

WILDERNESS TRIPS INFORMATION

WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE YOU PACK

Your personal comfort and safety depend on your preparedness. Wilderness travel and living is subject to challenging weather conditions and temperature changes. Your clothing is your personal shelter, and your layering system is your personal thermostat. Wilderness Trip participants should ask themselves, if the temperature becomes cold and windy, “How will I stay warm?” And if the weather is wet, “How will I stay dry?”

IMPORTANT: As a rule all layers/clothing should be “NON-COTTON” for all trips. (This excludes travel clothing and 1-2 cotton t-shirts.) Your expedition clothing should be made of synthetic, polyester, and/or nylon materials. These fabrics are lightweight, quick drying, and insulating—even when wet. If you have questions or want advice, please ask! We’d love to help you out.

GUIDELINES FOR GETTING GEAR

- » Michigan and Canadian summer weather typically means highs between 70° and 90° F and lows in between 30° and 50° F. Bring layers you can use to keep you comfortable despite the changes in weather.
- » You probably have a lot of what you need in your closet. And if you don’t, your family and friends might. See what you can borrow before buying.
- » Shopping second-hand stores saves money and resources. Remember: having clothing made of the right fabric is more important than buying a trendy brand.
- » If you decide to buy new, you don’t need need to get the most expensive brands. There are affordable brands that have great gear. Sierra Trading Post is a great place to start.

EXPLANATION OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF CLOTHING FABRICS

COTTON

AVOID COTTON. When cotton gets wet (even from sweat), it stays wet and will not keep you warm. This includes materials like corduroy, denim, and flannel.

WOOL

Wool doesn’t dry quickly, but it is odor resistant and will keep you warm even when it is wet.

SYNTHETICS

These are materials like nylon, polyester, and spandex that are used to make a lot of athletic-style clothing. Synthetic materials dry more quickly than cotton, and wick moisture away from your skin to help keep you warm.

FLEECE

Fleece dries more quickly than cotton and will keep you warm even when it’s wet.

WILDERNESS TRIPS PACKING LIST

WHAT CALVIN PROVIDES

These items will be provided to you by Calvin; you are not required to purchase. If you have any of these items, you may pack them. Before heading out, our trip leaders will check to make sure they are suitable for the trip. **Additionally, any personal items you bring are subject to the approval of Wilderness staff.**

- Tents/shelters/tarps
- All kitchen gear: stoves, fuel, pots, etc.
- All water purification gear
- Sleeping pads/sleeping bags
- First Aid kit and repair kit
- Activity-specific gear (backpacking backpacks, kayaks, large dry bags, etc.)

YOUR PACKING LIST

These are the items you are responsible for. Certain items include recommendations and/or hyperlinks. Those are examples we have found work well; you do not need to purchase the exact items. Please note instructions for specific trips.

NOTE: You will not need phones on the trip; they will be collected by trip leaders to encourage team growth and development. **Consider packing a small camera!**

CLOTHING

UPPER BODY/HEAD LAYERS

- 2 short-sleeve synthetic t-shirts
- 1-2 cotton t-shirts (for around camp and/or sleeping)
- 1 synthetic long-sleeve midweight shirt (for warmth)
- Optional but encouraged: long-sleeve sun shirt for UV protection (from [REI](#))
- 1 synthetic fleece/insulating jacket
 - Recommendation:** [Patagonia lightweight Synchronilla fleece](#)
- 1 waterproof/breathable rain jacket (not water resistant—must be waterproof)
 - No ponchos
 - Recommendation:** [Marmot PreCip](#), [Frogg Toggs Xtreme Lite](#)
- Women: 2 sports bras (wide strap/flat seam/ridgeless; thin straps can be uncomfortable with backpacks and personal flotation devices)
 - Recommendation:** [Patagonia Wild Trails](#)
- Sun/baseball hat
- Lightweight fleece or wool hat

WILDERNESS TRIPS PACKING LIST

CLOTHING CONTINUED

LOWER BODY LAYERS

- 1 pair synthetic mid-weight long underwear/leggings
- 1 pair synthetic pants
- 2 nylon quick-dry shorts
Recommendation: [Patagonia baggies](#)
- 6 pairs of underwear (not cotton)

TRAVEL CLOTHES

- Clean set of clothes packed in a separate Ziploc or stuff sack for our return trip—trust us, you'll want this!

FOOTWEAR

- Camp shoes:
Choose comfortable and lightweight shoes for camp

Recommendations: [Crocs](#), [Chacos](#), [Texas](#)

- Day shoes:

⇒ BACKPACKING: Trail runners or lightweight hiking boots
Shoes must be sturdy and comfortable to withstand backpacking long distances with big backpacks
To avoid blisters, please make sure your shoes are broken in and comfortable

Recommended brands: Merrell, Hoka, Altra

⇒ KAYAKING and BACKPACKING: Sandals with a heel strap
This is different from your camp shoes; you'll want shoes for water and for land
For kayaking, shoes must be CLOSED-TOE; Crocs work best for this purpose

Recommendations: [Crocs](#), [Chacos](#), [Texas](#)

- Socks (3-5* pairs)
Must be wool, wool blend, or synthetic (NOT COTTON!)

Recommended brands: [Smartwool](#), [Darn Tough](#)

*5 pairs required for backpacking trips

WILDERNESS TRIPS PACKING LIST

PERSONAL NEEDS

ESSENTIAL ITEMS

- Identification card/driver's license
 - ⇒ **Passport needed for all Canadian trips**
- Sunglasses with strap for water
Polarized sunglasses are best
Recommendation: Goodr sunglasses
- Strap for sunglasses, especially for Canadian Sea Kayaking
- Headlamp; Bring extra batteries!
Recommendations: Petzl Tikka, Black Diamond Spot
- 5 1-gallon Ziploc bags for organizing
- 1 lighter
- Personal snack bag: 6 energy bars or other items
Recommendations: Kind bars or Clif bars
- 5-10 liter dry bag for personal items
Required for CANADIAN SEA KAYAKING only;
encouraged for other trips
Recommendation: Sea to Summit

KITCHEN ITEMS

- Lexan spork
- 2 one-liter leakproof plastic water bottles
Nalgene water bottles work best for this
An inexpensive option: smartwater bottles
(but screw-top, not flip-top)
- Plastic (not metal) food dish—must have a lid!
Recommendations: GSI infinity mug, screw-top plastic container
- Hot drink cup with lid
16 oz. insulating mug (lightweight, not metal)
Recommendations: GSI infinity mug, 16 oz Nalgene

MISC.

- Swimsuit
- Stuff sack/large 2-gallon Ziplocs for organizing
Recommendation: Ditty Sacks
- \$30 for road meals and other purchases
- Small/light Bible
No bigger than a 3x5 inches, fits in a Ziploc sandwich bag
- 2 pens

PERSONAL HYGIENE

- Toothbrush
- Travel toothpaste
- Small contact solution, 2 oz.
- 2 contact cases
- Prescription glasses
- Extra contact lenses/glasses with strap for water
- Comb (if needed)
- Bandana or small quick-dry towel
- Dr. Bronner's soap (1 oz. small bottle)
- Small hand sanitizer
- Personal medications
- Sunscreen: 6-8 oz. bottle, SPF 30-50
- Personal toilet paper in Ziploc bag
Does not have to be a full roll

QUESTIONS?

orientation@calvin.edu