

Equipment List

Semester in the Amazon

Welcome to NOLS! We look forward to your arrival in the Brazilian Amazon.

Please read this document carefully, as it will help you determine your equipment needs for your course. Due to certain importation limitations and our desire to provide students with the best possible gear, we are requiring all students to come with all their basic personal outfitting equipment.

NOLS Amazon will provide all group boating and camping equipment, which includes all paddling related gear: boats, paddles, rescue gear, PFDs helmets, tents, flies, stoves and kitchen gear. NOLS provides some fishing gear (hand lines and rod/reel), which is shared by the entire group. NOLS also provides a library of local natural and human history, as well as all first aid, medications and basic repair equipment.

Your instructors will inspect your gear and ensure that it is suitable for your course, using their judgment and considering course route, curriculum goals, season and prevailing weather conditions. The gear recommendations in this document have been made by NOLS instructors with experience in the Amazon. There are a wide variety of equipment options in the U.S. The most important items to research beforehand are your boots and backpack. Please refer to the boot-fitting instructions in your enrolment packet.

This list is based on our knowledge of the conditions you will likely face and the standard quantity and type of gear that is needed to keep you comfortable during your expedition. Due to seasonal variances and your own individual desires or needs, you may find that some gear on this list gets less or more use than expected. The outdoors is a great teacher and this expedition will help you learn what gear choices work for you individually in the conditions you experience on this semester.

The availability of each item is indicated as follows:

Must Bring

– Indicates that the item is needed for the course. No price in the Purchase Price column
Indicates that NOLS Brazil does not have this item available for purchase.

Optional

– Indicates that the item is **not required for your NOLS course**, but could be useful. Optional items that are **highly recommended** generally will increase your appreciation of the course or have been found useful by some individuals, but due to higher costs are made optional.

NOLS Amazon is asking all students to purchase their personal gear before arriving for the course. Although some items can be purchased in Brazil (i.e. long cotton pants or shirts) other items are better purchased in North America or Europe before arriving. Another option for students is to contact NOLS via the NOLS online store and purchase some of the personal gear required for your course via NOLS.

Note: All prices are in \$USD and are subject to change.

If you have any questions, or if you would like more information regarding any of the items on the equipment list, please contact the following email (this is the preferred method for contacting us about specifics of the Amazon program): jon_kempsey@nols.edu



Upper Body Layers

Should consist of two (2) insulating layers (Polypro layer and fleece layer), a wind/bug and rain- proof layer, two (2) sunproof layers and two t-shirts. Combinations of the following garments are acceptable. Please note cotton is good in this environment. A good sun hat, a warm hat and a mosquito head net are also needed.

Equipment	Need	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
T-Shirt or other Light-Weight Cotton or Synthetic Shirt	Must Bring	\$18	2	Cotton is recommended. This is not one of your insulating layers. These should also be lighter in color. NOLS Brazil logo t-shirts are available for purchase.	
Lightweight Long Sleeved Collared Shirt	Must Bring		3	Lightweight cotton shirts are recommended, but Coolmax® type nylon also works well. These are for protection from the sun and bugs. They should have a collar, be loose fitting, light in color, and lightweight. Don't purchase shirts with ventilation features. Second-hand stores usually stock large selections of men's dress shirts appropriate for this use. Ex-Officio makes some shirts with bug protection (Insect Shield) and solar protection. See their Fly-Bye shirt as an example.	
Primary Insulating Layer (Lightweight)	Must Bring		1	Lightweight underwear top of Smartwool, polypropylene, ZeO2™, Capilene® or Coolmax, etc.	
Top Insulating Layer (Mid-Weight)	Must Bring		1	A full-length, mid-weight zip fleece top. (Down is unacceptable). Mainly for use on cool nights but will also double as a pillow. If you get cold easily consider bringing a fleece jacket instead.	
Wind Shirt	Optional		1	A lightweight, breathable, nylon wind shell either anorak or full-zip style. This must be large enough to fit comfortably over your upper body layers. Due North bug shirts are recommended. This can serve as a wind layer, but the primary use is as a layer to wear over your shirt to protect from bug bites. Should be light in color. "Bug shirts" are also suitable. (www.bugshirt.com)	
Rain Jacket	Must Bring		1	A lightweight, nylon spray/rain shell either anorak or full-zip style. Gore-Tex® gear is acceptable and can act as a wind layer as well.	

