

# Equipment for your Outdoor Action Trip

Here is all the information you need to pack for your Frosh Trip. When selecting gear for the trip, remember that you'll be in the outdoors for six days, so you'll want to bring *only* those things you need to be comfortable. Leave behind what isn't necessary—extra stuff just adds weight. This equipment list is based on 40 years of experience running Outdoor Action Trips. ***If you bring ALL the gear on the list and ONLY the gear on the list, you'll be comfortable in virtually any situation you'll encounter on Frosh Trip.***

Checkout the OA Video on YouTube to help you pack for your trip:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9LbrjeQCVq0>

---

**Fabrics:** For hiking you want clothing that is warm, breathable, and quick-drying. **Synthetic** fabrics are best because they won't absorb water, dry quickly, and are relatively windproof. Many people already have synthetic clothing at home, so you may not need to go out and purchase clothing just for this trip. Items like running gear, athletic warm-ups, and skiing/snowboarding gear can easily be used on this trip—so check out your closet or borrow from a friend *before* going to the store. Lightweight synthetic/cotton (50/50 blend) shirts, underwear, and pants are fine. You should **avoid** bringing *all-cotton* clothing since it absorbs water easily and won't keep you warm if it gets wet. Cotton also retains water so that it takes a *very* long time to dry. ***Do NOT bring all-cotton clothes such as sweatshirts, sweatpants, or jeans.***

**Dressing for the Weather:** Weather is unpredictable, so you'll need to bring a range of clothing for various temperatures, as well as rain. During the day, northeast temperatures at the end of summer can range from the 60s F at the low end to the 90s F. Temperatures can be considerably cooler at night, though, dropping into the 30s F and 40s F.

**Layering:** Dressing in layers is the most efficient way to stay comfortable in the outdoors. By bringing several different layers, you can add or remove clothing to match your activity level and the weather conditions.

- The **Base/Wicking Layer** keeps the skin comfortable and dry, which is essential for controlling your temperature. Polypropylene or other synthetic fabrics are ideal since they wick moisture away from your skin. Such lightweight synthetics or synthetic/cotton blends provide good ventilation for the skin to keep you dry and cool. During the day you'll probably be hiking in a T-shirt and shorts.
- The **Middle Layer** is made up of a long sleeve shirt and long pants, which provide insulation and some protection from the elements. You may wear these while hiking for cooler temperatures or to protect you from sun, or at camp at night and in the early morning.
- The **Outer Layer**—usually a fleece jacket or wool sweater—provides insulation. Synthetic fleece fabrics (such as Polartec) don't absorb water, so they keep you warm even if they get wet. You'll wear this layer around camp at night and in the early morning when it is cooler.
- The **Shell Layer** protects you from wind and rain. ***A waterproof rain jacket is vital in case of bad weather.*** A coated nylon rain jacket is lightweight, inexpensive, and works well. Waterproof-breathable fabrics like Gore-tex also work well but can be expensive. Raingear is not only essential for Frosh Trip, but also will get plenty of use on campus. All rain gear must be tested in the shower prior to arriving on campus.
- For the final layer, your **Head**, bring a wide-brimmed hat for sun and rain protection. At night, you'll need a wool or synthetic fleece hat to keep you warm—it can get colder than you think at night.

**Think Before You Buy!** Although backpacking requires specialized gear, you may be surprised how many items you already own or can borrow from a friend or relative. For example, you likely already own the synthetic or 50/50 synthetic/cotton blend clothing that is best for backpacking. ***Borrowing gear not only saves you money, but also contributes to Outdoor Action's effort to be environmentally friendly in all our activities.*** After all, hundreds of incoming freshmen buying hundreds of petroleum-based products for one-time use on Frosh Trip leaves a pretty serious impact on the environment. Borrow (or improvise!) first, then buy used gear if you can so that polluting/non-renewable resources are not being consumed to manufacture your new gear. Items that are most appropriate to buy new are those that require precise fitting (like boots) and those that you will use a lot around campus after Frosh Trip (like a rain jacket). ***If you are buying new gear, please ask retailers to show you products made from recycled or sustainable materials, or search online for different sustainable or environmentally friendly options.***

---

# Backpacking Trip: Personal Equipment List

Please check off each item as you assemble your equipment to make sure that you have everything.

---

**Outdoor Action can provide sleeping bags and/or backpacks if requested by July 31. Update your application at <https://oa.princeton.edu/applications/ft/frosh/applicationedit.aspx>.**

*If you already own these items or could borrow them, PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN.*

\_\_\_\_\_ **1 external or internal frame backpack** with shoulder straps and padded hip belt. External frame packs should have 2,000 - 3,000 cubic inches of volume and internal frame packs 4,000 - 5,000 cubic inches. Make sure the pack fits well and that all straps and zippers are in working order. If you have an external frame pack, bring sleeping bag straps, bungee cord, or rope to hold your sleeping bag onto the pack.

