



Packing List – What to Bring on Course

Joshua Tree Backpacking – 7 days

Packing for Wilderness Travel

Wilderness travel means you can and, for your comfort should, carry a lot less than you do in the regular world. Most experienced wilderness travelers will tell you that they bring roughly the same amount of gear on a three-day trip as they would on a three-week trip.

About this List

This list is very broad. It is designed be a complete “stock” of all possible ideal combinations of clothing; enough stuff to pack “heavy” and keep you warm if temperatures are a bit on the colder side but varied enough to pack “light” and carry fewer items if it is warmer. Once you arrive to your course, your instructors will help you select the best combination of items for you. Please don’t be frustrated if your instructors ask you not to bring something that you’ve packed or suggest that you borrow something from Outward Bound as an alternative to what you have brought. This is done for efficiency and to minimize pack weight, as well as to ensure that you will be well-equipped on your course. **Do not bring extras except where noted.** Keep in mind that this list does not include the water, food, and group gear (such as shelters, ropes, etc.) that you will carry.

Because the list has to accommodate ALL the weather conditions you may encounter and account for a wide range of individual preferences and body temperatures it is very likely you will not use every single item on this list. Therefore, we suggest **leaving the tags** on any items you purchase for this course so that, in the event it was not used on the trip, you have the option of returning it. When purchasing gear, please be aware of retailers’ return policies!!

Bring everything on the list! If there are items not mentioned on this list that you think you might need, or you have concerns about cost and want help strategizing for less expensive options, call your Student Services representative at (415) 933-6222. While companies such as the Patagonia, Mountain Hardwear, REI and many others make high quality outdoor apparel, you don’t need to buy all brand-name clothing. You can shop at army surplus stores, second-hand outdoor stores like the Wilderness Exchange or Play It Again Sports or overstock merchants like the Sierra Trading Post. Craigslist and eBay are also great resources for used gear, just make sure you know your size!

Weather During Your Course

As a desert ecosystem, Joshua Tree is mostly dry with variable temperatures. Elevations range between 2,000 to 5,000 feet and Joshua Tree does receive occasional rain and even snow at times. Although rain is rare in Joshua Tree, when it does rain, it pours! During the spring months average daytime highs are 65-80 degrees Fahrenheit in the sun with nighttime temperatures in the 40s and 50s. However, due to the desert wind, it can feel 10-15 degrees colder than the temperature suggests. Additionally, temperature changes of 40 degrees within 24 hours are common. Be prepared by obtaining all necessary warm clothing listed on the enclosed list. Bringing a variety of clothing allows you to layer on and off as conditions change.



PLEASE BRING ALL ITEMS IN THIS SECTION. There are multiple brand-name options available at varying prices. Please ask your local outdoor retailer for recommendations or if you have specific questions about sizing. **If you arrive for course without missing or inappropriate items, you will be required to RENT them from Outward Bound.**

TOPS			
#	Item	Description	Price Range
2-3	Cotton or Synthetic T-Shirts	Generally worn every day while backpacking. This is a base layer, meaning it goes next to your skin to wick moisture away. You will often wear more layers on top.	\$15-40 each
1	Long-Sleeved Synthetic Shirt	Mid-weight polypropylene or wool long underwear. No cotton. This is a base layer, used on cooler days. You will often wear more layers on top.	\$20-60
1	Long Sleeve Sun Shirt	Loose, lightweight, light-colored for sun protection. Our instructors often wear old oxford or men's button-down dress shirts from thrift stores since these get very dirty with daily use. Cotton is OK for this layer.	\$2 - \$60
1	Lightweight Fleece Top	Lighter than a more traditional fleece jacket, this mid-layer is made of polyester fabric. This layer should fit on top of your long-sleeved synthetic shirt. Typically comes with a ½ to ¾ length zipper. Wool is also appropriate.	\$30 - \$150
1-2	Sports bras	Should have the proper support for athletic activity. Quick-drying fabric is most comfortable. Cotton OK.	\$15-\$45 each

