\_\_\_\_ **PRUSIKS** – 1 Texas T or step prusik (approximately 10-12 feet or 3-3.5m of cordage), 1 waist prusik (6-8 feet or 1.8-2.4m of cordage), and 1 short prusik (4-5 feet or 1.33m of cordage). Cordage should be 5 or 6 mm.

\_\_\_\_ **PULLEYS** – One pulley is acceptable, two is best. We recommend the Petzl Mini.

\_\_\_\_ **WEBBING** – You will need to make an improvised chest harness, and have enough left over for a quick rap anchor. Bring about 8-10 feet of 9/16" or greater tubular webbing (that's 2.5 to 3 meters of 15mm or greater, for our metric-minded friends).