\_\_\_\_\_ **1 sleeping bag with stuff sack:** Any summer weight synthetic fill bag will do (fills like Polarguard Delta, CloudLoft, PrimaLoft, Thermic CF). If the bag has a temperature rating, a 35 to 45° F bag should be fine. The bag should have a nylon shell both inside and outside. Down bags are acceptable, but extra care must be taken to keep them dry. **Do not bring bags with cotton shell, fill, or lining**—if they get wet, you'll never get them dry.

**You MUST bring the following items. Outdoor Action cannot supply them to you.**

## **Feet:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **1 pair of lightweight hiking boots:** Your boots should extend over the ankle for ankle support; have lug soles for traction; and be either leather/nylon or all-leather. Leather/nylon boots that extend over the ankle are fine for Frosh Trip and are lightweight enough to wear around campus. All-leather boots are more durable, but they're generally heavier. If you plan to do more hiking, it may be worthwhile to invest in all-leather mid-weight boots. In addition, waterproof boots are best: the boots may already have a Gore-tex (waterproof/breathable) liner, or you can treat the leather with a waterproofing compound before the trip. Boots should fit comfortably with two pairs of socks: (1) a light synthetic liner sock and (2) a mid-weight wool sock. Having two sock layers means your socks slide against each other, so that the friction from your boots is absorbed by the sock layers rather than your skin. Friction against the skin is what causes blisters. While wearing two layers of sock, you should have a little extra room at the toe of the boot so that your big toe doesn't jam against the front of the boot when walking downhill. **Make sure your boots are well broken in before you arrive; otherwise your feet will pay the price! Start walking in them weeks beforehand. We cannot emphasize this enough: boots that aren't broken in invariably cause blisters!** See the excerpt below on boots from *The Backpacker's Field Manual* for more information.

\_\_\_\_\_ **1 pair camp/wading shoes:** Your feet will be tired at the end of the day, and you'll need comfortable shoes to wear around camp. Camp/wading shoes could be: sneakers/running shoes, Crocs, or sandals with a heel strap (e.g. Chacos) that will stay on your feet (**not flip-flops**). We recommend that your choice dries quickly.

\_\_\_\_\_ **2-3 pairs of light synthetic/polypropylene liner socks:** Wearing liner socks underneath wool socks helps to prevent chafing since the friction is between the two pairs of socks, not between the boots and your feet. **Do not bring cotton socks.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **2-3 pairs of medium weight wool hiking socks:** Wool socks keep your feet warm even when wet and give good cushioning. The higher the wool content of the socks the better (we recommend 85% wool, 15% nylon). **Do not bring cotton socks.**

## **Lower Body:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Underwear as needed (Girls: 1 per day; Guys: preference). Synthetic preferable.

\_\_\_\_\_ 1-2 pairs non-cotton shorts, loose-fitting (athletic shorts are great)

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 pair non-cotton long pants, loose-fitting: nylon, synthetic, fleece, or 50/50 synthetic/cotton blend. Athletic warm-ups are great. **No blue jeans or sweatpants**—they take too long to dry!

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 pair lightweight polypropylene long underwear bottoms (optional but highly recommended if you get cold easily)

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 pair waterproof rain pants or rain chaps, coated nylon (optional)

\_\_\_\_\_ **1 bathing suit (highly recommended)**

## Upper Body:

\_\_\_\_\_ T-shirts: 1 synthetic OR 1-2 synthetic/cotton (must be at least 50% synthetic). Outdoor Action will provide an additional shirt when you arrive.

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 long-sleeve shirt: synthetic (like under armour or nike drifit), athletic warm-up, 50/50 synthetic/cotton blend

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 synthetic fleece jacket or wool sweater: The mountains get chilly at night! (no cotton in this layer)

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 rain jacket or poncho: coated nylon or waterproof/breathable fabric like Gore-tex. **Make sure it's still waterproof**—the waterproof coating on nylon rain jackets degrades over time! You can easily test in the shower. Don't bring heavy rubberized rain jackets; they weigh a ton and you'll end up getting very hot and sweaty. Be careful with windbreakers and track jackets, most are not waterproof. **Water resistant is not the same as waterproof.**

## Head:

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 brimmed cap (wide-brimmed, baseball, etc) for sun and rain protection

\_\_\_\_\_ **1 wool or synthetic fleece hat for warmth at night**

**OTHER:** *The following items should be available at home or can be purchased cheaply.*

### Personal

\_\_\_\_\_ **Any medications you will need to take during the trip (allergy medications, inhaler, etc.)**

\_\_\_\_\_ Bring glasses, contact lenses, and contact solution as needed. Bring spare glasses if you plan on wearing only contacts. It is difficult to wash hands/lenses in the outdoors, so glasses are preferred, but many do wear disposable contacts during the trip.

