

# Equipment List

## Outdoor Educator Semester

**Welcome to NOLS!** We look forward to having you with us at NOLS Rocky Mountain. Please take time to read the following information before making your equipment choices.

Equipment selection and care is an essential wilderness skill. There is a bewildering variety of equipment on today's market. NOLS Rocky Mountain provides an Outfitting Department for our students for this very reason. We are a full-service retail store and rental facility for outdoor equipment and clothing. We have expert staff with over 40 years experience who can completely outfit you from head to toe for your expedition needs. The products that we carry have been selected for and field-tested on NOLS Rocky Mountain courses.

Here are three suggestions to help guide your gear purchasing process:

- 1) Purchase from us. We have a full retail store with experienced staff that can outfit you completely, tailoring your options according to route, weather, and time of year. This will guarantee you will get only the equipment you need with no extra purchases.
- 2) Already have items? Bring them along! Your instructors will inspect your gear and determine if it is suitable for your course. If an item is not approved, you can leave it with your luggage in our storage lockers.
- 3) Not sure what you'll like? Rent from us before you buy. Everyone has different gear preferences, and after a semester of camping, you'll have a much better understanding about what matters to you.
- 4) Want to shop before your course begins? Visit our preferred retailers - additional info below.

We understand that the equipment list may be daunting. That is why when you purchase or rent from us, our experts will provide you with some of the best gear, boots and clothing on the market, at a reasonable price, with consideration to the route, weather, and time of year you are traveling. You can rent from us almost everything you'll need for your course. Most students find this helps them avoid purchasing unnecessary items before the course, as well as determine which gear they want for future endeavors. You may even save money on any extra airline fees, such as extra baggage costs and/or overweight luggage fees on your travels to NOLS Rocky Mountain.

If you wish to buy gear before your course start, consider our Preferred Retailers. Preferred Retailers are retail stores whose staff is familiar with NOLS. Note: If you buy a new piece of gear or clothing for the course, please keep the tags on the item and save your receipt. That way, you have the opportunity to return your purchases if necessary. Ask the NOLS Admission Office about Preferred Retailers in your area, by calling 800-710-NOLS (6657) or by visiting [www.nols.edu](http://www.nols.edu).

**Purchase Only-** Indicates that the item is available at NOLS for PURCHASE ONLY.

**Must Bring-** Indicates that the item is NOT AVAILABLE at NOLS.

**All prices are subject to change.**

In addition to your course tuition, you have been billed an equipment rental deposit. This deposit will be applied directly to the charges you incur for equipment rental, cleaning, purchase of personal items, and any loss or damage to our gear. Total charges will vary depending upon the amount of equipment that you rent or purchase from us. The equipment rental and purchase prices located in the gear checklist will allow you to estimate your charges. If your bill is less than the deposit, the difference will be refunded to you by mail. If you think that your bill may exceed the deposit, please bring cash, travelers' checks, personal check, Visa or MasterCard to cover the excess. If you do not have a form of payment, we will bill you by mail.

If you have any questions or if you would like more information regarding any of the items in the Equipment List, please contact NOLS Rocky Mountain Outfitting Department at:

(307) 332-1422 or 4784 | [outfitting@nols.edu](mailto:outfitting@nols.edu) | [www.nols.edu](http://www.nols.edu)



### Upper Body Layers

We layer our clothing, combining different garments to achieve optimum insulation and protection from wind, rain and snow. We use either synthetic or wool fibers, which insulate when wet. We avoid cotton, which is poor insulation when wet. During spring, early summer and fall, it's common to need 3 insulating layers and a vest.

Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Base Layer Mid-weight Synthetic	Purchase Only	\$40-\$60	1	Mid-weight underwear top made of wool, polypropylene, Capilene® or ZeO2™.	
Middle Layer (Fleece Pullover)	Purchase at NOLS RM	\$50-\$60	1	Polyester fleece pullover/expedition weight top of Polartec® 100 or 200, fiberfill jacket or a wool sweater.	
Top Layer (Synthetic Jacket)	Purchase Only	\$185	1	Synthetic full-length zip fiberfill jacket. We carry the Mountain Hardwear Compressor jacket with hood.	
Wind Shirt/ Anorak	\$20	\$55	1	A lightweight, breathable, durable nylon wind shell in either pullover or parka style. Lightweight nylon exercise jackets usually are not sturdy enough to survive a NOLS course.	
Rain Parka	Purchase Only	\$120	1	A sturdy, roomy waterproof jacket with a hood. Both coated nylon and breathable fabrics such as Gore-Tex® are acceptable.	
T-Shirt	Purchase Only	\$20-\$35	1	A cotton or lightweight polyester/Capilene T-shirt.	

