

What should I bring on a hike?

Each hiker is unique and each will bring different gear, food, clothing, etc. All of us must bring the gear and supplies essential for a safe and enjoyable hike. The list below has two sections: the 10 essentials and gear that is nice to have.

One item that is not mentioned in either list is your **pack**. You will need a **backpack** or large **beltpack** to carry all of your stuff. Before you buy a new pack/bag, figure out how much stuff you are going to carry (see lists below) and select a bag that has room to spare.

The 10 Essentials

Always bring the 10 essentials! The items in this list provide the bare minimum needed to deal with issues on the trail. An explanation and description of each item is provided.

- ☐ **Navigation tools** - Compass, maps, and GPS devices (including your smartphone) will help you stay on your planned route and can help Search and Rescue come straight to you when you need them. Make sure you know how to use these tools before you take a hike.
- ☐ **Sun protection** - We live in a desert and even in the mountains there is very little shade. It is important to protect your skin from the relentless torrent of UV coming from above. Sun glasses, sunscreen/block, a hat, a long sleeve shirt, pants, and an umbrella are all great ways to protect yourself.
- ☐ **Insulation** - It might be cool when you start, hot at lunchtime and freezing at the summit. Bring layers of clothing that help you maintain your comfort regardless of the weather. Wear the footgear that works well for you. Some people like boots and some people like trail runners. You do you.
- ☐ **Illumination** - Got a light? In addition to the light built into your smartphone, you should have a headlamp or flashlight (or both) with you, just in case you are delayed and end up walking after sundown.
- ☐ **First Aid Supplies** - Bring what you need to take care of yourself! Each Hike Leader carries a first aid kit, but each hiker is responsible for bringing their own first aid supplies. This might be a few bandaids, a bit of leukotape, some ibuprofen and antibiotic cream or something more complex depending on your needs.
- ☐ **Fire** - Carry a small lighter or pack of matches (protected from moisture) in case you need to generate heat during an emergency
- ☐ **Repair Kit** - Gear breaks. Clothes tear. Shoelaces break. Have the materials (e.g.: duct tape, dental floss) and tools (e.g.: sewing needle) you need to deal with minor gear failures.
- ☐ **Nutrition** - Bring the food you need and a bit more. The day you go hiking is not an opportunity to lose weight through calorie restriction. Bring snacks and real food to get you there and back with a bit left over, just in case you, or a fellow hiker, need it.

- ☐ **Hydration** - Got water? Bring a minimum of 2 liters of water. For hikes that last more than four hours, bring 3-4 liters. If you KNOW that there is water available on the trail, you can bring less water if you bring the tools for collecting and purifying water in the wild. Bring some electrolytes!
- ☐ **Emergency shelter** - Throw a mylar space blanket or emergency bivy into your bag and leave it there.

Gear that is nice to have

In addition to the essentials listed above, there are numerous items that you might want to carry to make your hike more enjoyable and memorable. You can bring as many things as you like, but keep in mind that you have to carry everything that you bring and a heavy pack makes for a hard day. Keep it light! As they say: 'the grams lead to kilograms.'

- ☐ **Camera** - If you do not use your smartphone as a camera, you might want to bring a separate camera to take photos and videos. Don't forget the supporting items such as batteries, lens cleaner, tripod, etc.
- ☐ **Chair or sitting pad** - Rocks are hard. It can be nice to sit on something softer when you stop for a break. This could be a folding chair designed for backpacking or a piece of foam.
- ☐ **Hiking poles/sticks** - A good pair of walking sticks can save your joints from a lot of wear and tear. They are also good for clearing spiderwebs from the trail and poking the hiker in front of you when they are walking too slowly.
- ☐ **Trash bag** - Many of us like to clean the trail while we walk. It is useful to have a plastic trash bag of some sort to hold the trash we generate or collect.
- ☐ **Signaling tools** - Carry a whistle to signal others when you need rescue. Consider whether you want to use and know how to use a signal mirror or a two-way radio.
- ☐ **Identification** - Have a luggage tag or set of dog tags that provide health and emergency contact information. The club provides these to members!
- ☐ **Binoculars** - If you like to take in distant vistas or invade a bird's privacy, you might bring a pair of binoculars.