

E Q U I P M E N T L I S T

Alaska Backpacking

Welcome to NOLS! We look forward to having you with us this summer in Alaska. For your safety and comfort you will want to have the most suitable equipment on your course.

This list is designed to assist you in deciding what to bring to Alaska. The gear listed generally gets taken on these trips. There is also a list of optional items some people choose to bring. Remember that you will be carrying all your gear. Extra items definitely affect pack weight. The actual gear needed for your course may vary slightly, given course location and time in the season. Your instructors will inform you of any changes on the first day.

We can provide you with all of the equipment on this list, other than those items designated as "Must Bring." You are not obligated to purchase or rent gear from us.

We recommend that you only bring gear that you already own or that you can obtain inexpensively. On the first day you will sit down with one of your instructors and look at each of the items you may have brought. If the item meets our standards, you can bring it on your trip. You may store any excess gear at our headquarters.

While you do not have to rent gear from us, there are several reasons why we suggest it. Our rental gear is high quality, chosen and maintained specifically for the use it receives on our courses. The rental prices are reasonable given the wear the equipment receives. Also, if you plan to purchase gear, you will have a better understanding of your future needs after the course. Even if your equipment is appropriate, it will receive lots of hard use. Students are often surprised at the amount of wear that is put on their personal gear in a month.

If you decide to purchase boots, please refer to the Boot Fitting Guide that is included in your enrollment packet.

In addition to your course tuition, you have been billed \$250 as an equipment rental deposit. This deposit will be applied directly to the charges you incur for equipment rental, cleaning, purchase of personal items, and any loss or damage to our gear. Total charges will vary depending upon the amount of equipment that you rent or purchase from us. The equipment rental and purchase prices located in the gear checklist will allow you to estimate your charges. If your bill is less than the \$250 deposit, the difference will be refunded to you by mail. If you think that your bill may exceed the deposit, please bring cash, travelers' checks, check, Visa or MasterCard to cover the excess.

If you have any specific questions, please call our admission office in Lander at (800) 710-NOLS.

The availability of each item is indicated as follows:

Purchase Only - Indicates that the item is available from NOLS, but for PURCHASE ONLY.

Must Bring - Indicates that the item is NOT AVAILABLE from NOLS.

Prices are projected for current courses at NOLS. **All rental prices cover the entire course.** Purchase price listed is for new gear; used gear will be discounted proportionally according to amount of wear. ALL PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE. Please note that quantities may vary slightly due to instructor preference or weather conditions.

Footwear					
Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Leather Boots	Must Bring	Must Bring	1 pair	It is difficult to have the best of all worlds with boots in Alaska, due to possible wet conditions and varied terrain. Conventional leather boots can be used on a wilderness course. Whether you plan to buy boots before your course or own a pair of hiking boots, be sure to read below on fitting boots. Remember, boots should fit comfortably with 2 pairs of heavy wool socks, regardless of what the salesperson will tell you. A light liner sock may be worn next to the skin, but should not be substituted for heavy wool socks.	
Socks	Purchase Only	\$6- \$15	6 pairs	Must be 75 to 100% wool, Merino wool, heavy rag type, or thick polypropylene (no wool/cotton blends). A pair of neoprene socks (these are lightweight socks constructed out of neoprene that do not have a hard sole and can be found at most SCUBA diving shops) may be substituted for one pair of wool socks. We have a supply for sale.	
Camp Shoes	Must Bring	Must Bring	1 pair	Sneakers or running shoes in good condition to wear around camp. Moccasins, Texas and sandals are unacceptable.	
Gaiters	\$15	\$20 - \$60	1 pair	Must be knee-high and durable. We issue OR Crocodile and custom gaiters. Any gaiters with a double closure (i.e. both zippers and snaps) or 2" velcro are also suitable. Outdoor Research, Black Diamond, and Mountain Hardware are some brands to look for.	
Galoshes	\$8	\$20	1 pair	These should fit comfortably over your sneakers or camp shoes and reach your shins. We have a large supply of Galoshes. We recommend that you rent these from NOLS.	

Upper Body Clothing					
<p>You will need 3-4 upper-body insulating layers that fit comfortably over each other. One layer must be a fleece jacket or insulated jacket such as a Mountain Hardware Chugach jacket. If you tend to get cold easily, we suggest that you count on taking four layers. We generally expect students to provide one or two upper-body insulating layers from the following list. NOLS will fill in the gaps.</p>					
Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Base Layer (Long Underwear Top)	Purchase Only	\$25-\$75	1-2	Although mid- or expedition-weight polypropylene or polyester (Capilene or Extend by Mountain Hardware) is preferred, a wool top (at least 75% wool and no wool/cotton blends) of similar weight may be substituted. Mid-weight tops only constitute a half-layer, while expedition-weight tops are considered a whole layer.	

