

NCOAE Equipment List

Ecuador – 10-day

Summer Adventure Camp

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. Remember you will be carrying everything you bring with you on your trip – PLUS some of the food and some of the group gear. Consider what you can do without. If you don't need something, don't bring it!

You can save money too by 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 or Wal-Mart. 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 heavy cotton sleeping bag to the garage and use 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 again, we recommend using the gear provided by NCOAE, which is especially selected to meet the needs of our trips.
- Please do not pack cotton clothing. Synthetic clothing dries quickest (i.e. polyester, nylon) and therefore is the best option while backpacking. Some natural fibers that dry quickly and are wicking are also suitable (i.e. wool, silk, bamboo).
- **Do not bring any technology (i.e. cell phones, tablets, MP3 players, smart watches, etc.).**

If you have any questions or concerns about purchasing specific equipment please contact NCOAE Headquarters for assistance. Items listed below with an asterisk () indicate NCOAE has a limited amount of extra equipment available for students use, on an as needed basis. If your child needs to borrow an item, call our office to discuss this option.*

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

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Packs and Bags				
EQUIPMENT	REQUIREMENT	QUANTITY	COMMENTS	CHECK LIST
Internal Frame Backpack	NCOAE provides	1	Internal frame backpack, with a volume of 65 to 85 liters is ideal (3,900-5,200 cubic inches).	☐
Day Pack	Must Bring	1	Small backpack for use on day hikes or trips into town	☐
Zip Duffle	Optional	1	Used to organize and store items while at camp. (Example: Outdoor Products 12x24 Deluxe Duffle).	☐
Stuff Sacks / Gallon Ziplocs	Must Bring	1-4	Used to organize items in your pack. Lightweight drysacks are convenient (example: eVent Sil DrySack).	☐
Footwear				
EQUIPMENT	REQUIREMENT	QUANTITY	COMMENTS	CHECK LIST
Waterproof, Mid-Weight Hiking Boot	Must Bring	1 pair	Must be waterproof and at least mid-weight. Please read the Boot Selection Guide at the end of this list.	☐
Hiking Socks	Must Bring	4-6 pairs	Must be wool or wool/synthetic blend. No cotton or wool-cotton blends.	☐
Camp Shoes	Must Bring	1 pair	Closed-toed shoes are a must to protect your feet and are more comfortable for wearing in camp.	☐
River Shoes / Sandals	Must Bring	1 pair	Recommend closed-toed for protection from rocks. You can bring “open-toe” sandals if you’d prefer. Must have heel strap. (Example: Keens, Chacos)	☐
Upper Body Clothing				
You need three to four insulating layers . Example combination: Long underwear top + t-shirt + fleece/puffy + rain jacket. Make sure your layers fit comfortably over each other. If you get cold easily, we suggest that you bring additional layers.				
EQUIPMENT	REQUIREMENT	QUANTITY	COMMENTS	CHECK LIST
Base Layer - Long Underwear Top	Must Bring	2	Mid-weight synthetic or performance wool is best.	☐
T-Shirt	Must Bring	2-3	We recommend synthetic, lightweight polyester shirts.	☐
Long-Sleeved Shirt	Must Bring	2	Nylon or other synthetic long-sleeved shirt. Roomy enough to fit over base layers. Protection from cold, bugs, wind, brush, or sun.	☐
Fleece Jacket or Hoodie	Must Bring	1-2	Light- to mid-weight fleece or synthetic hoodie that fits over your base layers. No cotton hoodies or jackets.	☐
Insulated Jacket / Puffy	Must Bring	1	Light- to mid-weight synthetic-fill or “puffy” coat that fits over your base layers. No cotton coats.	☐
Fleece or Synthetic-fill Insulated Vest	Optional	1	A vest can supplement other upper layers, which is good if you get cold easily.	☐
Rain Jacket*	Must Bring	1	MUST BE WATERPROOF. Your rain jacket should be roomy enough to fit comfortably over all upper-body layers. Ponchos or Frog Toggs are NOT permitted.	☐

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Lower Body Clothing				
You need two to three lower-body insulating layers that fit comfortably over each other and underneath your rain pants. Example combination: Long underwear + hiking pants + rain pants.				
EQUIPMENT	REQUIREMENT	QUANTITY	COMMENTS	CHECK LIST
Base Layer - Long Underwear Bottoms	Must Bring	2 pairs	Mid-weight synthetic or performance wool is best.	☐
Fleece or Insulated Pants	Optional	1 pair	Can supplement other lower layers if you get cold easily. (Example: Columbia Fleece pants)	☐
Hiking Pants	Must Bring	2 pair	Nylon or other synthetic hiking pants for protection from cold, bugs, and dense vegetation.	☐
Shorts	Must Bring	1-2 pair	Light weight, synthetic athletic short. Should long enough to cover the length of your thigh to prevent chafing.	☐
Rain Pants*	Must Bring	1 pair	MUST BE WATERPROOF. These need to fit comfortably over your hiking pants. Frog Toggs are NOT permitted.	☐
Miscellaneous Clothing				
EQUIPMENT	REQUIREMENT	QUANTITY	COMMENTS	CHECK LIST
Sun Hat or Baseball Cap	Must Bring	1	Should be wide-brimmed to protect from sun.	☐
Winter Hat	Must Bring	2	Lightweight fleece or wool hat that will fully cover your ears.	☐
Bathing Suit	Must Bring	1		☐
Buff, Balaclava, or Neck Gaiter	Optional	1	Used to keep your head, neck, and ears warm or protect from the wind and sun.	☐
Bandana	Must Bring	1	For multiple uses.	☐
Light Gloves or Mittens / Glove Liners	Must Bring	2 pair	Lightweight wool or synthetic gloves, for cold mornings or evenings.	☐
Waterproof Gloves or Mittens	Must Bring	1-2 pair	Wool or synthetic gloves or mittens for cold mornings or evenings around camp. Must be WATERPROOF or must bring waterproof glove/mitten shells.	☐
Gloves or Mitten Shells	Optional	1 pair	Waterproof shells that fit over your gloves or mittens.	☐
Underwear/Bras	Must Bring	7-13 pairs underwear; 2 Bras	Undergarments made from merino wool or synthetic to wick moisture are highly recommended. Cotton briefs for women are acceptable.	☐
In Town Clothes	Must Bring	1-2 pairs	Comfortable, casual set of clothes for in town & for your flight home at the end of your course.	☐

