

# How to Pack for a Camping Trip, 10 Steps

The wilderness can be unforgiving, even with the proper gear. The last thing you want is to reach a remote destination and find that you forgot something essential. Develop a parts list to guarantee that you're well equipped.

## Instructions

**Step 1:** Establish a staging area. Use a corner of your garage or living room and pile gear there prior to packing. If you have the space, begin moving gear to the staging area several days ahead of time. This prevents overloading your brain at the last minute.

**Step 2:** Take a good look at your gear pile when you think it's complete. Spend a minute reviewing your parts checklist and check everything on it.

**Step 3:** Pack your clothing. You want to layer your clothing to meet changing temperatures and conditions. Pack spare clothing in case you get wet. Avoid cotton unless your trip is in a very warm climate--cotton dries slowly and offers no insulation when wet. Synthetic long underwear and jackets are best. Include a warm wool or fleece hat. While it is ok to have some spare clothing, resist the urge to bring everything in your closet. Most people don't use all the clothing they bring and regret having to carry it.

**Step 4:** Test your gear before you go. If batteries are involved, check if they are fresh and consider reversing polarity for transport.. Purchase a headlamp instead of a flashlight for hands-free convenience (available at REI.com for \$20 to \$40).

**Step 5:** Purchase several small and medium nylon bags (stuff sacks) to divide your gear. Cooking gear can go in one bag, first aid items in another bag, and so on. All can go into one or two larger bags.

**Step 6:** Plan your water supply. If water is scarce, consider having a large water bladder in your pack/bag such as those made by Camelback. In addition to offering a high capacity, water bladders have a hose that allows you to drink while you're on the move.

**Step 7:** Buy a good sleeping pad or two. Many people like to stack a fulllength sleeping pad on top of a shorter one. The extra warmth and comfort makes the weight and bulk worthwhile. Camping stores have several brands of pads, from \$20 to \$100.

**Step 8:** Plan your meals ahead, so you'll be guaranteed to have enough food and foods you like. You might want to consider packing your own energy bars just in case. .

**Step 9:** Weigh luxuries against absolute necessities (for instance, a handheld GPS is fun and helpful, but a map and compass work fine, too). Your specific destination may require additional gear or far less, if weight is an issue.

**Step 10:** Upon completion of the trip, unpack and review what was used and not used to evaluate if you want to pack that item again. Perhaps there is an item you forgot and need to add to the check list ? Also note what needs to be repaired or upgraded.