Upper Body Clothing (continued)					
Fleece Pullover or Sweater	Purchase Only	\$45-\$100	1	This can be any secondary fleece layer of 100 to 200 wt polar fleece. An expedition weight long underwear top can be substituted.	
Fleece or insulated vest	\$18	\$45-\$150	1	You may want a vest to supplement the upper layers. Insulation should be some type of polyester such as Light Loft, Polarguard 3D, and Thinsulate. We rent fleece vests as an extra layer.	
Fleece Jacket	\$18	\$45-\$100	1	We rent 300-weight Polar Fleece jackets. This could be the outer layer and should fit comfortably over the other two. A light insulated jacket such as a puff ball pullover could be substituted for this layer.	
Insulated Jacket	\$20	\$110-\$200	1	An insulated jacket that is lightweight, such as the Mountain Hardwear Chugach or the Patagonia Puffball, is a good third layer for mountaineering courses. This jacket should fit over your other layers.	
Synthetic or Cotton T-shirt	Purchase Only	\$10-\$35	1	To wear on warm days. We strongly encourage the lightweight polyester, polypro, or coolmax top because it can dry much more quickly than a cotton T-shirt. We have these for sale with the NOLS AK logo. A long sleeved T-shirt or heavy oxford shirt may be preferred to help with bug protection.	
Wind Shirt	\$18	\$50-\$150	1	Nylon wind shell, preferably with a hood,(not waterproof) that should be roomy enough to fit comfortably over all upper-body layers. Gore-Tex is acceptable.	
Rain Parka	\$20	\$99-\$200	1	We rent three-layer Gore XCR Parkas as a rain parka with a hood. It should be roomy enough to fit comfortably over all upper-body layers. Coated nylon or waterproof breathable jackets and parkas are acceptable. Ponchos are unacceptable.	

Lower Body Clothing					
You will need two lower-body insulating layers that should fit comfortably over each other and underneath your wind or rain pants. These should be medium weight base layer (long underwear) bottoms and either an expedition weight polypro bottom or fleece pants.					
Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Base Layer (Long Underwear) Bottoms	Purchase Only	\$25- \$45	1-2 pairs	These must be midweight polypropylene, polyester (e.g. Capilene, Extend by Mtn Hardwear) . Cotton and Duofold are unacceptable.	
Fleece Pants	\$18	\$65-\$100	1 pair	We rent polar fleece pants with an ankle zip. Expedition weight long underwear bottoms may also acceptable.	
Rain Pants	\$18	\$50-\$100	1 pair	We rent lightweight pants made from etherlite coated polyetherurethane nylon and Gore XCR rain pants. Gore-Tex pants may double as wind/rain pants.	

Lower Body Clothing (continued)

Wind Pants	\$18	\$55-\$100	1 pair	Nylon shell pants. These should fit comfortably over all lower-body layers. Side-zippers allow the pants to be put on over boots. Breathable fabrics such as Gore-Tex are acceptable, but lightweight "running pants" are NOT durable enough. If you own Gore-Tex bibs, we recommend that you bring them. We recommend renting NOLS wind pants. They are the most popular piece of equipment NOLS has designed. Many students purchase their windpants at the end of their course.	
Nylon Shorts	Purchase Only	\$25-\$45	1 pair	Light athletic shorts are fine. These do not serve as an insulating layer.	

Miscellaneous Clothing

Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Sun hat (baseball cap or felt hat)	Purchase Only	\$10-\$20	1 of either	Should be wide-brimmed to protect from sun and rain.	
Fleece or Wool cap or Fleece Hood	\$6	\$20	1	A ski cap or balaclava is good.	
Mosquito Headnet	\$4	\$12	1	It should come down below your neck and be a good quality weave.	
Neckwarmer or scarf	\$6	\$8-\$15	1 pair	Fleece neckwarmers are great and very comfortable. A scarf is acceptable but should be at least 75% wool.	
Fleece or Wool gloves	Purchase Only	\$10-\$25	1 pair	Fleece, Ragg wool, Dachstein, and army surplus are adequate. Heavy polypropylene gloves are also acceptable.	
Fleece or Wool mittens	Purchase Only	\$6-\$20	1 pair	Fleece, Ragg wool, Dachstein, and army surplus are adequate.	

