



**American  
Alpine Institute**  
*The Spirit of Alpinism*

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## **SQUAMSH CLIMBING EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST**

Squamish, British Columbia is located about an hour north of Vancouver at the spectacular head of Howe Sound. Dubbed "the recreation capitol of Canada," Squamish has a little bit of everything from rock climbing, to skiing, to mountain biking, to kite surfing.

Spring and summer temperatures vary dramatically. Spring and Fall temperatures tend to range between 50 and 65 degrees (10 and 18 degrees Celsius). The summer season is typically warm and dry. From June until late September the average temperature is between 68 and 82 degrees Fahrenheit (20 and 28 degrees Celsius). However, temperatures may drop to as low as 50 degrees Fahrenheit (10 degrees Celsius) at any time. Expect the temperatures at night to drop significantly from the daytime high.

While it does tend to be dry in Squamish during the summer, rain is always a threat. The climbing area is located on the periphery of a coastal mountain range and it does see rain showers regularly in the Spring and Fall seasons, but rain may come anytime.

This equipment list is aimed to help you bring only the essential gear for your mountain adventures. Please read this list thoroughly, but exercise common sense when packing for your trip.

If you plan to camp during this course AND are flying prior to your trip, please prepare your camping equipment for airport security. Stoves must be emptied and cleaned, then placed into your checked baggage. Lighters must be removed and purchased upon arrival. Liquid fuel bottles (e.g. MSR) are not allowed in checked baggage. If you drive, feel free to lug along everything but the kitchen sink, (i.e. lanterns, coolers, stoves, firewood, etc). However, if you are not bringing your own car and you will be relying on someone else for storage space, keep your camping kit reasonably lightweight and compact.

AAI carries products in all the categories and classifications listed below; these can be viewed and purchased on our Equipment Services website at <http://www.guideschoice.com>. Our Equipment Services staff is available to speak with you via phone or email to answer your questions about equipment for your course.

***Equipment items that are available for rental are designated with an (R). Please contact the Equipment Shop at 360-671-1570 for assistance in selecting equipment for your course.***

***Note: You need SHOES, HARNESS, and HELMET at minimum.***

### **Clothing & Footwear**

**T-Shirt:** Light colors are best. This shirt can be synthetic or cotton, though cotton is excellent in the desert due to its wicking properties. Long sleeved shirts are useful for much of the season for sun protection or warmth, but short sleeve shirts are great for when it's hot.

- Materials: Synthetic, cotton, blends.

**Shorts:** Lightweight shorts are nice for warm days.

- Weight: 4 - 8oz / 110 - 227 grams

**Climbing Pants:** These should be light to mid-weight comfortable pants that don't restrict movement. Soft-shell pants or synthetic pants also work.

**Base Layer Top:** These are used mainly in the evening or on colder days while climbing. This will be your primary layer on those days.

**Base Layer Bottom:** These are used mainly on colder days climbing. They should fit comfortably under your climbing pants.

- Weight: 5 - 8 oz / 140 - 225 grams
- Materials: Synthetic, wool.

**Wind Shell Jacket:** Lightweight water repellent nylon is recommended. This is often worn while climbing, so keep it light and simple. No waterproof coated nylon, please. If you cannot find a lightweight wind shell, a Gore-Tex rain jacket can be substituted, but remember, a jacket is heavier, bulkier and does not allow as good freedom of movement as a wind shell.

- Weight: 8 - 16 oz / 227 - 454 grams
- Materials: Nylon
- Examples: Patagonia Houdini, Outdoor Research Marvel

**Comfortable Walking/Approach Shoes:** Running shoes or lightweight approach shoes are preferred. Approach shoes should be able to be carried in a summit pack or clipped to the harness for multi-pitch routes with a walk-off descent. Most of the longer routes at Red Rocks involve approaches of at least half an hour. Sandals, "Crocs," or flip-flops are not appropriate. Many multi-pitch routes in Red Rock require a "carry-over," and as such, heavy hiking boots are not optimal due to their weight and bulk.

