

MHC T794B Backpacking Gear: (what to wear, share and pack)

The 10 Outdoor Essentials Modified for Backpacking: *Handbook 238*

- **Pocket Knife/ Multi Tool:** A Swiss army knife or multitool can be very useful
- **Rain Gear:** Frog Togs are fine. Mesh baseball caps work great if you water proof them and put a rain coat hood over them. Lighter weight, more packable and breathable rain suits can be nicer but expensive and may not get much use. An expandable poncho that fits over your pack can keep water from getting between your back and your pack in wet weather but they do not break the wind well. A waterproof wide brim hat can be desirable when hiking but may not work with a full pack. Untreated, cotton baseball caps can stay wet for days.
- **Trail Food:** High Calories are needed and should be planned into your meal menu but a few personal snacks may be wonderful.
- **Flashlight:** You may want a small tent light too and extra batteries/ bulbs.
- **Extra Clothing:** See below.
- **First Aid Kit:** A first aid kit can be shared by a crew. A personal kit may be too heavy.
- **Sun Protection:** Always bring sunscreen, sunglasses and a hat with a brim or bill.
- **Map and Compass/ Written Trip Plan/ GPS:** More to come in later sessions.
- **Fire Starter:** Bring a lighter if you have a trail stove.
- **Two Clear Water Bottles Per Person (One Liter/ Quart each):** It works well if you can store one on each side of your pack. Know how often you will be able to get water. On average most people need 4-6 quarts or liters of water per day. Know how often you can refill your bottles. Usually, you may have access to water 2-3 times per day.

Ideal Clothes to Wear (spring, summer, fall) *Handbook 241-246*

- **BASE BALL CAP OR WIDE BRIM HAT**
- **BASE LAYER:** quick dry shirt (Class B), quick dry underwear, non-cotton hiking socks
- **ZIP OFF QUICK DRY PANTS & NYLON BELT:** Or separate pants and shorts. No jeans.
- **HIKING BOOTS OR SHOES:** Siffer shanks are heavier and help reduce stone bruises on long trips. Ankle height boots add support & keeps gravel and grit out preventing sprained ankle, blisters etc. Gaiters keep sand, snow, and rain out of boots. 1 lb on your feet = 5 lbs in your pack. Bigger, heavier boots are more work but provide more protection. Avoid very high, heavy mountaineering boots, work or snow boots. Find the right balance for your trail, pack weight and your body. Trim your nails. If you hurt your feet, your trip may be over.

Clothes To Pack (keep your gear weight minimal on long trips)

- **OUTER SHELL:** Always pack a rain jacket & pants and or poncho where you can get to them fast and easy. (Frog togs work great but there are lighter, more breathable options at a greater cost.)
- **WARM WHEN WET LAYER:** Always pack a fleece or wool pullover/ jacket where you can get to it fast & easy. If it is chilly enough you are already wearing this layer when you start, also bring the next layer. It can get chilly when you stop hiking. Thin poly or silk thermal under pants are always recommended especially with nylon pants and take up very little space.
- **ADDITIONAL CHILLY WEATHER LAYER:** pack a warm, puffy, fleece or wool, vest shirt or jacket that fits over your fleece and under your rain jacket. Puffy vests compress for less bulk and weight but wool is warmest when wet.
- **WARM/ DRY SLEEPING CLOTHING:** Oversized socks, long pants & non irritating long shirt, balaclava or beanie hat. (Can be worn as a dry outer garment if needed)

- **CAMP SHOES & SOCKS:** Moccasins and water shoes make good camp shoes and are less bulky than running shoes but you can hike in running shoes if you have a problem with your boots. They can also be useful for a stream crossing to keep your boots dry. Running shoes dry faster than boots. You must always wear close toed shoes. Sandals with a toe covering work as well.
- **1 or 2 ALTERNATE BASE LAYERS:** (quick dry shirt, quick dry underwear, hiking socks) Plan to wash your alternate base layer every day and wear the same outer clothes daily.