BOTTOMS			
#	Item	Description	Price Range
1 pr.	Long Underwear bottoms	Mid-weight polypropylene or wool long underwear. No cotton. These are your base layer for your legs on cooler days. They worn next to your skin to wick moisture away.	\$15-50
1pr.	Quick Dry Shorts	Lightweight nylon fabric wicks moisture and dries quickly.	\$10 - \$50
1pr.	Quick Dry Pants	Lightweight nylon fabric dries quickly and is easy to pack away in a backpack. Should be loose fitting to aid in movement. Nylon/spandex blend recommended. "Convertible" pants with Zip off legs work well as both shorts and pants.	\$30 - \$80
1pr.	Fleece Pants	These pants that are made out of polyester fleece. They should be loose enough to fit over a pair of long underwear or shorts.	\$40 - \$100
3-7 prs.	Underwear	Cotton is okay for underwear, especially if you are prone to urinary tract infections.	Bring from home

OUTER LAYERS (MUST FIT OVER ALL LAYERS LISTED ABOVE)			
#	Item	Description	Price Range
1	Synthetic Insulated Puffy Jacket	Water-resistant, dries more quickly than down and retains some heat when damp. Your rain jacket should fit over this jacket. Hood recommended. <i>If you don't want to buy a synthetic jacket, you could substitute with a heavy 300-weight fleece jacket. No down fabric.</i>	\$100 - \$200
1	Raincoat & pants	All rainwear must be 100% water proof, not water resistant! Rain jackets should include a hood. Breathable fabrics recommended- any Gore-Tex jacket, Marmot © PreCip etc.	\$200+ for pair



HEAD & HANDS

#	Item	Description	Price Range
1	Warm hat	Fleece, polyester, and wool all appropriate. Should cover ears or have ear flaps. No cotton.	\$10 - \$30
1	Sun hat	Should have a good brim to at a minimum cover your face like a baseball cap or can have a brim all the way around for added protection. Should be made out of softer materials so it can get folded up easily if needed.	\$10 - \$40
1 pr	Liner Gloves or lightweight mittens	Usually made from fleece, wool, or synthetic materials.	\$10 - \$30

FEET

#	Item	Description	Price Range
2-3 prs	Synthetic Liner socks	Lightweight, flat-knit provides a close fit for a protective second skin that prevents blisters. Should be worn under heavier socks to prevent blisters. Need to be at least crew-height. No cotton. These are OPTIONAL.	\$5 - \$10/pair
2-3 pr	Mid-weight Wool Hiking socks	These socks are worn on top of the liner socks. Need to come up to the middle of your shin.	\$10 - \$20/pair
1 pr	Lightweight Backpacking Boots	Backpacking boots are the most popular off-trail boots sold today. These boots are offered in a wide variety of brands and models and work well for the majority of traditional Outward Bound courses. See your Boot Info Sheet for more information.	\$150+
1 pr	Camp shoes	“Camp” shoes should be close-toed, secure, light-weight and dry quickly. These are typically worn around camp to give your feet a break after wearing hiking boots all day. Occasionally camp shoes will be used to ford streams. Examples would be minimalist shoes, Crocs w/ heel strap, Toms, and mesh water shoes.	Bring from home

PERSONAL ITEMS

#	Item	Description	Price Range
1	Copy of Insurance Card	If you have medical insurance please bring a photocopy of both the FRONT AND BACK of your card. Please do not bring the original card. Your instructors will collect this from you.	Bring from home
1 pr	Sunglasses w/keeper strap	Bring an eyewear retainer with them, such as Croakies or Chums. Essential to protect your eyes in a sunny environment!	\$25+
1	Headlamp	A “hands free” flashlight. A LED headlamp that uses two or more AA- or AAA-batteries. LED lamps are brighter than the old Halogen headlamps but consume very little battery power. Bring one set of batteries per week of your course.	\$15 - \$35
2	Cotton Bandanas	This all-purpose piece of cotton absorbs sweat, cleans off trail-grime and offers a multitude of other camp and trail uses.	\$1 - \$5
2	1-Liter Water bottles	Wide-mouthed and durable. Nalgene, Sigg, and Klean Kanteen are good brand names. Powerade type bottle are OK, but please bring a few spare lids. Must be 1 Liter or 32oz in size.	



1	Toiletry kit	Toothbrush, travel-size toothpaste, floss, comb or small brush, and baby wipes (1-2 wipes per day). Deodorant and makeup are unnecessary. Look in the travel section of the store for appropriate sizes.	Bring from home
1	Small bottles sunscreen	Waterproof, SPF 30 or greater. Bring at least 3 oz.	
1	Lip Balm	15+ SPF or greater	
-	Paper, postage stamps, envelopes	You will have an opportunity to send letters out at the end of your course to be mailed.	

