

# NCOAE Equipment List

## Pacific Northwest – 14-day Backpacking & Whitewater Paddling



The National Center for Outdoor & Adventure Education (NCOAE) equipment list of required and optional gear will help you decide what to bring and what not to bring on your NCOAE adventure.

When it comes to outdoor equipment, there's no need to go all out and buy every piece of fancy gear just to cram in into your new, state of the art backpack. Remember you will be carrying everything you bring with you on your trip – PLUS some of the food and some of the group gear. Foremost in your mind should be weight, each item adds up to what will eventually be strapped to your back. So do the research, read the labels and consider what you can do without. If you don't need something, don't bring it!

You can save money too using the gear provided by NCOAE and by purchasing many items from the athletic clothing, sporting goods, and camping sections at your local discount store, such as Target. Athletic clothing is usually synthetic and works well for camping.

- If you have questions about gear you already own, send us an e-mail or call and we will assess its suitability for the environment where it will be used. We might suggest that you return your grandfather's heavy cotton sleeping bag to the garage and rent or purchase a lightweight, synthetic version instead. **Any gear you bring must meet NCOAE's standards.**
- If you prefer to purchase all of your gear that's fine too, but if you're not sure you'll ever use that \$400 internal frame backpack or sleeping bag again, we may have one available to rent! Of course you don't have to rent equipment from us, but our gear is tailor-made to fit our expeditions
- All participants who wish to rent gear must pay a \$250 deposit on gear to cover possible loss or damage. If all gear is returned in the condition in which you received it, the full deposit will be applied to any rental charges, and the remainder returned to you – so inspect the gear closely before and after renting. Damaged or lost group gear expenses are divided among all participants. Damaged or lost rental gear is charged to the renter. All rental gear is \$25 per item.
- Please do not pack jeans or jean shorts. If you have a choice, please pack non-cotton clothing. Mesh or synthetic clothing dries quickest and therefore is the best option while backpacking.
- Remember to bring one or two sets of "in-town clothes" for your return flight / drive after the trip!
- Items listed below with an asterisk (\*) may be available, in limited quantities, for student rental, on an as needed basis.

**Comments, questions, concerns... Call NCOAE Headquarters Monday through Friday  
between the hours of 8:30am-4:30pm EST at (910) 399-8090.**

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Packs and Bags				
EQUIPMENT	REQUIREMENT	QUANTITY	COMMENTS	CHECK LIST
Internal Frame Backpack*	Must Bring, or Rent	1	Internal frame backpack, with a volume of 75 to 85 liters is ideal (4,600-5,200 cubic inches).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ziplocs or Waterproof Stuff Sacks	Must bring	1-4	Used to organize items in your pack. Lightweight drysacks are convenient (example: eVent Sil DrySack).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Zip Duffle	Must bring	1	Used to organize and store food while at camp. (Example: Outdoor Products 12x24 Deluxe Duffle).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dry Bag	Must bring	1	Used to organize and store clothing while on the river. (Example: Sealline Dry Bag, 20-40 liters).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Footwear				
EQUIPMENT	REQUIREMENT	QUANTITY	COMMENTS	CHECK LIST
Mid-Weight Hiking Boots	Must Bring	1 pair	Please read the Boot Selection Guide at the end of this list.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hiking Socks	Must Bring	3-4 pairs	Must be 75%–100% wool, merino wool, heavy rag type, or thick polypropylene. <b>No cotton or wool-cotton blends.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Camp Shoes / Boots	Must Bring	1 pair	Closed-toed shoes are a must to protect your feet and are more comfortable for wearing in camp.	<input type="checkbox"/>
River Shoes	Must Bring	1 pair	<b>Must be closed-toed</b> with a heel strap for protection from rocks, sharp objects, or in case you happen to fall out of the raft. (Example: Keens)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neoprene Socks	Optional	1 pair	(Example: SealSkinz All Season Waterproof)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gaiters	Optional	1 pair	Full gaiters provide good leg protection while bushwhacking. Low gaiters are also acceptable.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Upper Body Clothing				
You need at least <b>three insulating layers</b> (base layer, mid-weight insulation layer, & puffy jacket), a wind-proof layer, a rain layer, and a t-shirt. Make sure your layers fit comfortably over each other. If you get cold easily, we suggest that you take four insulating layers, or three layers plus a vest.				
EQUIPMENT	REQUIREMENT	QUANTITY	COMMENTS	CHECK LIST
Base Layer - Long Underwear Top	Must Bring	1-2	Light or expedition-weight synthetic or performance wool is best. (Examples: Patagonia Capilene, Icebreaker wool)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fleece Jacket or Shirt	Must Bring	1	Light to mid-weight fleece jacket that fits over your base layers. (Example: Mountain Hardwear Microchill)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Expedition Weight Pullover	Must Bring	1	Synthetic recommended (Example: Patagonia R1 Hoodie).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fleece or Synthetic-fill Insulated Vest	Optional	1	A vest can supplement other upper layers, which is good for folks who get cold easily. (Example: Patagonia Synchilla Vest)	<input type="checkbox"/>
T-Shirt	Must Bring	2	Lightweight synthetic or wool shirts recommended.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Insulated Jacket	Must Bring	1	A warm, lightweight, synthetic-fill “puffy” jacket that fits over your base layers & under your ski jacket. (Example: Patagonia Nano Puff Hoody)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wind Shirt	Must Bring	1	Nylon wind shell, roomy enough to fit over base layers.	<input type="checkbox"/>