\_\_\_\_\_ Women: bring any feminine sanitary products you expect you will need

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 toilet kit: Only toothbrush, small tube of toothpaste, comb/brush, sunscreen, and lip balm. **Do not bring "smellables" like shampoo, soap, shaving cream, deodorant, etc.** Things that "smell good" to us are an attraction for insects and animals. OA will provide biodegradable soap.

\_\_\_\_\_ Insect repellent. Repellents with high concentrations of DEET are hazardous, so please do not bring products with more than 35% DEET. No aerosols please—it's bad for the environment.

### Gear

\_\_\_\_\_ **1 closed-cell foam sleeping pad** (3/8 in. foam) or inflatable camping pad (like a Thermarest—*not* a full-size inflatable mattress). Sleeping pads provide padding and insulation from the ground for more comfortable sleeping, and they help keep your sleeping bag dry.

\_\_\_\_\_ **3 one-liter reusable water bottles, preferably Nalgene.** *You must have these water bottles!* We recommend plastic bottles (a non-BPA plastic or polyethylene). **THE SUSTAINABILITY OFFICE WILL BE GIVING 1 PRINCETON NALGENE BOTTLE AT HOUSING CHECK-IN AT BAKER RINK.** So **bring 2** with you and get 1 on Saturday.

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 small flashlight or LED headlamp with fresh, alkaline batteries (alkaline batteries last longer). Headlamps are preferred, as they leave your hands free. **It gets very dark in the wilderness, don't forget this.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **At least 3 heavy plastic garbage bags:** one for sleeping bag, one for inside your backpack, and one as a rain cover.

\_\_\_\_\_ **5-6 gallon size Ziploc bags** or 2-3 plastic grocery bags for packing

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 plastic cup with handle (recommend Fairshare Mug)

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 plastic bowl (Tupperware works great) (recommend Fairshare Mug)

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 spoon

\_\_\_\_\_ 2 bandannas or handkerchiefs. They are useful for many things in the outdoors.

### OPTIONAL

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 camera

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 small notebook and pencil

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 pair sunglasses or clip-ons

\_\_\_\_\_ Travel size packets of hand wipes/towelettes (like Wet Ones)

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 pair lightweight, synthetic gloves

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 multi-tool (e.g. Swiss Army, Leatherman)

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 individual bottle of hand sanitizer (2 oz.)

**DO NOT BRING:** *You'll survive without these things, we promise!*

- Electronics: cell phones, iPods, CD players, etc.
- "Smellables": (attracts bugs and wild animals) deodorant, makeup, nail polish, hair spray, etc.

## Sources for Equipment

You may have a local backpacking shop in your town, or you can go to a chain store or shop online. **There are also a number of websites that resell used gear, this will save you money and reduce the environmental impact of your gear.** Some sources:

EMS -- [www.ems.com](http://www.ems.com)

REI -- [www.rei.com](http://www.rei.com)

L.L. Bean -- [www.llbean.com](http://www.llbean.com)

Sierra Trading Post -- [www.sierratradingpost.com](http://www.sierratradingpost.com)

Campmor -- [www.campmor.com](http://www.campmor.com)

### BOOTS (Excerpted from *The Backpacker's Field Manual* by Rick Curtis)

Your boots are among the most important pieces of equipment that you bring into the backcountry. With every step, they are the direct interface between you and the land. Boots come in an almost infinite array of heights, weights, materials, soles, etc. They should be selected according to your needs—day trip versus multiday, packweight, terrain, season and temperature, your hiking style (traditional versus ultralight), and personal characteristics (e.g., weak ankles), to name a few. And there isn't one boot that is best for every condition. The boots that are best for a day hike are not the best boots for a multiday winter camping expedition. Boots are an investment. Selecting, fitting, breaking in, and caring for your boots will help them last a long time and will maximize your own comfort.

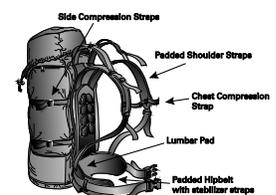
**What Kind of Boots:** There's no one boot that does it all, although there are boots that will handle a pretty wide range of uses and conditions. It's generally estimated that every pound (0.45 kg) of weight in your boots is the equivalent in energy expenditure of adding 5 pounds (2.25 kg) to your back. Lifting your feet up for thousands of steps each day takes a lot of energy. When you are looking for boots, go with the lightest weight boot that meets your needs. I think about what I need in a boot in relation to what I am doing on the trail. If I am doing an extended mountaineering trip and I've got a 60-pound (27 kg) pack, I want a stiff boot that extends well over the ankle to provide me with the kind of support I need. This boot is going to be somewhat heavy. If I'm going on a multiday trip and carrying 40 pounds (18 kg), I'll be fine with a lightweight boot that extends just over the ankle. You'll notice that I defined all of this in terms of *my* personal needs. I've got notoriously weak ankles, so I always opt for a lot of ankle support. Someone else might not need this much support (boot weight) while others might need more. As with clothing systems, you need to decide what your body needs and look for the lightest thing that meets those needs. Some people bring a second pair of "camp shoes" for use in camp. After a long day it feels good to get out of your boots and air out your feet, especially if they are wet from sweat or rain. Changing to camp shoes can also help reduce your impact at camp.