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Sleeping Gear				
EQUIPMENT	REQUIREMENT	QUANTITY	COMMENTS	CHECK LIST
Mummy Style Sleeping Bag w/Stuff Sack	Optional, NCOAE Provides	1	Temperature rating of 20 degrees F or colder. Synthetic, not down recommended. Compression stuff sack recommended.	☐
Sleeping Bag Liner	Optional	1	To keep you warmer on cold nights. Recommended if you get cold easily at night. Wool or synthetic recommended.	☐
Sleeping Pad	Optional, NCOAE Provides	1	Closed-cell foam or self-inflating pads. (Example: Therm-a-rest Ridgerest or Z Lite).	☐
Miscellaneous Gear				
EQUIPMENT	REQUIREMENT	QUANTITY	COMMENTS	CHECK LIST
Required or Prescription Medication (if applicable)	Must Bring	1 Set	Bring enough to last the entire trip. All medications must be in the original bottle with instructions for administration, and your name on it. Please pack all prescribed medicine.	☐
Toiletries (small, travel sized only)	Must Bring	1 Set	Toothbrush, toothpaste, lip balm w/ SPF 15+, period products. Facewash, moisturizer, washcloth/loofah for in-town days. Group Shampoo, conditioner, & soap provided. May bring own if prefer.	☐
Headlamp	Must Bring	1	Durable and lightweight.	☐
Extra batteries	Must Bring	2 sets	Bring 2 spare sets for headlamp	☐
Water bottle w/filter, 32oz	Must Bring	2	Durable plastic water bottles. Filter must be included. Should be 32 oz. (Example: Lifestraw Go)	☐
Insulated mug	Optional, NCOAE Provides	1	Durable plastic for hot drinks.	☐
Plastic Bowl	Optional, NCOAE Provides	1	Tupperware or Nalgene style, 16-30 oz capacity, with lid.	☐
Spoon or Spork	Optional, NCOAE Provides	1	Plastic or metal utensils	☐
Camp Towel	Must Bring	1	Pack towel that is compressible, lightweight, quick-drying, made of a microfiber or microfiber blend. For use after showering or after getting in water.	☐
Insect Repellent & Sunscreen	Optional, NCOAE Provides	1 each	Small, travel sized bottles – NO AEROSOLS. Sunscreen must be SPF 30 or greater.	☐
Sunglasses	Must Bring	1	Durable with UV protection.	☐
Prescription Glasses / 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.	☐
Eyeglasses Strap	Optional	1	Good brands are Chums and Croakies.	☐
Trekking Poles	Recommended	1 pair		☐
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.	☐

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Optional Items				
EQUIPMENT	REQUIREMENT	QUANTITY	COMMENTS	CHECK LIST
Camera	Optional	1	Small, waterproof or disposable camera. You are not permitted to bring your cell phones into the backcountry, even for camera use.	☐
Binoculars	Optional	1	Small, travel sized.	☐
English to Spanish - Pocket Dictionary & Phrase Book	Optional	1	For use while improving your fluency.	☐
Book	Optional	1	A small, lightweight book for reading.	☐
Small Card Game / Cards	Optional	1	For down time.	☐
Camp Pillow	Optional	1	Should be small, made out of a synthetic material and compressible.	☐
NCOAE Will Supply:				
Students share both the use of and the responsibility for the group gear that NCOAE dispenses.				
Sleeping Shelters	Maps & Reference Books/Materials		Maps & Reference Books/Materials	
Cooking Equipment & Dishes	Satellite Communication Device		Compass & Whistle	
Course Food	Group Sunscreen, Bug Spray		Extra Water Treatment	
First Aid Kit	Repair Kit		Group Sunscreen & Bug Spray	
Food Storage Canisters or Bags	Soap, Hand Sanitizer & Hygiene Wipes		Toilet Paper & Trowel	

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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 may travel off trail. You may be walking through cold streams, and your feet could get wet. You could be in rain or snow for days. **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 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.
- Boots must be waterproof. A Gore-Tex liner is recommended, but not required.
- A comfortable fit with your preferred hiking socks. Boots that are too small are a common cause of blisters.

Sizing boots properly is important. Hiking should fit snug everywhere, tight nowhere and offer room to wiggle your toes. Here are some tips:

- **Try on boots at the end of the day and with the socks you plan to wear.** Your feet normally swell a bit during the day's activities and will be at their largest then. This helps you avoid buying boots that are too small.
- **Fit issues to look out for:** You don't want to feel odd bumps, seams, pinching in the forefoot, or toes hitting the end of the boot when it's on an incline. If the boots are laced firmly and you still feel space above the top of your foot, then the volume of the boot is wrong.
- Spend some time in the boots. Take a walk through the store, walk up and down stairs, and find an inclined surface to walk on.
- When shopping online, consider a brand you've worn before. Most companies tend to use a consistent foot model over time, so the fit is likely to be similar.
- **Be sure to break your boots in before your first trip.** Too many sore-footed hikers overlook this important step.

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 boot examples:

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