Sleeping Gear					
Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Sleeping Bag	\$40	\$180	1	We use only synthetic-filled sleeping bags (Polarguard 3D, Light Loft, Polarguard HV). A down bag with a Gore-Tex exterior (or a Gore-Tex bivy sack) might be acceptable depending on your course area and the condition of the fabric. For this course, your bag should have a temperature rating of at least 15 degrees.	
Sleeping Pad	\$8	\$10-\$75	1 or 2	Should be closed-cell foam and 3/8" thick. Used for padding and insulation between sleeping bag and ground. We highly recommend and sell self inflating sleeping mat as one of your pads. Thermarest and Insulmat are great brands.	
Sleeping Bag Stuff Sack	\$8	\$28-\$35	1	The type of sleeping bag stuff sack needed depends upon the type of pack you are using. For internal frame packs, a compression stuff sack lined with plastic trash compactor bags is used. Lowe and Granite Gear are fine options. We use a compression stuff sack to make the sleeping bag easier to pack. For external frame packs, the sack must be oversized to accommodate more than just the sleeping bag.	

Backpacks and Storage Bags					
Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Internal Frame Pack or Pack Frame and Pack Bag	\$75	\$300-\$500	1	We use Lowe, Dana Design and Osprey internal frame packs. Other proven brands include: Arc'teryx, North Face and Gregory. If you bring an internal frame pack, it will be examined by your instructors to determine its suitability for your course and route. It must have a volume of at least 6,000 to 7,000 cubic inches. Side pockets and a compression stuff sack are recommended. External frame pack bags should have a volume of at least 3,500 cubic inches.	
Summit Pack	Purchase Only	\$50-\$100	1	This is only necessary for students bringing their own external frame pack. It should be a medium-sized day pack that is large enough to hold a sweater, rain jacket, water bottle, gloves, hat and an extra bottom layer: 1,800 to 2,000 cubic inches minimum. Book bag types are usually too small.	
Lash Straps	\$4	\$3.50	2 pairs	Should be at least 24". External frame packs will need 2 pairs of longer lash straps - approximately 54".	

Backpacks and Storage Bags (continued)					
Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Small Stuff Sacks	\$4	\$3- \$10	1-3	Used to organize items in your pack.	
Zip Bag	\$5	\$15-\$20	1-2	1 medium (12"X24") and 2 small each (9"x18") nylon duffel bags for carrying food. We use Outdoor Products brand.	
Waterproof Bag Liners	Purchase Only	\$.50	5	Plastic trash compactor bags are sturdy and work well. These can be found in any grocery store.	

Miscellaneous Personal Gear					
Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Bandannas	Purchase Only	\$2	1-2	For multiple uses.	
Sun glasses/goggles	Purchase Only	\$30-\$110	1 pair	Any good quality sunglasses with 100% UV protection will work fine. If you wear prescription lenses and have limited vision without them, bring your own prescription sunglasses or look for a quality pair of clip-on polarized shades at a specialty fishing store. Lenses should be dark and block 100 percent Ultra Violet. Glass lenses will get scratched less than plastic. We sell Smith and Optic Nerve. Julbo, Bolle, Coyote Vision, Oakley, and Bausch & Lomb are good brands.	
Eating Gear	Purchase Only	\$5-\$10	NA	Rubbermaid (3pint) type bowl with a lid, laxan plastic spoon, and insulated mugs are great. Mug volumes of 12 oz. to 20 oz. are recommended with 20 oz mugs preferred by many.	
Water Bottle	Purchase Only	\$6	1 or 2	Wide-mouth quart- or liter-size.	
Lip Balm	Purchase Only	\$2	1-2 tubes	Stick or cream with sun protection.	
Extreme Sunscreen	Purchase Only	\$6	1 tube or bottle	A tube or bottle of 2-3 oz. is plenty. A sun protection factor of 23 or greater is necessary.	
Bic Lighter	Purchase Only	\$1	1	Used to light stoves.	

Miscellaneous Personal Gear (continued)					
Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Insect Repellent	Purchase Only	\$4	1	A small bottle.	
Notebook and Pen/Pencil	Must Bring	Must Bring	1 each	A steno-type notebook is fine. Avoid heavy notebooks.	
Toilet Articles	Must Bring	Must Bring	NA	Toothbrush, toothpaste, comb, brush, skin lotion, tampons. For liquids, sample sizes of 2 oz. are preferable. Odorous items can be bear attractants and should be avoided.	
Watch	Must Bring	Must Bring	1	A cheap watch is best; waterproof and with alarm is preferable. Please bring a watch even if you are not accustomed to using one.	
Prescription Glasses and Contact Lenses	Must Bring	Must Bring	NA	If you wear prescription glasses or lenses, you should bring a spare set.	

Optional Items					
Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Lightweight Base Layer (Top)	Purchase Only	\$10 -\$20	1	To wear on warm days.	
Camera/Film	Must Bring	Must Bring	1	You will need to bring a protective container. An Army ammo box is ideal for the paddling section, but a small waterproof bag is more suitable for the other sections.	
Book	Must Bring	Must Bring	1	A small book for pleasure reading.	
Thermos	Purchase Only	\$25-\$35	1	A one or two quart vacuum bottle is great to have on the river. Be sure it is stainless steel and not glass.	
Knife	Must Bring	Must Bring	1	A small pocketknife.	
Headlamp or Flashlight	Must Bring	Must Bring	1	These are good for August. Should be lightweight. Not needed in June or July. Remember, Alaska is the Land of the Midnight Sun.	
Trekking Poles	Must Bring	Must Bring	1-2	One or two trekking poles. Ski pole type trekking poles are preferred. Walking sticks or track skiing poles are not acceptable.	