**Fitting Boots:** Proper fitting of boots is essential, and whole treatises have been written on the subject. One thing to know about boots is that all boots are constructed on what's called a *last*, a representative "average" foot mold (length, width at toes, width at heel, etc.) that the boot is built around for each shoe size. Some boot makers use a unisex last for each size while others have a separate last for women's boots and men's boots (and there are lasts for children's boots). I've found that some manufacturers' lasts just don't work with my feet while others seem to be just right. Finding that winning combination of a boot that has the features you want and the correct last is your goal. You should try new boots on in the afternoon, since your feet swell during the day. Select a sock combination of a liner sock and outer sock that you plan to wear on the trip, and try the boots on. Bring your own socks. A lot of times I've forgotten to bring my own socks to the store and end up using socks from some random pile the store has. Then when I get home it turns out that with my own socks the boots don't fit right. With the boot unlaced, slide your foot all the way to the toe end of the boot. You should be able to get your index finger to fit between the back of your heel and the back of the boot. Lace up the boots with moderate tension. The laces should hold the boot in an "intermediate position"—that is, that you still have room to crank them tighter, pulling the boot together more, or loosening them up, so you can tighten or loosen the boots as needed. You should be able to wiggle your toes inside the boot. With your foot flat on the ground, hold the boot heel down and try to lift your heel inside the boot. There should be only 1/4 to 1/2 inch (6 to 12 millimeters) of heel lift. Too much heel lift will lead to friction and possible heel blisters. You also want to check the boot length. With the boot firmly laced, do some good hard kicks against a post or the floor. Do your toes smash into the front of the boot? If so you've discovered "boot bang." This is a serious problem. On long downhill stretches your toes smashing into the front of the boot can result in lost toenails and other foot problems. Whatever boot bang you experience in the store will be magnified when you are going downhill with a heavy pack. If you are getting boot bang, try lacing differently, another size, different sock combination, or another boot. As we get older our feet tend to get longer—no, we aren't still growing, but most people's arches begin to flatten out and without that curve the feet get longer. So if you haven't been hiking for a while you might be in trouble if you pull that five-year-old pair of boots out of the closet and expect them to fit like they used to. If it's been a while, wear them around *before* your trip and make sure it's not time to buy a new pair.

**Breaking in Boots:** Before you leave the store with your new boots, make sure that you can bring them back if they don't fit. Most stores are good about this if you only wear them indoors and bring them back in good condition and in a reasonable period of time. Start wearing your boots around the house to be sure you have the right fit. Once you are happy with the fit, you need to break the boots in to your feet. Always break in a pair of new boots well before your trip. Most medium to heavyweight boots will require some use to soften up and conform to your particular feet. Even old boots should get a little break-in if you haven't worn them for a while. Begin with short walks and gradually increase the time you wear them. Easy day hikes are a good way to break in boots. Each time you lace your boots, take the time to align the tongue and lace them properly; otherwise, the tongue will set into a bad position, which can lead to hot spots and blisters.

### THE BACKPACK (Excerpted from *The Backpacker's Field Manual*)

There are two basic types of packs: external and internal frame. The purpose of the frame is to transfer most of the weight of your gear onto your hips, so the strong muscles in your legs carry the load, rather than your





should extend 2 to 4 inches above your shoulders. The shoulder straps should follow the contour of your shoulders and join the pack approximately 2 inches (5 centimeters) below the top of your shoulders. The position of the shoulder harness can usually be adjusted. The lower ends of the straps should run about 5 inches (12.7 centimeters) below your armpits. On both types of packs be sure the width of the shoulder straps is positioned so that they neither pinch your neck nor slip off your shoulders. On the shoulder straps you may find load lifters that connect to the pack at about ear level and connect to the shoulder straps in front of your collarbone. These help pull the top of the pack onto your shoulders. Some internal-frame packs allow you to bend the frame stays to adjust them to match the curvature of your back.

3. In both types of packs the sternum strap should cross your chest below your collarbone. If the pack is properly fitted, you can adjust the load lifters and other fine-tuning straps to make the pack hug your back. Adjustments can also be made while hiking, periodically shifting the weight distribution to other muscle groups, which makes hiking less tiring.