Our advice? Bring the sweaters, fleece jackets and other layers you think might work. We'll advise you on the best combination for your course, the season and area. As you may not use all of the above listed on a course, it depends on weather and other extenuating circumstances.

### Lower Body Layers

You will need 1-2 synthetic insulating layers (usually an under layer and in early summer, a pair of fleece pants). All must fit comfortably over each other so that they can be worn at the same time.

Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Base Layer Mid-weight Synthetic	Purchase Only	\$32	1 pair	Mid-weight bottoms of high performance polyester, polypropylene, ZeO2 or Capilene®. Cotton and cotton blends are not acceptable.	
Middle Layer (Exp-Weight Synthetic)	Purchase Only	\$40-\$60	1 pair	Expedition-weight bottoms that fit comfortably over the under layer bottoms.	

### Lower Body Layers (continued)

Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Wind Pants	\$20	\$60	1 pair	Nylon shell pants. These should fit comfortably over all lower-body layers. Side-zippers allow the pants to be put on over boots. Breathable fabrics such as Gore-Tex are acceptable, but lightweight "running pants" are NOT durable enough. If you own Gore-Tex bibs, we recommend that you bring them. We recommend renting NOLS wind pants. They are the most popular piece of equipment NOLS has designed. Many students purchase their wind-pants at the end of their course.	
Rain Pants	Purchase Only	\$90	1 pair	Optional. Although not required, some people like to use rain pants in conjunction with a rain jacket.	
Nylon Shorts	Purchase Only	\$40-60	1 pair	Loose-fitting nylon athletic shorts.	
Briefs/ Sports Bras	Purchase Only	\$23-\$30	1 pair	Optional. Silk, synthetic or none. We recommend that men go with out underwear, and just use nylon athletic shorts with liners. Women should use what's comfortable, but avoid cotton if possible.	

Our advice? Bring the synthetic or wool long johns, fleece or exercise pants you think might work. We'll advise you on the best combination for your course, the season and area.

### Head, Neck and Hand Layers

Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Baseball Cap or Wide Brim Sun Hat	Purchase Only	\$18.95	1	To protect ears and face from the sun.	
Balaclava	\$6	\$17	1	Optional. Balaclavas are full head and neck coverings that have an opening for the face. They are usually made out of Polartec® 100 or 200 fleece. We usually use these on winter sections.	
Wool or Fleece Hat	\$6	\$15-\$21	1	A warm hat made of wool or fleece.	
Mosquito Headnet	Purchase Only	\$6	1	A light nylon headnet that fits over your hat (summer especially).	
Neck Gaiter	Purchase Only	\$13	1	Optional for courses beginning before June 25. Wool (at least 75%) or fleece neck gaiters. A wool or synthetic scarf will work as well.	
Gloves	Purchase Only	\$12-\$23	1-2 pairs	Ragg wool or synthetic (fleece).	

### Head, Neck and Hand Layers (cont.)

Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Mittens	Purchase Only	\$7-\$40	1 pair	Ragg wool or synthetic (fleece).	
Mitten Shells	Purchase Only	\$49-\$59	1 pair	Water-repellent nylon or Gore-Tex® shells that fit over your mittens or gloves.	

Our advice? As long as they're not cotton, bring your gloves and mittens. We'll check them and see if they'll work. Depending on the route, weather and semester activity you may need two pairs.

### Packs

Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Backpack	\$100	\$250	1	Our packs are large expedition packs with a volume of 6100 or 6500 cubic inches made by Lowe or Deuter exclusively for NOLS. <b>If you bring an internal frame pack, it will be examined by your instructors, to determine it's suitability for your course and route. It must have a volume of 6100 to 6500 inches.</b>	
Lash Straps	\$1	\$4	1 pair	We use these to lash gear/sleeping pad to a pack; at least 24" long.	
Small Stuff Sacks	\$1	\$4	2 or 3	2 or 3 small nylon or mesh sacks for organizing items in your pack.	

Our advice? An expedition backpack is a major purchase. If you don't already own one, we think you should use ours, gain some experience, then make an informed decision on your needs.