Our Advice? Bring the fleece tops and polypro you already own and you think might work. We'll advise you on the best combination for your course and season. For your wind/rain gear we suggest you bring a light spray/rain jacket if you already own it or purchase a light weight rain jacket from Mountain Hardwear, Patagonia, REI, EMS, etc. A Gore Tex® jacket will work for your wind/rain wear, but is expensive, can be uncomfortable in warmer temperatures and can get ruined in this environment. Some people like bug shirts. They are more comfortable than wind shirts in the humidity.



Lower Body Layers

Should consist of durable long cotton pants for bug and sun protection and 2 pair of shorts. One insulating layer is sufficient.

Equipment	Need	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Underwear/ Boxers	Must Bring		2 -3 (men) Women bring 5-8 cotton pair	Cotton underwear is recommended, rather than nylon. Men may prefer boxer shorts.	
Shorts and Sports Bra for Women	Must Bring		1	Loose fitting nylon athletic or river shorts. Men may want shorts with liners These should be quick drying, not cotton! These double as a swim suit (along with a sports bra for women).	
Bathing Suit	Optional		1	Speedo or "tsunga" for men, bikini for women.	
Primary Insulating Layer: Light- Weight Synthetic	Must Bring		1 pair	Lightweight long bottoms of high performance polyester, polypropylene, ZeO2, Capilene® or Coolmax. Only used for Hiking sections.	
Long Pants	Must Bring		3 pairs	These are used daily for bug and sun protection. They should be loose fitting. We recommend full cut khaki style pants, or khaki type pants that have the bottom zips that turn into shorts. Jeans and camouflage pants are not acceptable. Second hand stores usually stock large selections of cotton pants appropriate for this use. Lighter colors are preferred. See Ex-Officio "Amphi" or "Gobi" styles.	

Our Advice? Backpacker style nylon travel pants with the zip off legs have been popular with past students and can double as your long pants and one pair of your shorts. **Remember you will LIVE in your long sleeve cotton shirts and pants, so choose wisely.** They are crucial for keeping you protected from sun and bugs.

Head, Neck & Hand Layers

Equipment	Need	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Sun Hat	Must Bring	\$15	1	A wide brimmed crushable hat to provide protection from the sun on your canoe section. Hats made out of canvas are recommended; avoid hats made from GORE TEX or plastic, as they get too hot. Choose a hat that you like as you will wear this often. NOLS Brazil has suitable hats for sale.	
Baseball Cap with Bandana	Must Bring	\$15	1 of each	Necessary for sun protection. Especially useful while hiking, when your wide brimmed hat is more cumbersome with a pack on. The bandana protects your neck and ears from the sun. NOLS Brazil sells baseball caps with sewn on flaps that cover the neck and ears.	



Head, Neck & Hand Layers (Continued)					
Equipment	Need	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Wool/Fleece Hat	Must Bring		1	To keep you warm at night during the hiking section at the higher elevations.	
Leather or Gardening Gloves	Must Bring		1 pair	These are used for hand protection during hiking section and during the river section as well.	
Mosquito Head Net	Must Bring		1	A netted hood to provide relief from the bugs and "Mozzies". Some students and instructors just bring full-length hooded bug shirts. Outdoor Research (OR) has good quality headnets or see www.bugshirts.net .	

Footwear

NOLS Amazon does not have boots, sneakers, boat shoes or river sandals for rent or sale. We do have flip-flop sandals for sale for use on the river section in beach camps.

You'll need a sturdy pair of hiking boots with good ankle support and proper fit for hiking on uneven terrain with heavy packs. You'll need gaiters, camp shoes, wet/river shoes and at least 3-4 pairs of hiking socks. You can bring an optional pair of sandals for wearing on the river or in camp if desired. These shoes should all be in good condition, as they will receive a lot of wear.

Equipment	Need	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Medium-weight Off-trail Leather Backpacking Boots (no fabric boots)	Must Bring		1 pair	We do not have boots for rental or purchase. Please read the following information and the boot fitting information in your enrolment packet. Leather boots with good ankle support and minimal seams are your best option. These boots are designed for extended backpacking and provide good support for off-trail hiking with heavy packs. See boot recommendations at the end of this equipment list. We have had complaints about Vasque boot quality from previous students.	
Insoles	Optional		1 pair	To assure your comfort in hiking boots choose an after market insole (these are insoles available for purchase separate from footwear). They can provide arch support, stabilize your foot and heel, add cushion and help with volume adjustment. Suggestions would be Spenco Polysorb®, Superfeet or Montrail Stabilizing Insoles®.	
Wool Socks	Must Bring		4 pairs	Crew length. Socks must be heavy wool or wool / polypropylene blend. Thorlo® and Smartwool® are good choices. You will need 3 sets of hiking socks and a camp sock.	
Camp Shoes	Must Bring		1 pair	Running, tennis or cross-training athletic shoes, in good condition, to wear around camp at the base or for travel. Crocs with ventilation holes are a good option for camp shoes, as they are lightweight and quick drying.	

