

# Equipment List

## Salmon Backpacking & Rafting

### Welcome to NOLS!

We look forward to meeting you. We have designed this equipment checklist to help you decide what to bring on your course. **Please take the time to read the descriptions carefully.** The checklist on the far right side of the pages is designed to help you organize what to bring with you and what to rent or purchase from us.

**Because you will have a better understanding of your equipment preferences after your NOLS course, we recommend renting from NOLS rather than purchasing expensive gear in advance.** Gear rental will provide you with an opportunity to test the gear you use and will help you to make more informed purchases. If the 'Rental Price' column is grayed out, that item is NOT available for rent. If the 'Purchase Price' column is grayed out, that item is NOT available for purchase. **If you want any items for your course that are not available from NOLS for rent or purchase, be sure to bring them with you!**

If you wish to buy gear before your course, consider Preferred Retailers. Preferred Retailers are retail stores that maintain close ties to NOLS. Staff members at these stores are familiar with NOLS and understand the equipment needs you are likely to encounter. They can be vital in getting you started on an expedition. Ask the Admission Office about Preferred Retailers in your area or visit our web site at [www.nols.edu](http://www.nols.edu).

**We do encourage you to use gear that you already own.** Bring a range of items to choose from and your instructors can help you decide which gear to select—that is what your instructors are there for! For example: If you own several upper body layers but cannot decide whether two mid-weight tops or one mid-weight top plus an expedition weight fleece is the better choice, then bring them all and your instructors will guide you towards a good decision. **Please note:** equipment needs vary by course as conditions, in our dynamic outdoor classrooms, change throughout the season. **Prior to leaving for the field, our instructors will inspect any gear you have brought with you to determine it's suitability for your specific course location.** If an item is not appropriate, you can leave it with your baggage in our storage lockers.

### Equipment Fees

The NOLS outfitting department is capable of providing most of the equipment needed for your course. To cover the cost of equipment rental, an equipment deposit is required in addition to the course tuition. Additional charges will be incurred for any equipment that is lost or damaged. The final cost will vary according to how much gear you rent and/or purchase from NOLS and how much of your own equipment you use. You will be billed for any charges that exceed your equipment deposit or refunded any balance approximately 2-4 weeks after the end of your course.

### Gear Purchase

At the end of the course students may opt to purchase new and used equipment. NOLS offers substantial discounts for used equipment, and the rental deposit for gear used on your course will be applied toward purchase. **A cautionary note: additional gear purchases may raise total outfitting bill well above the rental deposit coverage.**

If you have any questions or if you would like more information regarding any of the items in the equipment list, please contact the NOLS Admission Office at 800-710-6657 or visit our web site at [www.nols.edu](http://www.nols.edu).

**All rental prices cover the entire course and all prices are subject to change.**



Upper Body Layers						
Equipment	Qty	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Comments	Have	Need
Synthetic T-shirt	1		\$42	Synthetic fabrics dry quickly and can be considered an insulating layer.		
Mid-Weight Top	1		\$43	Light or mid-weight base layer made of polypropylene, Capilene, or ZeO2.		
Expedition Weight Top	1		\$68.50–\$85	Heavy long underwear top, Patagonia R2, lightweight fleece, thin wool sweater, lined softshell, Primaloft, or other synthetic-filled jacket.		
Fleece/Insulated Jacket		\$10	\$59			
Fleece Vest	1	\$10	\$35–\$50	Optional. Fleece or synthetic-filled vest. An extra layer if you tend to get cold easily.		
Wind Shirt	1	\$10	\$55	A lightweight, breathable nylon wind shell is great for hard travel days and for keeping the bugs away. Not a required item but highly recommended.		
Sports Bra or Tank	1		\$36	Women should bring a synthetic sports bra, or a synthetic sports tank in place of a sports bra and t-shirt.		
Rain Jacket	1			A lightweight waterproof jacket with a hood. Coated nylon or breathable fabrics such as Gore-Tex are acceptable. Older/used Gore-Tex is ineffective in heavy rain.		

Lower Body Layers						
Equipment	Qty	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Comments	Have	Need
Mid-Weight Bottoms	1		\$38	Light or mid-weight long underwear bottoms made of polypropylene, Capilene, or ZeO2.		
Expedition Weight Bottoms	1		\$53	Optional. Expedition-weight long underwear bottoms, Patagonia R2, or lightweight fleece pants. <b>Not recommended for July and August courses.</b>		
Fleece Pants		\$10	\$50			
Wind Pants	1	\$12	\$60	Breathable nylon wind pants roomy enough to fit over all lower body layers. NOLS makes some of the best wind pants available. We encourage renting or buying from us.		