### Sleeping Bag and Pad

Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Sleeping bags: Fall Sleeping Bag	\$60	\$180	1	Synthetic-filled bags (Quallofil®, Hollofil®, Polarguard®, etc.) perform well in the variety of conditions we encounter on courses. For fall, a bag with approximately 3 pounds of fill rated to 5° or 10° F and having 6-8 inches of loft is required. Fall and Spring semesters will <b>also</b> need a bag for winter conditions (synthetic filled bag rated to -15° F).	
Winter Sleeping Bag	\$20	\$240	1		
Summit/Compression Stuff Sack	\$12	\$49.95	1	We use the Lowe Attack Summit that doubles as a compression stuff sack for your sleeping bag and a summit pack for day hikes.	
Plastic Trash Bags	Purchase Only	\$.50	2 or 3	2-3 heavy-duty lawn and garden bags (33 gallon) to help waterproof your sleeping bag and backpack.	

### Sleeping Bag and Pad (continued)

Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Sleeping Pad	\$6	\$15-\$75	1	Should be closed-cell foam and 3/8" thick. Used for padding and insulation between sleeping bag and ground. We highly recommend and sell self-inflating sleeping mat as one of your pads. Thermarest and Insulmat are great brands.	
Sleeping Pad Stuff Sack	\$4	\$10	1	A nylon stuff sack for the sleeping pad.	
Ground Cloth	\$2	\$8	1	A waterproof nylon sheet to go between your sleeping pad and the ground.	

Our advice? A sleeping bag is another major purchase. If you don't already own one, we think you should use ours, gain some experience, then make an informed decision on your needs.

### Climbing Section

Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Summit/Day Pack	\$15	\$150	1	A medium-sized daypack with 2400 cubic inch capacity.	
Rock Shoes	\$40	\$100-140	1 pair	We have a limited supply available for rent.	
Harness	\$0	\$80	1	We have harnesses to rent, free of charge, but if you own one, bring it along.	
Cotton Climbing Pants	Must Bring	\$44	1	Optional. Loose fitting pants to protect your legs while climbing.	

Our advice? If you won a harness, helmet, chalk bag and pair of shoes, bring them along. If your instructors approve, you can use them. We will use the school's protection, belay devices, slings, carabiners and ropes.

### Winter Section

Semesters with winter sections will require additional insulation layers, skiing and winter camping gear.

Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Insulated Parka	\$20	\$175-\$350	1	A synthetic-filled winter parka with hood. It must fit comfortably over all your upper body layers.	
Insulated Pants	\$20	\$125-\$200	1	Synthetic filled ski warm up pants. Must fit comfortably over all you lower body layers.	
Insulated Mittens	\$5	\$29-\$45	1 pair	Synthetic filled mittens that fit over your other mittens and gloves.	

Winter Section (continued)					
Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Insulated Booties (2 pair)	\$5	\$45	1	Synthetic filled booties to wear in camp and while sleeping.	
Overboots	\$10	\$85	1	Synthetic filled overboots we wear over the booties as a camp shoe. These are not a "supergaitor".	
Ski boots	\$80	\$265-425	1	We use the Scarpa T3 or Garmont plastic boot with a cable binding. We stock ski boots in sizes 6 through 13. Your boots will need to fit properly over two pair of socks with an insole.	
Skis, poles and skins	\$45	\$400	1	We use backcountry telemark skis and bindings.	
Avalanche Transceivers	\$0	\$290	1	We'll issue you a transceiver rental free.	
<p>Our advice? Our winter gear is specialized for our expeditions. If you own a pair of ski bibs or pants or a thick winter parka, bring it along and we'll check it. If you have a pair of skis you think might be suitable for the course, give us a call.</p>					

River Section					
Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
River sandals	Purchase Only	\$80	1 pair	Rubber sandals with a heel strap. Alp, Teva and Chaco are common brands.	
Neoprene Booties	\$3	\$5	1 pair	A river or diving bootie that will stay on your feet while swimming. Must have a rubber sole.	
Long-sleeved cotton shirt	Must Bring	Must Bring	1	A collared long-sleeved cotton shirt is an effective form of sun protection.	
Lightweight cotton pants	Must Bring	Must Bring	1	Convenient to keep sun off your legs around camp.	
Swimsuit	Must Bring	Must Bring	2	Most men prefer wearing nylon shorts. Some women like to wear lycra swimsuits in the river; others prefer nylon shorts and a "jog-bra" type top. Having a second set allows you to designate one "dry" set to wear in camp and a "wet" set to wear on the river.	
Wetsuit	\$10	Rental Only	1	3mm Neoprene wetsuit. Full Body or Farmer John style.	
Waterproof Breathable Top L/S	\$8.50	\$60-\$85	1	A top layer waterproof breathable insulating fabric used in place of 3mm wetsuit.	
Waterproof Breathable Bottom	\$8.50	\$60-\$85	1	A bottom layer waterproof breathable insulating fabric used in place of 3mm wetsuit.	
Paddle Jacket	\$5	\$50-\$85	1	Nylon jacket worn over insulating layers when kayaking or rafting. Also called a splash jacket.	