Footwear (Continued)

Equipment	Need	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Gaiters	Must Bring		1 pair	Worn over the hiking boots as snakebite protection, to keep out dirt and gravel and to provide lower leg protection. Gaiters receive hard use. Gaiters with zippers should have a double closure system either Velcro or snaps. OR Crocodiles and Mountain Hardware Ventigaiters® have a Velcro front opening and are the best options. Gaiters with restrictive fit or tight elastic around the boot cuff are not acceptable.	
Rubber Boots	Must Bring (available for rent)	\$15 per month rental	1 pair	River section. Used around camp in the tropical forest and as snake protection. If you have larger or wider feet (size 11 1/2 or larger) we suggest you bring your own boots. CROCS makes a shin high shoe or XTRATUFF 12 inch boots are suitable.	
Cotton Socks/Poly liners	Must Bring		3 pair	Short cotton socks for wearing with camp shoes or as a second hiking layer. The thin synthetic liners work well, too.	
Wet Shoes	Must Bring		1 pair	For the River Section. We recommend some sort of NRS, Salomon, Keen or other commercial wet shoe with a solid sole. NOT neoprene booties. NO RIVER SANDALS. A pair of old Converse All Stars or sturdy tennis shoes work just fine, but they should be in good condition.	

Our Advice? Bring the shoes listed, and your instructors will help advise you of the best combinations for each section.

Packs & Bags

You will use a combination of bags for each section. Your backpack will be your primary bag on your hiking/ cultural sections and will also be used for storage on the canoe section. You will also use a combination of zip bags, compression stuff sacks and dry bags during your course. Personal luggage must be limited to what you can fit in your backpack, and small duffel. No suitcases or heavy duffels are permitted. A simple lightweight travel duffel to contain your pack during transit is permitted.

Equipment	Need	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Backpack	Must Bring		1	If you already own a large backpack, please bring it with you. Internal frame packs should have a volume of 80 litres (4200-4800 cubic inches). A sleeping bag compression stuff sack is required with internal frame packs. If you decide to purchase an internal frame pack, we recommend the NOLS/Lowe Alpine Systems, Dana Designs Astralplane or Alpine LTW, Arc'teryx Bora 80, or other packs of similar quality and capacity. Larger individuals (5'11" or taller) should bring a bigger pack (up to 90-100 litres).	
Small Stuff Sacks (Ditty Bags)	Must Bring		2 or 3	Small nylon or net bags for organizing items in your pack. Women can use one for tampons.	
Zip (Duffel) Bag	Must Bring	\$15-\$25	1	One large zippered nylon bag (12"x24"/approx 30L) or waterproof rubberised bag for use as clothing and storage bags. We rent and sell nylon zip bags for this purpose.	



Packs & Bags (Continued)

Equipment	Need	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Dry Bag	Must Bring	\$20 Rental	1	20-30 litre-size for use as a waterproof day bag on the canoe section. We rent dry bags.	
Plastic Trash Bags	Must Bring		10	Heavy-duty trash bags, 33 gallon- white trash compactor bags are an excellent choice. These are for making stuff sacks and backpacks more waterproof. You'll find better quality in the U.S.	

Our advice? An expedition backpack is a major purchase. If you don't already own one ask around and try out a few. If you have a larger size pack then the suggested volume bring that one anyway; it should be fine if it is the same recommended brand as the smaller models.

Sleeping Gear

Equipment	Need	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Sleeping Bag	Must Bring		1	A lightweight synthetic-filled (Quallofil, Hollofil, Polarguard, etc) sleeping bag +45 and above is fine. Down bags are not suitable for the wet conditions experienced in the Amazon. See the REI website for +45 bags.	
Compression Stuff Sack	Must Bring		1	Medium size compression stuff sacks are required with internal frame packs for your sleeping bag.	
Cotton or Silk Sleep Sheet	Must Bring	\$20	1	Great for use when it is too hot for the sleeping bag. For River sections this might be your only sleeping layer.	
Therm-A-Rest with Stuff Sack	Must Bring		1	Therm-A-Rest® or similar brand full length or 3/4 length are best; bring a repair kit. Pacific Outdoor Supply also makes a good air mattress.	