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			Protection from bugs, wind, brush or to use as “cooking shirt.”	
<b>Rain Jacket*</b>	Must Bring, or Rent \$15.00	1	Jacket should be roomy enough to fit comfortably over all upper-body layers. For rainy or stormy days in the backcountry. <b>Ponchos are NOT ACCEPTABLE.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Lower Body Clothing</b>				
You need <b>two to three lower-body insulating layers</b> that fit comfortably over each other and underneath your wind or rain pants. Example combination: Mid-weight long underwear + fleece pants.				
<b>EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>REQUIREMENT</b>	<b>QUANTITY</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>	<b>CHECK LIST</b>
<b>Base Layer - Long Underwear Bottoms</b>	Must Bring	2 pairs	Mid- or expedition-weight synthetic or performance wool is best. (Examples: Patagonia Capilene, Icebreaker wool).	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Insulated or Fleece Pants</b>	Must Bring	1 pair	Fleece or synthetic-filled pants are needed when the weather is especially cold. (Examples: Sherpa Jaaro Microfleece Pant).	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Rain Pants*</b>	Must Bring, or Rent	1 pair	These need to fit comfortably over your hiking pants.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Hiking Pants</b>	Must Bring	2 pair	Nylon or other synthetic hiking pants are recommended for protection from bugs and dense vegetation.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Nylon Shorts</b>	Optional	1 pair	Nice for warm days. Pockets are nice to have.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Miscellaneous Clothing</b>				
<b>EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>REQUIREMENT</b>	<b>QUANTITY</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>	<b>CHECK LIST</b>
<b>Sun Hat or Baseball Cap</b>	Must Bring	1	Should be wide-brimmed to protect from sun.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Winter Hat</b>	Must Bring	2	Fleece or wool hat that will fully cover your ears.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Bathing Suit</b>	Must bring	1	Necessary for paddling parts of the adventure when possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Buff, Balaclava, or Neck Gaiter</b>	Optional	1	Used to keep your head, neck, and ears warm or protect from the wind and sun – can replace a light cap	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Bandana</b>	Must bring	1	For multiple uses.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Glove Liners</b>	Optional	1	Lightweight polypropylene gloves may be layered with heavier gloves for warmth or worn alone for sun protection.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Waterproof Gloves or Mittens</b>	Must Bring	2 pair	Wool or synthetic gloves or mittens for cold mornings or evenings around camp.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Waterproof Gloves or Mitten Shells</b>	Optional	1 pair	Waterproof shells that fit over your gloves or mittens.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Neoprene Gloves</b>	Optional	1 pair	To keep hands warm while paddling	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Underwear/Bras</b>	Must Bring	2-4 pairs of underwear; 2 Bras	Undergarments made from merino wool or synthetic to wick moisture are highly recommended. Cotton briefs for women are acceptable.	<input type="checkbox"/>

