

BACKPACKING GEAR LIST



This gear list was prepared to build your camper's beginner adventure kit. **Each gear item on this list is required for each camper for every overnight trip.** If you wish to purchase gear, each item has links to some tried and tested gear that would work for your camper. A lot of these items can be purchased on Amazon or at REI.com with fast shipping. There are limited quantities of rental/borrowed gear available. **Families who need to borrow gear need to reach out to me ASAP** to reserve gear for your camper's trip at carlynsaunders@keenetwork.org Any questions, concerns, or additional recommendations can be directed to me as well.

~Carlyn Saunders, KEEN's Environmental Education Director

THE BIG THREE (also known as the heaviest and most \$\$\$)

TENT

1-2 person 3-season, 1-3lbs

- ❖ Freestanding tents come with a pole system to stand on their own, usually has a separate rain fly.
- ❖ Trekking pole tents require 1-2 hiking poles to set up, requires more stakes, usually rain fly is built in.

Budget: my personal favorite [NATUREHIKE VIK 1](#)

Other: [NEMO Hornet 1](#) [Big Agnes Copper Spur 1](#) [Gossamer Gear The One](#)

SLEEP SYSTEM (bag and pad)

3-season sleeping bag/quilt, rated 30 degrees or lower

- ❖ Down will be lighter and pack down smaller, will not retain heat when wet.
- ❖ Synthetics are heavier and bulkier, will retain heat when wet.
- ❖ Quilts are designed to work with your sleeping pad to increase heat/comfort.

Budget: [Featherstone Moondance 25](#) [Klymit KSB 20](#)

Other: [Outdoor Vitals Summit 30](#) [Enlightened Equipment Revelation APEX](#)

3-season sleeping pad has an R-value of 2.5 and higher

- ❖ Closed foams are cheaper, won't break, and more versatile.
- ❖ Inflatables are more comfortable, more expensive, and can puncture.

Budget: [Klymit Insulated Static V](#)

Other: [Thermarest NeoAir](#) [Thermarest ZLite](#)

EXTRA: Pillow (inflatable or stuff-able)

[Trekology Pillow](#) [Sea to Summit Aeros](#) [Thermarest Stuffable Pillow Case](#)

BACKPACK

A 30-50 liter pack, internal frame is best, with a padded hip belt

- ❖ Fit backpacks by [torso length](#) to allow proper weight distribution on hips (not shoulders)
- ❖ Always buy a backpack to fit the gear you have! The largest, heaviest items (sleeping bag, pad, tent) SHOULD FIT INSIDE. Attaching large items like these to the outside severely throws off your center of gravity and can cause falls/injuries more easily.
- ❖ Most backpacks are NOT waterproof and in heavy rain, a pack cover will NOT keep your vital gear dry. Line your backpack with a heavy duty trash bag to keep critical gear dry.

Budget: [Outdoor Vitals Shadowlight 45L](#)

Other: [Osprey Ace 38L](#) [Osprey Aura 50](#) [Osprey Eja 48](#) [Gossamer Gear Gorilla 50](#)

CLOTHING

- ❖ Because we carry everything on our backs, there is no need to bring more clothing than needed. You'll need **ONE** set of clothes to hike in and **ONE** set of clothes to sleep in. To feel cleaner, bring extra underwear and baby wipes to clean the important spots over the week.
- ❖ Layers, layers, layers! We frequently find ourselves hiking at higher elevations where it can get cold and wet, even in the summer! Pack clothing made of specifically wool, fleece, and synthetics.

NO COTTON, NO DENIM!

- ❖ **Hiking Clothes:** athletic shorts/leggings or hiking pants, active wicking T-shirt/sun shirt, underwear/bras
- ❖ **Base layers:** top and bottom (for sleeping and warmth)
- ❖ **Socks:** 2 pairs for hiking, 1 pair dry for camp (synthetic or wool; again, NO COTTON)
- ❖ **Warm:** fleece & puffy jacket, gloves & beanie (again, NO COTTON)
- ❖ **Wet:** rain jacket (Budget: [Frogg Toggs](#), Other: [REI](#)), rain/wind pants (optional)
- ❖ **Footwear:** sturdy sneakers or hiking boots (worn or broken in); camp shoes/water shoes, like [Crocs](#)/[Tevas](#)/[Chacos](#) (no flip flops)
- ❖ **Bandana or Buff**
- ❖ **Sun hat & Sunglasses**

OTHER

HEADLAMP

- ❖ Handheld flashlights work well too, but headlamps are easier for keeping your hands free

Budget: [Petzl TIKKA](#)

Other: [Black Diamond Spot](#)

WATER BOTTLES AND FILTRATION

- ❖ A [Sawyer Squeeze filter](#) is the best and can be paired with a 1L Smart Water bottle or similar (must be a small pop bottle sized opening that's threaded). [This is a lightweight and reliable system.](#)

When camping in the fall/winter/spring, always pack an additional water bottle, specifically a [Nalgene](#), as they can be filling with boiling water in cold weather emergencies.

FOOD/COOKWARE

- ❖ Most food eaten while backpacking is "add hot water only". So, **mugs** should be packed for warm beverages and a **spoon** to eat. Bowls are preferred over plates.
- ❖ A **10L+ roll-top/closed bag** for food, quart/gallon **Ziploc** for food trash, and a **carabiner** (Heavy duty grocery bags work too)

TOILETRIES

- ❖ Place these items inside a separate Ziploc or closed bag: toothbrush, toothpaste, hand sanitizer, sunscreen, bug spray, toilet paper and/or baby wipes, camp towel, small **Ziploc** for trash

POCKETKNIFE OR FOLDING KNIFE (optional)

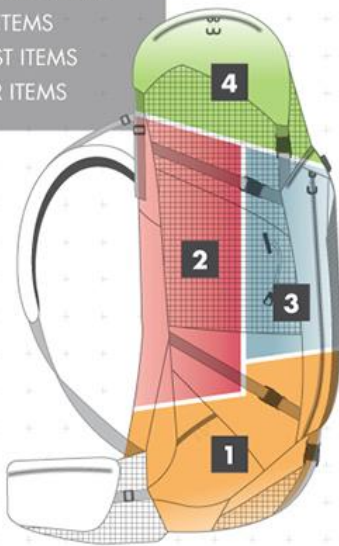
TREKKING/HIKING POLES (optional)

EXTRA: phone with downloaded music/podcasts WITH headphones, battery charger (if needed), camera (if no phone), deck of cards

[HOW TO PACK YOUR BACKPACK](#)/[HOW TO PACK YOUR BACKPACK](#): We will go over this in great detail to make your packing the most efficient, but it's always a good thing to view PRIOR to a backpacking trip (as you will be packing and unpacking your pack EVERY DAY).

PACK WEIGHT DISTRIBUTION & PACKING ZONES

- 1 MIDWEIGHT ITEMS
- 2 HEAVY ITEMS
- 3 LIGHTEST ITEMS
- 4 LIGHTER ITEMS



MIDDLE BACK (AGAINST THE BACK PANEL)
Heaviest items, including cookware, hydration reservoir, tent body, food, stove

SIDE POCKETS
Water bottles, fuel containers, tent poles, fishing rod

HIP POCKETS
Phone, camera, snacks, chapstick, pocket knife



LID
Small items you need access to, like snacks, compass, lighter, first aid, rain cover

MIDDLE FRONT
Lightest items, including pillow, towel, lightweight clothes, etc.

BOTTOM
Medium weight gear, including sleeping bag, air mattress, camp clothes, pillow, etc.