Miscellaneous Items

Equipment	Need	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Insulated Mug	Must Bring		1	12 - 20 oz. insulated mugs with lids are preferred.	
Bowl	Must Bring		1	A bowl with a snap-on lid or screw top is recommended. Re-sealable Tupperware® containers can work great for bowls.	
Spoon	Must Bring		2	Lexan spoons are light, durable and popular. Metal spoons will also work. Bringing a second as back up is a good idea.	



Miscellaneous Items (Continued)

Equipment	Need	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Water Bottle /Camelback	Must Bring		2-3	Wide mouth 1-1.5 litre (16 oz., 32 oz., 48 oz. size). Platypus or Camelbacks work well also and we encourage you to bring them if you have one. You will need two water vessels with a minimum capacity of 2.5-3 litres.	
Lip Balm	Must Bring		2	2 sticks, cream or tube type moisturising balm with sun protection factor SPF15 or greater.	
Sunscreen	Must Bring		3	125-250 ml. tube of water resistant sunscreen with a Sun Protection factor SPF15 or greater (SPF30 recommended). Fair skinned people may need total sun block like zinc oxide.	
Sunglasses	Must Bring		2 pairs	Lenses should be dark and 100%UV resistant. Glasses can be wrap around style or good quality sunglasses. We suggest a sturdy case. Julbo, Vuarnet, Bolle, and Bousch & Lomb are good brands. Having an extra pair is a good idea.	
Sunglass Retainers	Must Bring		1	Chums® or Croakies® for your glasses or sunglasses.	
Head-Lamp	Must Bring		2*	Should be durable and lightweight. Tikka, Petzl, Black Diamond, Princeton Tech or similar are recommended. Headlamps with adjustable light sources (both LEDs and standard bulb) are recommended as they allow better battery efficiency. Bring extra bulbs specific to your needs. *These are so crucial that having a backup is required.	
Batteries	Must Bring		8 -10 sets	Approximately 140 hours of <u>full intensity</u> light is required for the semester.	
Disposable Lighters	Must Bring		2	Used to light your camp stoves.	
Personal Hygiene Articles	Must Bring		3 sets	3 travel or trial size containers of toothpaste, hand sanitizer and liquid soap (Dr. Bronners is recommended and they sell a convenient 2.5oz bottle) Alternatively, you may bring larger containers with 2oz Nalgene bottles to refill, when needed (available for sale at NOLS Brazil). In the field you'll want to keep toiletries to a minimum to reduce weight. In addition, bring a small bottle of moisturizing lotion, toothbrush, floss, comb, or brush, nail clippers and small nail brush. Female hygiene products sufficient for 80 days. The use of re-usable tampons is becoming more common on NOLS courses but we recommend you test these at home before you arrive for your course. See http://www.divacup.com/en/home/faqs/	
Notepad	Must Bring		1	A small, lightweight pad is fine. Stenographer notebooks will work also.	

Miscellaneous Items (Continued)

Equipment	Need	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Pen and Pencil	Must Bring		3	2 black pens and a pencil for taking notes and writing in your journal.	
Portuguese/English Dictionary	Must Bring		1	Required for the Cultural section. Pocket sized editions are best.	
Watch	Must Bring		1	Water –resistant. An alarm is mandatory.	
Insect Repellent	Must Bring		3	You will need DEET repellent for insect bite protection. A minimum of 30% DEET is recommended (Ultrathon, Sawyer’s Gold Comp, Cutter’s Outdoorsmen) 125ml/4 oz containers. An alternative is lemon-eucalyptus based repellents (REPEL). A combination of the two can be effective. Picaridin is a third newer option for insect repellent. www.travmed.com is a good reference for repellents.	
Epi- pens and Antihistamines	Must Bring	Must Bring	**	**Anyone who has experienced moderate allergic reactions to bee stings/insect bites should bring antihistamines and see their doctor about a possible prescription for Epi-pens.	
Anti-Malarial	Must Bring		**	**NOLS recommends Malarone, Doxycycline or Lariam. For fairer skinned people Doxycycline is NOT a good option due to heightened sun sensitivity.	

Optional Items

Items on this list are optional. You do not need to bring them for your course, but if you already own them or would like to bring some of these items you are most welcome. Your instructors will assess if what you bring in this category is appropriate for your course. Avoid heavy and bulky items.