Lower Body Layers (Continued)						
Equipment	Qty	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Comments	Have	Need
Rain Pants	1			Optional. Lightweight coated nylon or breathable fabrics such as Gore-Tex are appropriate. If you own rain pants, bring them, but you are not required to purchase new ones.		
Underwear	2–3		\$20–\$32	We recommend that men just use a pair of nylon shorts with a liner. For women, a couple pairs of synthetic or silk underwear with a cotton liner works well. <i>A pair of synthetic boxers for men is an option though not necessary.</i>		
Nylon Shorts	1		\$45	Quick drying, loose fitting nylon athletic or river shorts. No cotton shorts please.		

Head, Neck & Hand Layers						
Equipment	Qty	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Comments	Have	Need
Warm Hat	1		\$30	Wool or fleece hat.		
Sun Hat	1		\$18	Baseball cap or visor with a brim works well.		
Sunglasses	1		\$40	Lenses should be dark and block all UV and infrared light.		
Sunglasses Retainer (i.e. Chums)	1		\$6	Chums or Croakies to keep track of your glasses.		
Wool or Fleece Gloves or Mittens	1		\$8–\$28	Either choice is appropriate. Gloves offer more dexterity, whereas mittens provide more warmth.		
Mosquito Head Net	1		\$5	Should fit over a baseball cap and cover the neck.		

Footwear						
Equipment	Qty	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Comments	Have	Need
Liner Socks	2		\$7	Optional. Lightweight wool, polypropylene or Capilene socks that you can wear under your hiking socks.		
Wool or Polypro Socks	4		\$12	Wool or wool/synthetic blend hiking socks.		

Footwear (Continued)						
Equipment	Qty	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Comments	Have	Need
Gaiters	1	\$10	\$20–\$30	Must be knee high and durable. Examples include Black Diamond, O.R., Granite Gear, & Mountain Hardware.		
Hiking Boots	1			Sturdy backpacking boots with good ankle support and proper fit are critical for hiking on uneven terrain with heavy expedition packs. The most common mistake students make is getting boots that are too small.		
Camp Shoes	1			1 pair lightweight running or cross training shoes in good condition. Avoid expensive shoes. Open-toed “river” or mountain sandals are not acceptable. “Crocs,” which are lightweight, rubber, closed-toe shoes are acceptable.		
Commercial Insoles	1			Optional. When purchasing hiking boots you can inquire about buying separate insoles. They provide arch support & stabilization for your feet. If you choose this option be sure to try them on with your boots for proper fit.		

Packs & Bags						
Equipment	Qty	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Comments	Have	Need
Small Stuff Sack	2–3	\$1	\$4	Optional. Used for organizing items in your pack. Mesh or nylon.		
Internal Frame Backpack	1	\$42	\$165–\$450	NOLS has a variety of packs available for rent. You will need a pack that is around 6000 cubic inches in volume. If you don’t already own a pack this size, we recommend renting one from us in order to try before you buy. If you own a pack between 5000- 6000 cu. in. bring it along and ask your instructors if it will work.		
Lash Strap	2 opt.	\$2/pr	\$3.50	Optional. Depends on how large your pack is.		
Trash Bag	2–3		\$2	Compactor bags are sturdier than other garbage bags. For waterproofing gear.		



Packs & Bags (Continued)						
Equipment	Qty	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Comments	Have	Need
Zip-lock Bags	2-3			Optional. Durable quart size Ziploc bags can be handy.		

Sleeping Gear						
Equipment	Qty	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Comments	Have	Need
Sleeping Bag	1	\$40	\$200-\$250	We recommend synthetic-filled sleeping bags, which are durable & perform well in rainy weather. Down bags are insufficient for the wet conditions we encounter. A synthetic bag w/ approx. 3 pounds of fill rated to 15° F or 20° F and with 6-8" of loft is needed. Note: Sleeping bags are an essential piece of gear. Instructors will evaluate the bag you bring from home, for suitability.		
Compression Stuff Sack	1	\$3	\$25	A sleeping bag stuff sack with straps attached to compress contents.		
Closed cell foam Sleeping Pad	1	\$2.50	\$10	Full-length closed cell foam pad to insulate and pad between the ground and your sleeping bag. Therm-a-rest pads are acceptable. Please bring a patch kit if you bring a Therm-a-rest pad.		
Therm-a-Rest Sleeping Pad			\$85-\$115			
Sleeping Pad Stuff Sack	1	\$1	\$4	Protects foam sleeping pads & Therm-a-rests if/when it is lashed to the outside of pack.		