Optional Items (continued)

Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Candles	Must Bring	Must Bring	1-2	Plumber's candles or Pink Ladies are fine. Again, these come in handy for August courses.	
Underwear	Must Bring	Must Bring	2-4 pair	Briefs or boxer shorts. We recommend women bring silk or nylon "undies" which dry fast after a wash. Many outdoor stores sell polyester underwear which are a bit expensive but help to keep you warm and dry. Jogging bras made out of supplex/lycra or polypropylene wick moisture away from your skin and are highly recommended.	
Waterproof Pack cover	Must Bring	Must Bring	1	Bring one if you have one.	
Vitamins	Must Bring	Must Bring	NA	A multi-vitamin supplement to the diet is preferred by some.	
Flyfishing Gear	Must Bring	Must Bring	1 set	If you have your own rod and tackle feel free to bring it.	
Compass	Must Bring	Must Bring	1	We distribute one compass to each tent group. However, when students bring their own compasses, more map reading practice is possible for everyone.	
Crazy Creek or similar camp chair	Must Bring	Must Bring	1	Past students recommend these for meetings and classes.	
Umbrella	Must Bring	Must Bring	1	A golf umbrella is recommended for Brooks Range courses.	

Shared Group Equipment—NOLS will supply

Expedition members share both the use of and the responsibility for the group gear that NOLS issues. NOLS charges only for group equipment lost or damaged. Keep in mind that NOLS evaluates gear from a number of perspectives beyond those which an individual user might consider. Performance, durability and simplicity are all contributing factors towards our gear selection.

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| 1. Tent | 6. Shovel | 11. Cooking Gear/Spice Kits |
| 2. Stove (white gas only,
we use Optimus & MSR) | 7. Kayaks or Canoes | 12. Fishing Gear |
| 3. Fuel Bottles & Funnel | 8. Paddles | 13. Maps |
| 4. Compass | 9. Repair Kits | |
| 5. Whetstone | 10. Reference Books | |

FIRST AID:

Our instructors carry adequate first aid kits. There is no need to bring your own.

Boot Selection Guide

NOLS has been outfitting people with boots for many years and our priorities have remained the same: We want you to have boots that provide adequate protection for your feet, that are durable enough to withstand a month of rugged wear, and that provide reasonable comfort. Many boots available on the market do not meet these criteria, and a boot that is good for your personal use may not be a good boot for your NOLS course.

By our standards, a boot should have the following:

- a sole that provides good traction, like Vibram or other lugged sole.
- 1/2 to 3/4 length shank or **full poly mid-sole** stiffener within the sole to provide foot support and protection
- a full-grain, one-piece leather upper -**Boots that are constructed from a combination of nylon and leather sewn together are not durable enough and are unacceptable.**
- good ankle support for rugged off-trail hiking with a heavy pack

The following lists are not exhaustive, but should help define what boots are acceptable for your course. We don't judge these as good or bad boots, but if you arrive with a pair similar to those on the unacceptable list, don't expect to take them on your course. **The acceptable boot list is a list of styles that can be compared to boots not on this list. The boots on this list are old styles as well as some current models . PLEASE SEE YOUR ENROLLMENT PACKET FOR INSTRUCTIONS ON PROPERLY FITTING BOOTS.**

EXAMPLES OF ACCEPTABLE BOOTS (WITH A PROPER FIT)

Asolo Meridan, Longitude, Latitude
Asolo Cygnus, Mansfield
Garmont Rebel, PicosII, Chitral
LaSportiva M-Hike, Tibet
Limmer Hiker
Limmer Mountain
Lowa Baffin, Scout
Merrell Ridgeline
Merrell Wilderness
Montrail Vercors
Raichle Trekker
Salomon Raid Mtn, Mach 8, SM8
Tecnica Horizon, Stratos, Shasta
Vasque Super Hiker II

EXAMPLES OF BOOTS WHICH ARE UNACCEPTABLE

Asolo Voyageur
Danner Mtn. Light, Alpine, Winterlight
Garmont Force, Vegan, Syncro
La Sportiva Storm
Lowa Tanark
Nike Zealand
Nike Lava High
Raichle Ecolite
Salomon STF 6, X-Adv 7
Vasque Clarion
Vasque Liberty
Vasque Skywalker
Vasque Sundancer

