

PACKING LIST – Intro to Backpacking Rocky Mountain National Park

For your convenience, we've linked time-tested gear from REI and other trusted retailers below to help you get started. Click each hyperlink to be directed to some of our staff picks for footwear, equipment, and more:

FOOTWEAR

- ___ 1 pair of midweight [hiking boots](#) or [shoes](#) (Remember to [waterproof](#) your boots!)
- ___ 1 pair lightweight camp shoes (For example: [lightweight sandals](#), crocs, [tevas](#), etc.) to wear in camp.
- ___ 2 pairs hiking socks: (wool or synthetic equivalent: [Smartwool](#), [Woolrich](#), [Darn Tough](#))

CLOTHING (No cotton)

- ___ 1 pair lightweight, synthetic hiking [pants](#) ([zip-offs](#) work well) or [skirt](#)
- ___ 1 or 2 short sleeve technical [tee-shirts](#)
- ___ 1 lightweight [long-sleeved fleece](#) or lightweight, long-sleeved [wool shirt](#)
- ___ 1 pair lightweight, long underwear [top](#) and [bottoms](#): silk, wool, or synthetic equivalent
- ___ 1 [wide-brimmed](#) or [baseball-style hat](#) for protection from sun/rain
- ___ 1 [stocking cap](#), wool or fleece, or a [buff](#)
- ___ 1 pair lightweight gloves: [wool](#), [Capilene](#), or [Polartec](#)
- ___ 1 synthetic "[puffy](#)" (down or poly) jacket
- ___ 1 [rain jacket](#) AND [rain pants](#): a waterproof/breathable fabric like Gore-tex.
- ___ [Underwear](#)
- ___ Change of clothes for last evening out/travel home - try [Toad&Co](#) for [sustainable](#), [comfortable](#) options!
- ___ 1 pair of dedicated sleeping clothes (i.e. [thermal underwear top/bottom](#))

EQUIPMENT/ESSENTIALS

- ___ 1 pair [trekking poles](#) (required)
- ___ 1 [backpack](#): 50-75 liter capacity. This backpack needs to be able to fit all your gear, and your bear canister for your food, toiletries, and other scented items.
- ___ 1 [sleeping bag](#); synthetic fill or down fill, warm to 30 degrees F
- ___ 1 lightweight [sleeping pad](#), inflating OR [closed cell foam](#), R-value 2-4
- ___ Capacity to carry 2 - 3 liters of water, with [waterbottles](#) and (see Notes on Packing List)
- ___ 1 solid bear canister, required by Rocky Mountain National Park ([BearVault BV500 Journey Bear Canister](#) or equivalent) Note: these can be rented in Estes Park for \$7 per day at [Estes Park Mountain Shop](#). We will have time to rent these on Day 2, if needed.
- ___ 1 heavy-duty, extra-large [garbage bag](#) to line your backpack
- ___ 1 [rain cover](#) for your backpack
- ___ 20-30 liter packable [day hiking pack](#) (your backpacking backpack can also be used)
- ___ 3 or 4 [stuff sacks](#) (can also be used as a pillow)
- ___ Small [headlamp](#) with fresh batteries
- ___ 2 [bandanas](#)
- ___ Plastic/reusable [bowl](#), [cup](#), and eating utensil ([spoon](#)/[spork](#))
- ___ [Ear plugs](#) (for a good night's sleep)
- ___ [Sunglasses](#) (100% UV blocking) and [retention strap](#)
- ___ 3 [quart-sized](#) and 3 [gallon-sized](#) Ziploc bags
- ___ Snacks you can't live without!

AGC supplies the sunscreen, TP, and insect repellent as part of the group gear unless you require something specific.

TOILETRIES (small everything)

- ___ [Toothbrush](#), [toothpaste](#), [dental floss](#), [hand sanitizer](#), contact lens paraphernalia, sanitary supplies
- ___ [Lip protection](#) with sunblock of at least SPF 15
- ___ Personal [first aid/patch kit](#) (e.g., Band-Aids, 1 safety pin, moleskin, Compeed (or blister bandages), KT tape, ibuprofen, any personal medications)
- ___ Small personal [hand sanitizer](#)
- ___ Personal [camp soap](#) (biodegradable)

Please note: Individuals with the potential for a severe allergic reaction to insect stings or specific foods or medications must bring an epi-pen. Please consult your physician and tell your guide.

Not required but recommended:

- ___ Short [gaiters](#) - lightweight and breathable
- ___ Kula Cloth (microfiber antibacterial cloth used for after using the restroom). These can also be used as an alternative to a bandana and purchased in our [AGC store](#)!