**River Section (continued)**

<b>Equipment</b>	<b>Rental Price</b>	<b>Purchase Price</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Check List</b>
Small mesh "dunk bag"	\$1	Rental Only	1	We use small mesh bags to store our personal dishes (cup, bowl, spoon) on this section. Bring one if you have it.	
Medium Size Dry Bag	\$10	\$55-\$90	1	3 cu. ft. 16" diameter x 25" tall dry bag made of heavy duty, durable waterproof material. Used to carry all personal clothing.	
Small Dry Bag	\$2	\$15-\$27	1	600 cu. in. 6.5" diameter x 19" tall dry bag made of heavy duty, durable waterproof material. Used to carry all personal items needed during the day.	

Our advice? Rental of whitewater specific gear (PFD, helmet, paddle jacket) is included in your tuition. Feel free to bring any personal whitewater gear you have and your instructors will check it to make sure it is appropriate for your trip.

**Footwear**

<b>Equipment</b>	<b>Rental Price</b>	<b>Purchase Price</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Check List</b>
Boots	Purchase Only	\$185-\$200	1 pair	Sturdy leather heavy backpacking or light mountaineering boots with good ankle support for wilderness courses. Our boot stretching process helps expedite the break-in period of new boots.	
Socks, Wool	Purchase Only	\$12-\$19	4-6	Heavy ragg wool or heavy wool/polypropylene blend.	
Liner Socks	Purchase Only	\$6	2 or 3	Optional. Lightweight wool, polypropylene or Capilene® "wick dry" socks. You will need at least two pairs if you are using a liner sock/wool sock combination in your hiking boots.	
Gaiters	Purchase Only	\$50	1 pair	Knee high, durable.	
Camp Shoes	Must Bring	Must Bring	1 pair	Running, tennis, or cross-training athletic shoes.	

Our advice? You'll be backpacking for two to four weeks. Your boots will be a critical piece of gear. If they're not sturdy, don't provide enough support or don't fit properly with at least a liner and a wool sock, we won't let you use them. If you have any doubts about boots, feel free to give us a call.

**Recommended Boots**

NOLS has been outfitting people with boots for many years and our priorities have remained the same: We want you to have boots that provide adequate protection for your feet, that are durable enough to withstand extended rugged wear, and provide reasonable comfort. Many boots available on the market do not meet these criteria, and a boot that is good for your personal use may not be a good boot for your NOLS course.

Medium-weight, off-trail backpacking/light mountaineering boots work best. They provide good support for off-trail hiking with heavy packs, and usually require less break-in time than heavyweight mountaineering boots. Here are some features to

look for:

- Constructed from full-grain one-piece leather upper or a combination of nylon or Gore-Tex and leather
- A sole that provides good traction, like Vibram® or other lugged sole
- 1/2 to 3/4 length shank or full poly mid-sole stiffener within the sole to provide foot support and protection
- Ankle support — Trail runner sneakers are not acceptable; below-the-ankle hiking boots are not acceptable
- Comfortable fit with your preferred hiking socks. Boots that are too small commonly cause blisters.

**Please see the Boot Fitting Guide in your Enrollment Packet for instructions on how to properly fit boots.**

The following list of acceptable boots is not exhaustive and is to be used for *suggestions only*. The boots listed here should help define what types are acceptable for your course. It is fine to substitute a similar boot for one of those listed here.

