

Wild Dharma Backpacking Equipment List

Please take time to read the following information before making equipment choices. Feel free to contact us anytime with further questions.

Boots or Hiking Shoes

Boots are your most important piece of gear, and blister prevention is the main consideration. Make sure yours aren't too small; err on the side of roomy. Break them in long before the expedition, and waterproof them before you travel. Beeswax and Nikwax both work well. Traditional leather boots are durable and form to your foot over time. With the advent of ultralight backpacking, some people prefer low-top day hiking or trail running shoes. If you have experience carrying a loaded pack over uneven terrain in that kind of shoe, you're good to go. For those with little backpacking experience in the American West, a traditional ankle high-top rigid-sole boot is recommended for the added support.

Clothing

Keep in mind that summer mountain weather can range from warm and sunny to cold, windy, and wet. Snow is possible in the Rockies any time of year. Early morning temperatures can start below freezing, only to rise into the 80s by late afternoon. Wool, Capilene, polypropylene, fleece, and synthetics will keep you comfortable and dry through a range of conditions. Avoid cotton. Dressing in layers allows adaptability to changing weather. There will be no showers during the expedition.

Nothing Extra

Proper gear will keep you comfortable under demanding circumstances, but everything on this list travels on your back, day after day. Choose the lighter option whenever you have a choice, and leave the rest at home. If you are unsure whether something is worth carrying, ask us before you pack it. A lighter pack makes for a more spacious experience on and off the trail. Simplicity is liberating.

Please limit your gear to the items listed below. Please do not bring pets, firearms, electronic equipment (incl. phones), recreational drugs, or anything listed under 'Group Equipment.'

If you have a rakusu (small robe), you may bring it. If you plan to read during the trip, choose wisdom literature that supports your practice—one book or photocopies of select chapters.

Upper Body Layers		
Equipment	Quantity	Comments
☐ T-shirt	1	Wool or synthetic
☐ Mid-weight base layer	1	Wool or synthetic, long sleeved
☐ Vest or second base layer	1	Fleece or synthetic down vest; or second wool or synthetic shirt
☐ Outer warm jacket	1	Synthetic insulation, down, or very warm fleece
☐ Rain jacket	1	Roomy, sturdy, waterproof, and ultralight
☐ Wind shirt (optional)	1	Nylon with hood is nice in the wind!

Lower Body Layers		
Equipment	Quantity	Comments
☐ Shorts	1	Synthetic, quick drying, loose fitting. Board shorts work well.
☐ Long hiking pants (optional)	1	Synthetic, quick drying, nylon or breathable Gore-Tex
☐ Fleece pants or mid-weight base layer	1	Wool or synthetic
☐ Rain pants	1	Useful also as wind protection during zazen.
☐ Briefs /sports bras	1	Women can wear what's comfortable: cotton, silk or synthetic are fine. Bras should be silk or synthetic.

Head, Hands and Footwear		
Equipment	Quantity	Comments
☐ Sun hat	1	Baseball cap or sombrero
☐ Warm hat	1	Wool or fleece
☐ Sunglasses	1	Good quality to protect your eyes from direct and reflective sun
☐ Gloves or mittens	1	Ragg wool or thick fleece
☐ Boots/hiking shoes	1	Leather or synthetic (see information above)
☐ Socks	3	Wool or wool/synthetic blend (1 for sleeping only, 2 for hiking)
☐ Gaiters (optional)	1	Some people like these to keep dirt and small rocks out of shoes
☐ Camp shoe (optional)	1	Crocs or lightweight running shoe or tennis shoe

Pack and Sleeping System		
Equipment	Quantity	Comments
☐ Backpack	1	3500 – 5000 cubic inches (60 – 80 liters) capacity
☐ Small stuff sacks	2 to 3	These help organize gear in your pack & create a cushion for zazen
☐ Sleeping bag	1	Synthetic or down rated to 20°F
☐ Sleeping pad	1	Foam or air; for insulation and comfort
☐ Heavy-duty plastic trash bag, used as a liner in your pack, or waterproof stuff sacks plus pack cover	1–2	Keeps your sleeping bag and gear dry in the rain.

Miscellaneous Items		
Equipment	Quantity	Comments
☐ Water bottle	1–2	You should carry at least a 1 liter and drink 4 liters per day
☐ Mug	1	Thermos or insulated mugs are great for hot drinks in the morning and evening
☐ Bowl & spoon	1 each	For mountain oryoki
☐ Sunscreen & lip balm	1 each	Small travel size containers to save weight
☐ Bandanas	2 to 3	Two recommended for women for hygiene purposes
☐ Headlamp	1	Nice for camp at night. Keep it lightweight
☐ Lighter, toilet paper, Ziploc	1 each	This will be your toilet bag. Bring a conservative amount of toilet paper
☐ Toiletry bag	1	Simple: small travel size toothpaste, toothbrush, meds, lotion, tampons
☐ Trekking poles (optional)	1 set	Optional but recommended for off trail travel and knee support
☐ Wrist watch	1	To follow the schedule.
☐ Pocket knife, binoculars & camera (optional)	1	Keep these small and light if you decide to bring them
☐ 1 gal Ziploc bag	1	To keep your schedule and chant card (provided) and other items (rakusu, book, notepad) dry and clean.
☐ Wisdom literature, notepad & pencil (optional)	1 each	Keep these small and light and put them in a Ziploc bag
☐ Outdoor zafu	1	Inflatable cushions can be found online but are prone to leaks. Think about what you can sit on comfortably. A compressed sleeping bag might work for you.
☐ Outdoor mat/zabuton	1	Yoga mats or foam sleeping pads work for this (cut one to size if you want to save weight).

Group Equipment (Please do not duplicate!)

Everything below is provided and shared among participants. Group equipment use is included in tuition.

Tents	Healthy natural food	Maps & field guides
Tarps	Water filters and treatment	Compass
Camp stoves	Bear canisters and/or bear hangs	Medical kit
Cooking gear	Bear spray (if in Grizzly country)	Emergency communication device
Fuel and fuel bottles	Trowel	