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In Town Clothes	Must Bring	1 pair	Comfortable, casual set of clothes for in town & for your flight home at the end of your course.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Sleeping Gear</b>				
<b>EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>REQUIREMENT</b>	<b>QUANTITY</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>	<b>CHECK LIST</b>
Mummy Style Sleeping Bag w/ Stuff Sack*	Must Bring, or Rent	1	Temperature rating of 20 degrees F or colder. Synthetic, not down. Compression stuff sack recommended.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sleeping Pad*	Must Bring, or Rent	1	Closed-cell foam or self-inflating pads. (Example: Therm-a-rest Ridgerest or Z Lite).	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Miscellaneous Gear</b>				
<b>EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>REQUIREMENT</b>	<b>QUANTITY</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>	<b>CHECK LIST</b>
Required or Prescription Medication (if applicable)	Must Bring	1 Set	<b>Bring enough to last the entire trip.</b> All medications must be in the original bottle with instructions for administration, and your name on it. Please pack all prescribed medicine.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toiletries (2 – 3 oz travel sized only)	Must Bring	1 Set	Toothbrush, Toothpaste, Lip Balm w/ Sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher), Moisturizer, Feminine Hygiene products. (Shampoo, Conditioner, & Soap for pre & post course only).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Watch w/ Alarm	Must Bring	1	Must be waterproof (Example: Timex Expedition)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Headlamp	Must Bring	1	Durable and lightweight.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extra batteries	Must Bring	1 set	Bring 1 spare set for headlamp	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pocket Knife	Optional	1	One small pocket knife is sufficient.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water bottle	Must Bring	2	Heavy, durable plastic. Wide-mouth and must be at least 32 oz. A lightweight bladder system can replace 1 durable bottle. (Example: Platypus SoftBottle and Nalgene).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hydration System	Optional	1	CamelBak or Platypus are popular.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Insulated mug	Must Bring	1	Durable plastic for hot drinks.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plastic Bowl	Must Bring	1	Tupperware or Nalgene style, 16-30 oz capacity, with lid.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spoon or Spork	Must Bring	1	Plastic or metal utensils	<input type="checkbox"/>
Towel	Optional	1	A pack towel that is compressible, lightweight, quick-drying, made of a microfiber or microfiber blend. For use after sweating or after getting in water.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mosquito Head Net	Optional	1	Mosquitos & blackflies can swarm heavily in summer months.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Insect Repellent & Sunscreen	Must Bring	1	Small, travel sized bottles – NO AEROSOLS. Sunscreen must be SPF 30 or greater.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sunglasses, Wrap-around style	Must Bring	1	Durable with 100% UV protection. If you wear prescription lenses, bring your own prescription sunglasses. You will want to block the sun from the sides. (Examples: Julbo, Native).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prescription Glasses and Contact Lenses	Must Bring	Multiple	If you wear prescription glasses or contact lenses, bring a spare set. Even if you wear contacts daily, plan to carry a pair of glasses.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eyeglasses Strap	Optional	1	Good brands are Chums and Croakies.	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Trekking Poles	Optional	1-2		<input type="checkbox"/>
Sit pad or Camp chair	Optional	1	Portable seat for increased insulation when sitting on ground. Crazy Creek, sleeping pad adaptor, or make from cut foam.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Optional Items</b>				
EQUIPMENT	REQUIREMENT	QUANTITY	COMMENTS	CHECK LIST
Camera	Optional	1	Small, waterproof & shockproof camera. Bring extra battery and memory card. You are not permitted to bring cell phones or tables into the backcountry, even for camera use.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Binoculars	Optional	1	Small, travel sized.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Book	Optional	1	A small, lightweight book for reading.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Small Card Game or Cards	Optional	1	For down time.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fishing Gear	Optional	1 set	If you want to bring your own gear, you're welcome to. Note, however, that fishing opportunities are very limited and route dependent, and you must obtain a license.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ear Plugs	Optional	1-2 pairs	To block out loud sleepers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Small Stuff Sacks or Gallon Ziplocs	Optional	2-3	Used to organize items in your pack. Lightweight dry sacks are convenient.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Notebook w/ Pen or Pencil	Optional	1	A notebook for journaling or drawing.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Camp Pillow	Optional	1	Should be small, made out of a synthetic material and compressible.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>NCOAE Will Supply</b>				
<b>Students share both the use of and the responsibility for the group gear that NCOAE dispenses.</b>				
Tents	Group Tarp		Toilet Paper & Trowel	
Stoves, Fuel Bottles & Fuel	Maps & Reference Books/Materials		Compass & Whistle	
Cooking Gear	Course Food & Spice Kit		Water Treatment	
First Aid Kit	Repair Kit		Group Sunscreen & Bug Spray	
Bear Canisters or Bags	Soap, Hand Sanitizer & Hygiene Wipes		Solo Tarps	
PFD's	Helmets		Paddling Gear & Safety Equipment	