OPTIONAL

- ___ Small [journal](#) and pen
- ___ Camera
- ___ Basic [compass](#)

Notes on Packing List

Please note: If you are unfamiliar with any terms used to explain the equipment or clothing required for this trip or would like help with any item listed, please let us know.

Adventures in Good Company's packing list includes items to help you prepare for the various activities and conditions. It is not personalized, so please add the things you require to travel safely and comfortably but remember – less is better! You may not use everything you bring; however, you need to come prepared for all possible weather. At the same time, you must be able to carry your own luggage, sometimes up and downstairs. Bringing a duffel bag or soft-sided suitcase with wheels, rather than a hard-sided suitcase, is easier for packing into the vans that will be transporting our luggage. **As space for luggage on our trips is limited, please do not overpack!**

Backpack: You will need a backpack between 50-75 liters capacity. It is essential to have a backpack that fits correctly, as an ill-fitting pack can ruin your trip. While we understand wanting to borrow a pack, do not try to get by with someone else's pack if it does not feel comfortable on your body at full backpack weight. Be sure to have your backpack fitted to you by your local outfitter, whether it is a new one you purchased for the trip or one you already have

Pack Cover: These are waterproof, elasticized covers designed to keep your backpack and contents dry in inclement weather. If you are purchasing a pack cover, take your pack with you or know the size. An alternative to buying a pack cover is to use a heavy-duty contractor bag to line your pack to protect the contents from rain.

Regarding organization/packing your backpack: Using several small stuff sacks (rather than one large) is a great way to organize your gear, clothing, and food. Compression sacks might come in handy for sleeping bags and clothing.

Footwear: Well-fitting, sturdy boots or trail shoes are important to your safety and enjoyment. If you plan to buy new boots, break them in by wearing them around town and taking some short hikes *before* your trip. For general hiking, lightweight or midweight cordura or leather boots with a Vibram sole work well. If you have weak ankles or are recovering from an ankle injury, get boots that come above the ankle— you'll find that this will give you more support in uneven or slippery terrain. Remember to waterproof your boots before the trip. Even boots billed as 'waterproof' need to be treated with a waterproofing product.

Sleeping bag: Bring a sleeping bag with either down or synthetic insulation that is rated for at least 30 degrees. Other than temperature rating, weight and bulk are factors to consider in sleeping bags. Appropriate choices for the climate we will be backpacking include down, waterproof down, and synthetic.

Clothing: The clothing on the packing list has been chosen for your trip conditions. **NO COTTON** for your activewear! It should be made from synthetic/synthetic blends, down/down blends, or wool/wool blends. Layering is the most practical and efficient method of insulating the body. Several layers of varied weight provide better insulation than one thick layer. Adding or subtracting layers allows you to adjust the temperature.

Short gaiters: Gaiters can be useful for keeping your socks clean (reducing the chance of blisters), keeping debris out of your boots (another blister preventive measure), providing another barrier between you and poison ivy, and, most importantly --- if it rains they keep your socks dry and prevents wicking water down into your boots.

Rain Gear: You will need a jacket made of coated nylon or a waterproof/breathable fabric like Gore-tex, HellyTech, Membrane, H2No, or Ultrex. **Be sure it keeps water out.** Before making this necessary purchase, be sure that it fits you correctly. It should be large enough to fit over all your layers. In particular, the hood needs to be effective. It should shield your face from the rain and turn with your head. The movement of your arms must not interfere with the hood. Put on your daypack; can you still raise your arms? Your wind/rain pants should be comfortable, allow enough room for your layers, and permit free movement of your legs (for example, can you crouch comfortably?). Partial or full-length leg zippers are helpful for quickly putting your pants on over your boots. An inexpensive plastic poncho will leak and tear easily and is inadequate. Many choices range from affordable (for example, Frog Togs/Ducs) to more expensive.

Hydration: 1 water bottle is required for this trip. Another option to meet the 2-3 liter requirement is a water bladder. These water bags have a hose attachment that you drink from and usually fit inside your backpack.

Personal First Aid Kit: Bring a small first aid kit with familiar medicine and first aid supplies you might need. The guides will have a first aid kit but having what you know works well for you is a good idea. Recommendations include the following: blister or foot remedies like moleskin, Compeed, blister bandages, or similar, a small roll of duct tape (always useful!), KT tape, and remedies for respiratory ailments, stomach ailments, sore muscles, or joints.

Trekking Poles: Trekking poles contribute to your safety by improving your balance and stability, and to your health by saving stress on your hips and knees. If you are unfamiliar with trekking poles, [click here to read this blog post](#) addressing the most commonly asked questions.

Disclaimer: This packing list features some affiliate links. This means AGC gets a small commission if you make a purchase (at no extra cost to you). Thank you for the support!