Additional Personal Gear to Pack *Handbook 267-285*

- **Backpack: w/ Rain Cover & bags** to divide types of gear & keep it all dry. Zip locks & trash bags work. You will want easy access to water quickly while hiking. Put soft and heavy things in an optimal location and back smaller items around larger ones. You may want to put your tent but not your poles along your spine keeping weight as close to your spine and hips as possible. Tent poles can often be strapped on the side with trekking/ snowshoe poles. Internal frame packs are lighter. Distribute weight evenly between your hips and shoulders with a hip belt and frame. Maximum pack weight with food and water is 20% of your weight if you are still growing. Then if you are fit, a max of 25 -30% depending on your body composition. Also measure your torso length and get the right size & volume pack for you. Make sure its volume is large enough to match the amount of weight you should carry. Internal frames can be 40-120 liters. If you are small, start with a light 3 lb pack if you can. An average internal frame pack may weigh 5lbs. Adjustable packs are the way to go if you are still growing, renting or sharing your pack but they may weigh a pound more. The troop has packs you can borrow. CAP & REI rent. You can carry more weight with an external frame pack if you are hunting or going in the winter with more gear and snow shoes.
- **Sleeping System:** Bag, Pad, Sleeping Hat, Sleeping Socks and dry thermal underwear or fleece pajamas. Hammocks can be a light option if permissible and you have trees. A sleeping pad insulates you from the cold ground and adds comfort. Synthetic bags still stay warm when wet. Down is smaller & lighter. Sleeping in thermal underwear or fleece pajamas can add less weight than switching to a bag with a lower temp rating. A fleece bag may work in warm weather and save weight. If you need to sit down and it is wet you may need to use your sleeping pad. Most backpacking sleeping pads are 1.5 lbs. Some need to be strapped on, some fit inside your pack if you have space. Maximize multi use items. Put your fleece jacket or puffy coat in your sleeping bag stuff sack for a pillow.
- **Personal Hygiene Kit:** Sunscreen & insect repellent to apply first thing every morning. Wash it off at night. Toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, soap, small chamois wash cloth & chamois towel. Towel and washcloths need to dry fast. Important for multi day trips. Waterless Face & Body Wash can be handy, wash your face, wet your washcloth in your bowl or a one-gallon zip lock bag and wipe sweat, dirt, sunscreen and bug repellent off every night. Dude/ baby wipes are great for dirty stinky parts and at the cat hole but pack them out in a zip lock.
- **Eating Kit:** Hand sanitizer or wipes, spork, bowl and optional cup for hot drinks or soup. If you use eat in bag meals you may not need a bowl but it is nice for washing. If you do not bring a bowl, you'll probably want a cup. You can't eat soup from a plate. A spork is nice but often all you need is a spoon.
- **Chairs & Cell Phones** are optional, bulky and heavy.

Shared Gear (save space in your pack to pack your share of it)

- **Shelter/ Ground Cloth:** Sometimes shared, keeps you dry, If tenting solo, get a 3 lb tent if you can. (Tarps 1lb, hammocks & bivy's 2lb). Sometimes you will want to get out of the

wind. Plastic rain ponchos for privacy and ground cloth. Ground cloth is part of a tent. You save about 1 lb per person by sharing a tent. Upgrade your tent stakes to save weight; they vary from 1 lb to ¼ lb.

- **Water Purification & Water Storage Bladder:** Shared: by a half patrol (3-5 people). If you can, collect water that is coming out of the ground. It is less likely to be polluted. A Sierra cup can be very useful if water is shallow. Open water is more likely to contain higher levels of bacteria, viruses, protozoa, parasites, microorganisms that are not good for you. Filter standing water. Purify water from open bodies of water. A steri pen is much smaller and lighter than a filter but does not filter out debris. If your campsite is dry. (No water source) You may need one or two water bladders to haul more than 2 liters of water per person back to your campsite. If your site is dry you may want to break camp and hike to a water source for breakfast.
- **Cooking Gear:** Shared by a half patrol (3-5 people). Menu determines the size of the cooking group, the size of pot and type of stove burner needed. Bring one small butane canister per person for a 5-day trip. Dining Flys are optional, bulky and heavy but are great if you have a wet forecast. It is difficult to cook in the rain and you do not want to eat or cook in bed. (No flames in tents ever)
- **Food:** Shared by 2-5 people. More to come in a later session. Each person carries a meal or snacks for each day so that everyone's load should get equally lighter each day without having to redistribute gear. Plan a min. 3,000 calorie per day per average person, balanced diet. The type of food and how much of it is served hot is a personal choice. You need enough nutrition to get through a strenuous day and recover at night. One pot meal of dried, rice, pasta, peas, carrots, lentils and beans are much lighter than foil packs of wet foot or canned meat. They may also be less bulky than mountain house style meals and you have far less trash to pack out. They are also cheaper and easier to find. Having less trash to pack out can save bulk and weight. Repackaging food into zip lock bags per meal and only taking the amount you will need saves bulk and weight. Leave the cardboard boxes at home. Cut out and take the ingredients label. Put all parts of one meal in a 1-gallon zip lock and label it by day, date, meal and names of people eating it. Check for allergens etc.
- **Bear Bag/ Rope/ Canister:** Shared by 2-3 people: Bear canisters are handy. Waterproof stuff sack/ dry sack and paracord is lighter. You will need to quit and hike out if animals eat your food. Store group food in separate areas so you do not lose all of it at one time.
- **Cat Hole/ Latrine Kit:** Shared by half patrol (3-5 people). Plastic garden spade/ trowel partial roll of toilet paper or mini-Kleenex packs, dude wipes, sanitizing wet wipes or hand sanitizer, latex free gloves 4 one-gallon zip lock bags. Dig a cathole for human waste 200' from open water. Plastic ponchos are nice for privacy and if you have to go in the rain, they help keep your pants dry. You may want to add a poncho or 2 to your latrine kit.
- **First Aid, Emergency, Survival & Repair Kits:** Shared by one patrol or crew: Whistle, Mirror, GPS emergency signal, Cellphone & power bank (good for emergency communication and navigation but heavy and not essential) notebook & pen, tape, zip ties, wire saw, tent fabric, pole & sleeping pad repair kits, needle, thread, monocular, adjustable trekking poles if someone sprains an ankle.
- **Share** as much gear as you can. Rent expensive lightweight equipment that you only use once a year. Compression sacks for sleeping bags, and puffy coats can reduce bulk.
- **Shakedown & Shake Out** prior to every trip. Carry only what you need for that trip and make debrief notes in a journal or device of what you did not need or what you missed.