



**American  
Alpine Institute**

*The Spirit of Alpinism*

www.guideschoice.com

www.aai.cc

[info@aai.cc](mailto:info@aai.cc)

Equipment Shop: (360) 671-1570

Administrative Office: (360) 671-1505

## Joshua Tree Equipment List

Joshua Tree National Park is located in the high desert of southern California. The winters are generally cool with highs in the 60's and lows at night in the 30's. Rain, or even snow, occasionally falls, but most days are sunny and pleasant. Routes in the shade are often a bit too cold but those in the sun seem just right. The weather can be breezy at times, making it feel cooler than the thermometer would have you believe. In the Spring (March and April) and the Fall (Oct. and Nov.) day time highs often climb to 80F with lows at night near 40F to 50F.

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. Climbs in October simply do not require as much clothing as those done in January. Please pack accordingly. Though it is possible for program participants to lodge in hotels in the nearby town of Joshua Tree, we recommend that you car camp in one of the Park's campgrounds. The desert is a wonderfully quiet and beautiful place at night. The sunrise and sunset, and the star filled night sky are an important part of the Joshua Tree experience. If you decide to stay in a hotel you need not bring any of the items listed under the "Camping Equipment" heading. Food can be purchased in nearby grocery stores before (or during) the course. During busier times in the spring and fall the campgrounds can fill up, so please be prepared to make other arrangements. Rental camping equipment is not available for this course.

If you plan to camp during this course AND are flying to the area, 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. Also, if you are flying in and want to camp, you can rent all camping gear from Joshua Tree Outfitters. They'll even do your food shopping for you and have a full cooler waiting.

**Note: For all climbing programs in Joshua Tree, you will need to bring shoes, a harness, and a 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:** Comfortable pants that don't restrict movement. Softshell pants or synthetic dress 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.

**Undergarments:** AKA underwear; most climbers wear them underneath their base layer.

**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 Shoes:** Running shoes or lightweight approach shoes are preferred. Sandals, "Crocs," or flip-flops are not appropriate.

**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 / Belay Jacket:** 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, but it should be quite warm. A thick fleece jacket or puffy belay jacket 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 loop sare 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 are recommended for all Joshua Tree climbs. An all-around rock shoe that performs well (both in cracks and while edging) is recommended.

We work with a local gear shop, Nomad Ventures. Please contact them or your guide for rental information. <http://www.nomadventures.com/>

**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.

**Climbing Backpack:** (R) 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.

- Size Range: 28 – 40 liters / 1700 - 3000 cu in.
- Examples: Black Diamond Speed 40, Cilogear Worksack

**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 onequart Nalgene type, is required. Other plastic bottles, similar in nature can work as well.

**Lunch Food:** Look for lightweight, high energy, and 'snackable' foods. Some days it is reasonable to take a lunch break, while on others it is not. 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:** 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.

**Tent:** A lightweight 3-season tent is recommended for camping near Joshua Tree.

**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.

**Fuel:** Fuel can be obtained at nearby outdoor stores once in Joshua Tree.

**Pots:** One 1 1/2 - 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

**Eating Utensils:** 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.

**Water Jug:** Campgrounds in the Park have no water supply. Gallon jugs can be purchased full or filled at a local grocery store or Park entrance at the start of your course.