Eating System						
Equipment	Qty	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Comments	Have	Need
Insulated Mug	1		\$12	NOLS carries 12 and 20 oz insulated mugs with lids. A wide mouth ½ liter Nalgene bottle is another good option.		
Bowl with Lid	1		\$7	We suggest a durable Lexan or Tupperware bowl w/ lid.		
Spoon	1		\$2	Lexan spoons are light and durable.		
Water Bottle	2		\$10	Wide mouth quart or liter size plastic bottles.		
Camelbak	1			Optional. Many students find they hydrate more consistently with a hydration system. You are still required to bring 1 additional liter size water bottle in case of a leak.		

River Gear						
Equipment	Qty	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Comments	Have	Need
Dry Bags	2	\$12	\$20–\$60	One large, expedition- sized dry bag with backpack straps, and one small dry bag. For keeping your gear dry on the river section. These are specialized items that you should consider renting from NOLS rather than purchasing ahead of time.		
River Sandals or River Shoes	1			Sandals should be sturdy with good ankle straps and durable soles. Velcro closures tend to fail in constantly wet and sandy conditions. Therefore, we recommend Teva Guide Sandals, Chacos, or other models with buckle fasteners. Others prefer to wear old running shoes, which are acceptable provided they can withstand repeated dunking.		
Cotton Pants & Long Sleeve Shirt	1 of each			Lightweight cotton provides sun protection and comfort around camp on the river section.		

Miscellaneous Items						
Equipment	Qty	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Comments	Have	Need
Lip Balm	1		\$2	Must have SPF 15 or greater.		
Sunscreen	1–2		\$9	Small bottle of SPF 30 recommended. <i>We suggest sunscreen with Zinc or Titanium Oxide.</i>		
Bandanna	1–2		\$3.50	Handy for cleaning glasses or protecting your ears/neck.		
Headlamp w/ batteries	1		\$35	Durable and lightweight.		
Extra Batteries	1 set		\$5	Bring 1 spare set for your headlamp.		
Notebook & Pen	1		\$1–\$8	A small, lightweight notepad is ideal.		
Watch w/Alarm	1			A waterproof watch.		

Miscellaneous Items (Continued)						
Equipment	Qty	Rental Price	Purchase Price	Comments	Have	Need
Toiletries	1			Keep to a minimum. Prescription medications, toothbrush, small tube of toothpaste, floss, tampons or pads, comb, small bottle unscented skin lotion. NO deodorant or shampoo will be used on course, but it is okay to bring small containers for post-course shower.		
Hand Sanitizer	1			Optional. Soap and hand sanitizer provided for group use - if you would like your own bottle please bring small travel size.		
Insect Repellant	1		\$5	Small bottle. No aerosol spray cans.		
Glasses or Contacts (plus spare)				If you wear glasses or contact lenses you need to bring a back-up pair of glasses. (Prescription sunglasses can act as a spare pair).		
Dental Devices				Optional. Hard protective case recommended. Consider bringing an extra if loss/damage would be detrimental to your teeth.		
Camera	1			Optional. A small padded case is highly recommended.		
Book	1			Optional. A small paperback		
Trekking Poles			\$100	Optional. If you like to use poles for hiking. These should telescope for easy packing.		
Camp Chair	1			Optional. Lightweight "Crazy Creek" style. If your pack becomes too heavy, your instructors may not allow you to take this.		
Prescription Medications				<b>IMPORTANT:</b> Please be sure you have enough for your entire course and travel days.		
Vitamins				Optional. A small quantity of multi-vitamins is popular among students and staff to supplement rations.		
Water Treatment System	1			Optional. NOLS supplies Potable Aqua tablets (hydroperiodide) or Aqua Mira for backcountry water purification. However, if you are sensitive to iodine or chlorine you may need to bring your own water filter such as the PUR Scout or Hiker, or the SWEETWATER guardian.		



## Recommended Boots

Medium-weight, off-trail backpacking/light mountaineering boots work best. This type of 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 types 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\*

Oboz: Wind River

Asolo: TPS 520 GV, TPS 535

Lowa: Tahoe GTX, Tibet GTX, Banff

Garmont: Dakota

La Sportiva: Pingora GTX, Thunder GTX

Montrail: Blue Ridge, Torre, Traverse

Scarpa: Delta M3, SL M3

Technica: Galaad NB, Galaad SD GTX

Vasque: Switchback, Switchback GTX, Zephyr GTX, Zephyr II, Wasatch GTX, Sundowner GTX, Summit GTX, Sundowner Black or Brown GTX, Sundowner Classic GTX, Wilderness Vasque Chinook, Breeze XCR Hiking, Clarion GTX

**\*Please note that boot manufacturers often rename their product line. Visit the manufacturer's website or contact us if you have questions. Refer to your enrollment packet for specific boot fitting information.**