- Socks: Bring one pair per day.
- Materials: wool, synthetic, cotton

**Shell Jacket:** In the unlikely event of rain, a lightweight shell jacket will help protect you from the elements. Your jacket should be sized to comfortably fit over your other layers. Your hood should fit over your climbing helmet.

- Weight: 8 - 20oz / 227 – 566 grams
- Materials: eVent, Gore-tex, h2No, or similar

**Light Insulating Layer:** The goal for this piece is to add warmth to your clothing layering system. The weight and design of this piece will vary based on the other items of clothing that you are bringing. A fleece jacket or sweatshirt is an example of this layer.

**Gloves:** A lightweight pair of fleece gloves work well in cold weather. Leather gloves are excellent for belaying.

- Materials: fleece, leather

**Beanie Hat/Toque:** Bring a thin, warm hat that will fit under your climbing helmet.

- Weight: 2 – 4oz / 56 – 112 grams
- Materials: fleece, wool, windstopper, or similar

**Sun hat:** A baseball cap or visor helps keep the sun off.

## **Climbing Equipment**

Note: If you own a belay or rappel device or a small free-climbing rack, feel free to bring it along. Even though AAI supplies this equipment, most climbers feel more comfortable using gear with which they are familiar.

**Climbing Harness: (R)** For multipitch climbing, choose a harness with adjustable leg loops and a belay loop. Make sure it fits your body when wearing your climbing clothing. Gear loops are desirable features.

**Climbing Helmet: (R)** Lightweight, well ventilated, and comfortable. Models with a plastic shell are more durable, but are heavier than all-foam models. Must be UIAA approved for climbing.

- Examples: Petzl Elios, Black Diamond Half Dome

**Carabiners:** Bring one locking carabiner, if you own one.

**Belay Device:** A Black Diamond ATC-Guide or Petzl Reverso is required for Masters Courses where lead climbing is the objective.

**Chalk Bag and Chalk: (R)** Optional but highly recommended.

**Rock Shoes: (R)** Rock Shoes should fit so they are comfortable and can be worn all day. (If you are doing a multi-pitch route, and they have to be pulled off immediately after every pitch, they're too tight.) An all-around rock shoe that performs well on sandstone (both in cracks and while edging) is recommended. If you do not own them, you can rent them from AAI.

**Climbing Backpack/Summit Pack:** Used to get your equipment to the climbing area. This daypack should carry comfortably and be sized to fit all of your equipment while hiking and climbing. It should be able to fit all personal gear, and a rope/group gear.

If doing a multi-pitch route, a summit pack is required.

- Size Range: 30-50 liters / 1700 - 2100 cu in.
- Examples: Black Diamond Speed, Cilogear Worksack

Summit Pack Examples: Black Diamond Bullet, Hollowpoint.

**Athletic Tape:** Optional. Bring one roll of 1 1/2 inch wide cloth athletic tape for taping hands for crack climbing. Available in athletic supply stores and climbing shops.

## **Other Essentials**

**Camera:** We recommend a small point-and-shoot cameras that can easily be carried in an outside pocket or small case outside your pack. If you can't comfortably and safely carry your camera outside your pack, even in bad weather, you'll miss the best photo opportunities. Though some climbers bring them, SLR cameras are not recommended because of weight and bulk. If bringing a digital camera, consider your battery needs.

**Hydration:** 3 liters of water capacity are the minimum. Hydration packs or bladders like the Camelback or Platypus with a hose are recommended. At least one water bottle, usually one-quart Nalgene type, is required. Other plastic bottles, similar in nature can work as well.

**Lunch Food:** You are responsible for planning your meals during your course. Look for lightweight, high energy, and 'snackable' foods. Some days it is reasonable to take a lunch break, while prolonged breaks are often not feasible on multipitch climbing days. Please call our administrative office for additional guidance in the food planning process.

**Sunscreen:** Bring a small container with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of at least 30. For the fair skinned, the higher the SPF the better.