Equipment	Need	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Camera and Film	Optional		1	Lightweight, 35 mm or digital compact cameras are sufficient; bring a protective case. Waterproof cases recommended for canoeing and coastal sections. No heavy lenses and elaborate set-ups. Bring enough film or digital storage for 80 days. Recharging batteries may not be possible for up to 6 weeks at a time.	
Waterproof Dry Box	Optional		1-2	If you have anything particularly valuable i.e. expensive camera, you may want to bring a special dry box to store it in. These must be small. Pelican and Otter boxes are two reliable brands	
Anti-Fungal Cream/Talcum Powder/Ear Drops	Optional		2	In the tropical forest we have had severe cases of foot fungus. Neosporin and other companies make a cream for foot fungus, which comes in handy. Lotrimin is a recommended brand. Tea tree oil is a natural remedy and excellent anti-fungal as well. Gold Bond talcum powder has also been recommended. Drops for Swimmer’s Ear should be brought for people with a history of ear aches (even as a child)	

Optional Items (Continued)					
Equipment	Need	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Binoculars	Optional		1	Highly recommended. Good for wildlife spotting. The best are those that are lightweight and water-resistant.	
Pocket Knife	Optional		1	Good for all sorts of uses. Knives with blades longer than 4 inches are not permitted.	
Fishing Rod	Optional		1	NOLS provides some rod/reel and hand line set-ups to be shared by expedition members. Avid fisherfolk should bring their own gear, but check for size limitations.	
Vitamins/ Emergen-C	Optional			A multiple vitamin to supplement the diet is preferred by some, due to the amount of time in the field. Some sort of rehydrating solution is valuable for the long, hot days. Emergen-C is a good brand.	
Photo Album Small	Optional	NA	1	Pictures of family, friends and your life back home to share with people you meet in the cultural opportunities throughout the course.	

Travel and In-Town Clothing & Documents

You will need some clothes to wear in town between sections and when travelling to and from Brazil. These should be separate from any clothes that you take with you on any field sections. Try to keep this extra luggage to a minimum, as storage space is limited. Some important documents to have photocopies of are also listed.

Equipment	Need	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Underwear	Must Bring	Must Bring	2 pair	For wearing in town	
Shoes	Must Bring	Must Bring	1 pair	A decent pair for wearing in town	
Shorts	Must Bring	Must Bring	1 pair	For wearing in town	
Cotton Pants / Skirts	Must Bring	Must Bring	1 pair	For wearing in town	
Shirts	Must Bring	Must Bring	2	For wearing in town.	
Mosquito Netting	Must Bring	Must Bring	1	For in town and pre- course use.	
Photocopies	Must Bring	Must Bring		Of passport, credit cards. Keep stored separately in your luggage.	

Group Gear

Expedition members share both the use of and the responsibility for the group gear that NOLS issues. NOLS charges only for group equipment that gets lost or damaged. Keep in mind that NOLS evaluates gear from a number of perspectives beyond those, which an individual user might consider. Performance, durability, and simplicity are all factors we consider when we select our gear.

Canoes	Paddles	Rescue gear
Flies /Bug tents	Basic Fishing Gear	Library/reference Books
Camp Stoves	Fuel & Fuel Bottles	Chemical water treatment
Cooking Gear	Maps & compass	Portage dry bags
PFDs/helmets	Food bags	
Trowels/Shovel (Small)	Equipment Repair Kits	Drug & First-Aid kits

First Aid

Our instructors carry adequate first aid kits and medications. There is no need to bring your own.

You must have prescriptions for any meds and inform your instructors of ANY medications you are planning to take into the field.

Recommended Boots

Medium-weight, off-trail backpacking/light mountaineering boots work best. This type of backpacking boot is constructed with a full grain leather upper and typically has a Vibram® rubber sole. Some models utilize an injection molded, composite rubber sole with a randed welt to bond the leather upper to the sole. Both types of sole are acceptable. These boots are designed for extended backpacking, provide good support for off-trail hiking with heavy packs, and usually require less break-in time than heavyweight mountaineering boots.

The following list is not exhaustive and is to be used for suggestions only. The boots listed here should help define what boots are acceptable for your course. It is fine to substitute a similar boot for one of the types listed here provided the boot that you bring is a good quality leather model designed for extended backpacking expeditions with heavy packs.

Examples Of Acceptable Boots

Asolo: TPS 520 GV, TPS 535

Lowa: Tahoe GTX, Tibet GTX, Banff

Garmont: Dakota, Expedition, Montana

La Sportiva: Latok Trk, Thunder GTX

Montrail: Blue Ridge, Torre, Traverse

Raichle: Mt Peak, Mt Trail

Scarpa: Delta M3, SL M3

Technica: Galaad NB, Galaad SD GTX

Vasque: Zephyr, Luna, Wasatch GTX, Sundowner Summit GTX

*** Please note that boot manufacturers often rename their product line. Visit the manufacturer's website or contact us if you have questions.**