Asolo: Power Matic series; TPS series; Power Light series; Matrix series; Energy series

Garmont: Dakota; Synchro Plus GTX; Cypress GTX, FC Eco 4.0 GTX

La Sportiva: Thunder II GTX; Cascade GTX

Lowa: Tahoe GTX; Tibet GTX; Banff; Pingora GTX

Montrail: Feather Peak GTX

Oboz: Wind River

Scarpa: Mustang GTX; Barun GTX; Nepal Pro GTX; SL M3; Escape GTX

Vasque: Wasatch GTX; Bitterroot GTX; Summit GTX; Sundowner GTX series; Clarion GTX; Breeze GTX; Taku GTX

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

Miscellaneous Items					
Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Insulated Mug	Purchase Only	\$3.50-4	1	12 to 20 oz. insulated mugs with lids are preferred. Available with NOLS logo.	
Bowl	Purchase Only	\$7	1	A bowl with a snap-on lid is also handy, such as a tupperware bowl.	
Spoon	Purchase Only	\$1	1	Lexan spoons are light, durable and popular.	
Water Bottle/ Hydration Dromedary	Purchase Only	\$12-15	1	1 wide mouth quart or liter size plastic bottle, such as a Nalgene. A Camelbak or Platypus is fine.	
Lip Balm	Purchase Only	\$3-4	1	Stick, cream, or tube type moisturizing balm with sun protection factor (SPF) 15 or greater	
Sunscreen	Purchase Only	\$6-9	1	A3 to 6 ounce tube with sun protection factor (SPF) 15 or greater	
Bandannas	Purchase Only	\$2	2 or 3	A few of these are always handy.	
Sunglasses	Purchase Only	\$40-80	1 pair	Lenses should block 100% ultraviolet and 95% infrared light.	
Glasses And Contact Lenses	Must Bring	Must Bring	1 or 2 pairs	Optional. Bring a spare pair.	
HeadLamp/Flashlight	Purchase Only	\$29-40	1	Durable and lightweight. Headlamps are popular. Bring spare batteries.	
Disposable Lighters	Purchase Only	\$1.50	2	Use for lighting your camp stove.	
Insect Repellent	Purchase Only	\$5	1 or 2	1-2 small bottles. No aerosol spray cans.	

Miscellaneous Items (continued)					
Equipment	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Quantity	Comments	Check List
Toilet Articles	Must Bring	Must Bring	1	Toothbrush, toothpaste, comb, brush, skin lotion, tampons. Travel or trial sizes are enough. Bring your own.	
Watch	Purchase Only	\$20-\$65	1	A watch with an alarm is a nice feature.	
Notepad And Pencil	Must Bring	Must Bring	1	A small, lightweight pad is fine.	
Sunglass Retainers	Purchase Only	\$5	1	Optional. Chums® or Croakies® for keeping track of your glasses or sunglasses	
Candles	Purchase Only	\$0.50	1 or 2	Optional. 1 or 2 Plumbers candles.	
Pocket Knife	Purchase Only	\$20-\$45	1	One small knife is sufficient; simple Swiss Army knives are popular.	
Camp Chair	Purchase Only	\$30-\$50	1	Optional. Chairs such as Crazy Creek are nice to have for basecamp settings.	
Thermos	Purchase Only	\$24-\$35	1	Optional. Insulated thermos for winter section.	
Town Clothes	Must Bring	Must Bring	1	Optional. You won't take these into the field, but to wear around Lander consider 2 or 3 shirts or sweatshirts; 2 pairs jeans, pants or a skirt; a jacket or sweater; a pair of casual shoes or running shoes; additional toiletries (shampoo, soap, razor, etc.); approx. \$400 spending money and personal identification (see Travel and Logistics Information).	
Water Filter	Must Bring	Must Bring	1	Optional. NOLS supplies Potable Aqua tablets (hydroperiodide) for backcountry water disinfecting. If you are sensitive to iodine, bring chlorine based tablets or a water filter.	
Trekking Poles	Purchase Only	\$65-75	1	A sturdy 2-3 section pole for easy packing. We sell the Black diamond Trail Back and Leki Eagle.	

Our advice? Keep the toiletries, pocketknife and camera gear to small sizes. We work to keep our pack weight as low as possible, but our packs are heavy. Saving every ounce in essential!

### Group Equipment

All items listed below are provided by NOLS and shared among all expedition members. Group equipment is included as part of the course tuition. However, students will be charged for any lost or damaged group equipment.

Tents & Shelters	Climbing Protection	Binoculars	Maps & Compass
Camp Stoves	Climbing Ropes	First Aid Kits	Reference Books
Fuel and Fuel Bottles	Helmets and Harnesses	Snowshoes (if necessary)	Equipment Repair Kits
Cooking Gear	Ice Axes	Fishing Equipment	Trowels or Shovels
Bear Resistant Food Containers			