**Lip Protection:** Bring one with the highest SPF available. Some models of "chapstick" have SPF15 or higher.

**Headlamp:** Required for multipitch climbing days. High output LED models are preferred over older halogen models. Flashlights are not acceptable.

- Examples: Petzl Tikka XP, Black Diamond Spot

**Personal Medical Kit:** Please include prescriptions at a minimum.

**Sun Glasses:** Choose a model with UVA/UVB protection. Keeper strings like "Croakies" are useful to prevent dropping your glasses while climbing.

## **Camping Equipment**

These items only need to be brought if you will be camping during your course. Rentals are not available for this course.

**Tent and tent stakes:** A lightweight 3-season tent is recommended plus stakes for the wind. For camping near Red Rocks.

**Sleeping Pad:** Bring one pad – preferably a lightweight inflatable pad. Closed cell foam pads are suitable, but will add bulk to your pack. Please bring a patch kit for inflatable pads.

- Weight: 8-20 oz / 225 – 565 grams

**Sleeping Bag:** Bring one that is rated to around 20-25°F.

- Weight: 16 – 42 oz / 453 – 1200 grams

- Materials: Down, Primaloft, Polarguard 3D

**Stove:** Any small backpacking stove will do. Guides will have extra MSR fuel bottles if you fly and need to borrow one. You will need to provide fuel of course.

**Fuel:** Fuel can be obtained at nearby outdoor stores once in Las Vegas.

**Pots:** One 1½ - 2 quart pot is enough for one person. Two people sharing a stove might want to bring two pots if their meals are significantly different.

- Materials: Titanium, aluminum

**Spoon:** Bigger is better. Lexan is lighter, but metals spoons are more durable.

**Thermal mug:** 16-20oz with a lid. Optional.

**Bowl:** A lightweight Tupperware-type bowl is recommended. The new, ultra-light folding plastic contraptions are excellent. Avoid metal bowls.

**Lighter:** Bring two. Lighters are no longer acceptable in checked baggage when flying.

**Food:** There are numerous grocery stores nearby where one can obtain camping food.

**Personal Toiletries:** Bring a toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, etc.

**Hand Sanitizer:** Any alcohol based product for hand sanitizing work well.

## **The Equipment Shop at the American Alpine Institute**

The Equipment Shop at the American Alpine Institute provides clothing and equipment for purchase, rental gear, and advice. Shop staff members are great climbers themselves and deeply involved in evaluating and testing gear. They are considered by many outdoor gear manufacturers to be the most expert in the country. They thoroughly understand the needs of climbers who will be rock climbing, ice climbing, mountaineering, or exploring the world on international expeditions. Please consider our staff members a part of your resource team in preparing for your trip. AAI Equipment Specialists are on hand to consult with you on specific gear needs, to answer questions on the latest equipment and innovations, and to make recommendations on best choices of clothing and equipment. They can assure that you are equipped with the best possible gear for your climbs. And if you have any difficulty determining if some particular items of clothing or equipment you already own will serve you well on a particular trip, they can help you answer that question.

### **Guides Choice International Field Testing**

The Equipment Shop at the American Alpine Institute also administers AAI's prestigious Guide's Choice Award. Equipment and clothing that have been awarded the Guides Choice designation have proven to be the top item in their product category. The awards are made on the basis of excellence in design, performance, and durability demonstrated in rigorous international field tests carried out by the professional guides of the Institute. All of the products at the Equipment Shop and on its website, [guideschoice.com](http://guideschoice.com) have been field-tested or have been vetted and are in the process of being field-tested.

### **Call or E-mail the Equipment Shop for Advice or Gear**

Please feel free to contact us and to let us help you get ready for your climbing trip. Our staff members are experts in the field, and the items of gear that we rent and sell are the best made in terms of design, performance, and durability. Your comfort and safety depend on being well equipped. Whether you get your gear from us or just get advice, we're here to help you prepare.

**Call:** (360) 671-1570

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