TOILETRIES

#	Item	Description
-	Prescription eyewear	If you rely on vision correction please bring back up, i.e. second set of glasses in case of loss or damage. If you use contacts, bring extras and a small bottle of solution.
-	Prescription medications	THESE MUST BE DECLARED DURING THE APPLICATION PROCESS. Keep your medications in their respective bottles. This includes inhalers and Epi-Pens.
1 week supply	Feminine supplies	Bring at least a week's worth of supplies as changes in diet, altitude, & fitness level can unexpectedly induce menstruation. Instructors have only minimal supplies on hand to lend to participants and may not have your preferred brand or type (pads vs. tampons, for example).

MISCELLANEOUS (FOR TRAVEL TO & FROM COURSE)

#	Item	Description	Price Range
-	Travel money for snacks, course expenses, etc.	The first day is often long. Have cash to buy snacks along the way or bring food with you. Participants will also be asked to pay for any borrowed gear that gets lost or damaged and pay for any rentals of required items. <u>You will also have the opportunity to purchase a selection of Outward Bound gear at the end of your course.</u> (\$40-50 suggested)	\$40-50
	Clean clothes for the trip home / Towel	Please bring a towel and a set of clothes to travel home in.	Bring from home



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Optional Items: These are NOT required and you will be fine without them. Please only buy them if you plan to use the items again after your course or you think they will be of great assistance to you while on course (you may be asked to leave these behind depending on weather and available space in your pack).

Optional Items			
#	Item	Description	Price Range
1	Hydration System (including pack)	CamelBak or Platypus are good brands; there are several others. Only the reservoir/"bladder" is required not the hydration pack. Must be at least 2 Liter capacity.	\$20-\$40
1	Trekking poles	These are of great assistance to those with knee problems or who want more stability on the trail. Adjustable length trekking poles provide the most versatility and comfort. Old ski poles are an inexpensive alternative.	\$20+
1	Camera	Disposables are great! Regular cameras are fine, but you will have to take some extra precautions to keep out moisture, dirt and sand. Recommend bringing extra batteries for courses over 10 days. You will not be able to charge your batteries during course.	
1	Watch w/ alarm	Inexpensive, durable, & waterproof. This is OPTIONAL. Some instructors may request that you leave your watch behind.	\$10-50

OUTWARD BOUND PROVIDES ALL OTHER EQUIPMENT INCLUDING SLEEPING BAGS, SLEEPING PADS, AND BACKPACKS. THERE ARE NO ADDITIONAL FEES FOR THE USE OF THIS EQUIPMENT.

If you DO wish to bring some of your own gear here are our minimum standards for what MAY be acceptable:

- Sleeping pads – Can be ¾ to full size in length. They can be made of closed-cell foam (Ridge-Rest or Z-Rest) or be inflatable (Therma-Rest®). If you bring an inflatable pad **you must bring a patch kit as well**. Note that inflatable pads usually weigh considerably more than closed-cell foam pads.
- Backpacks – Need to have a minimum capacity of **80 Liters (4,900 cubic inches)** should carry 45-60 lbs. comfortably and be an internal frame design. Side pockets are useful to access equipment while on the trail, such as water bottles.
- Sleeping bags – Need to be made from synthetic materials (down fill is not appropriate for our purposes) and have a 15 degree warmth rating.

If you bring your own equipment it will be inspected by your instructor at the beginning of your course. If it does not meet our standards you can store it with your luggage during course. All personal items not used will be stored in a locked, secure location at our base camp.



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Items NOT allowed on course: You will not be allowed to bring any of the items listed below on your course. Electronics such as phones or iPods may be brought on the plane or the bus but you will be asked to leave them behind before going into the field.

- Electronics: phones, iPods, etc.
- Knives or any other weapons
- Deodorant, soap, shampoo, or make-up
- Tobacco products, recreational drugs, or alcohol

A Note about Travel: We highly recommend wearing your course clothing and boots while traveling. In the unlikely event your luggage is lost or delayed in transport, having your course clothing with you will minimize the inconvenience you may experience until your luggage can be located. Coming dressed and prepared will also further the efficiency on your first day of course. We also recommend bringing all essentials with you on the flight in your carry-on bag. Items like prescription medications, the copy of your insurance card, and travel money can be hard to replace.