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### Boot Selection Guide

NCOAE has been outfitting people with boots for many years, and our priorities have remained the same: we want you to have footwear that provides adequate protection for your feet and ankles, that is durable enough to withstand weeks of wet, rugged wear and that provides reasonable comfort. Many boots available on the market do not meet these criteria.

When considering footwear, remember that your course will travel mostly off trail, you may be walking through cold streams, and your feet will get wet. You could be in rain or snow for days. You will cross creeks. **The type of footwear that you need will depend on how heavy your pack is and how strong your ankles and feet are.**

Here are some features to look for in and hiking boots:

- A sole that provides good traction like Vibram or other lugged sole.
- Some form of nylon shank to provide foot support and protection.
- Ankle support
- Durable uppers that will withstand hiking among sharp boulders and dense vegetation.
- A Gore-Tex liner is fine, but unnecessary. Your foot will get wet when the river comes in over the top of your boot. A Gore-Tex liner will slow drying time once the boot is wet.
- A comfortable fit with your preferred hiking socks. Boots that are too small are a common cause of blisters. Please see the Boot Fitting Guide in your enrollment packet for instructions on how to properly fit boots.

The following list of acceptable footwear is not exhaustive. It is to be used as a guide to the general type of footwear acceptable for your course. It is fine to substitute a similar boot or shoe for one of the types listed here. If you are considering a lighter boot or shoe, you will have to be committed to trimming your pack weight to below 40 lbs. which takes prior commitment to weighing each ounce of your personal gear. Expect to be carrying around 30-45 percent of your own body weight on your back. You will be carrying almost 25 pounds of group gear, so factor that in to your total pack weight.

#### Mid-weight hiking boots:

Asolo: TPS Series, Power Lite Series, Matrix Series, Radiant Series, Energy Series, FSN Series  
Lowa: Terek GTX, Tibet Pro GTX  
Garmont: Dakota, Synchro Gore-Tex  
La Sportiva: Thunder II GTX, Garnet GTX, Omega GTX  
Scarpa: Himavan GTX, Mangali GTX, Bhutan GTX, Kailash GTX, Terra GTX  
Vasque: Wasatch GTX, Summit GTX, Sundowner GTX, Clarion GTX, Taku GTX, Talus UltraDry  
Oboz: Wind River, Sawtooth Mid