



American
Alpine Institute

The Spirit of Alpinism

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PROFESSIONALISM FOR THE OUTDOOR EDUCATOR

Bellingham, WA

EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

Your course will take place in Bellingham, Washington. This area enjoys a typical maritime climate of mild temperatures throughout the year with frequent precipitation in the winter and generally pleasant summers. The preferred climbing season extends from about late April, through the summer, to the end of September. Summer highs can be up in the 80's but more commonly are in the 60's to 70's. Nighttime lows are usually around 50°F. Rain is not uncommon, particularly before mid-June. Rain is less common here than in other climbing areas on the coast, because the mountain is in a rain shadow. A typical day in the summer might begin cool and pleasant, warm to the lower 70's by afternoon, and drop to a night-time low between 40-50°F.

For this course you will be expected to provide your own lodging, with one exception. On the third evening of the program, the team will be in the backcountry. For the frontcountry portion of the class, many students will opt to camp at Larrabee State park about 20 minutes away from our office and where your course will be taking place.

At AAI we take equipment and its selection seriously. Our Equipment Services department is expertly staffed by climbers, skiers and guides. Additionally, we only carry products in our store that have been thoroughly field tested and approved by our guides. This intensive process ensures that all equipment that you purchase from AAI is best suited to your course and future mountain adventures. Please contact us to select equipment for your course.

The primary goal of any backpacker should always be to carry as little as possible. What is left out of a backpack is often just as important as what is placed inside. Conditions in the mountains vary dramatically from season-to-season, and sometimes even throughout the same day. This can make the process of preparing equipment for a trip difficult. On the one hand, a hiker wants to be light. But on the other hand, a hiker wants to have everything he or she needs if there is a storm.

This list was designed for the “worst case scenario,” a trip with significant inclement weather. In serious conditions it’s not uncommon for a backpacker to need every piece of clothing and equipment on this list. However, if a program does not encounter significant weather, there may be items here that are not used. As you prepare for your trip, it’s important to plan for the worst and hope for the best.

Please be sure to check the forecast several days prior to your course to ensure that you are properly prepared.

[NOAA Bellingham, WA Weekly Forecast](#)

Call or E-mail the Equipment Shop for Advice on Gear

Please feel free to contact the equipment shop for advice as you prepare for you program. We are happy to provide you with equipment advice whether or not you choose to purchase or rent equipment at AAI. We take your comfort and safety seriously.

Call: (360) 671-1570 Email: shop@AlpineInstitute.com

Equipment Shop Website: Shop.AlpineInstitute.com

Frontcountry Classroom Essentials	Packing Checklist
<p>Frontcountry Classroom Essentials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Smart Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Gaia Smartphone App <input type="checkbox"/> Gaia Pace smartphone App <input type="checkbox"/> Altimeter Smartphone App or watch <input type="checkbox"/> Compass <input type="checkbox"/> Map Tool with UTM Grid Reader <input type="checkbox"/> Notebook and Pen/Pencil: Right as rain paper might be a good thing to consider if notes need to be taken outside. <input type="checkbox"/> Laptop (<u>Optional</u>, but many students find that this helps significantly in their scholastic exercises.) <input type="checkbox"/> Comfortable clothing for being outside in and around town 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy

Backcountry Equipment/Gear Clothing	Packing Checklist
<p>Beanie/Toque Only recommended if the weather is cold. Wool or synthetic.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy

<p>Sun Hat A baseball cap or visor serves well.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Sunglasses Choose a model with UVA/UVB protection. Keeper strings like “Croakies” are useful to prevent dropping your glasses while hiking. If you plan on spending time on snow, wrap-around design or side-shields are required. Sunglasses designed for mountaineering let in less visible light than ordinary sunglasses, reducing eye strain, but are not necessary for backpacking. Bring an extra pair if you have one, or prescription pair if you wear contacts/glasses.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Liner Glove Thin, lightweight, wool or synthetic gloves. Size to fit snug but not too tight. Generally worn alone in temperatures above 25°F(-4°C) when precipitation is not present. UPF rated liner gloves are ideal for sun protection. Bring 1 pair.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Hard Shell Glove (Optional depending on location and weather) Waterproof and insulated gloves. If the glove lacks insulation then size it to fit a liner glove inside. Mainly worn in wet conditions, cold, or when not mobile.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Sports Bra Wool or synthetic, comfortable, active wear.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Base Layer Wool or synthetic shirt, long sleeves preferred, ideally a “sun hoody” with UPF 30+ sun protection.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Active Insulation Layer Lightweight “gridded fleece” or lightweight synthetic insulated jacket. Hood preferred. ☆ <i>Active insulation jacket weight at 40g/m2 and heavier Insulation jacket at 60g/m2 or 80g/m2</i> ☆ <i>Example: Patagonia R1, Montbell UL Thermawrap Jacket, or similar.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Soft Shell Jacket or Windshirt (Optional) A soft shell is a weather resistant, breathable, and stretchy freedom of movement piece. This piece is versatile in the sense of movement. It is often called an “action layer.” It is weather resistant, meaning it can put up with light showers and wind. Also if it gets wet it dries fairly quickly. This enables you to not have to stop and put on another piece when the wind picks up or a light shower happens. Because it is water resistant, and not waterproof, it also breathes fairly well. This enables you to move without overheating, so you don’t have to constantly stop to change out layers to regulate body temperature. They are also made of a stretchy material so there are no restrictions to your movement during activity. Put all those together and you have a pretty versatile layer, the Soft Shell. Hood preferred. ☆ <i>Materials: Exolite, Matrix, Schoeller</i> ☆ <i>Example: Patagonia Houdini, Arc’teryx Squamish Hoody, Mountain Equipment Squall.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy

<p>Insulation Jacket AKA the “puffy.” Down or Synthetic. This piece is worn in cold conditions or when not moving. Hood preferred. If choosing Down, water-resistant Down treatment is preferred to help prevent matting and loss of insulating ability if the jacket gets wet. ★ <i>Weight: 350g-450g ideal weight.</i> ★ <i>Example: Arc'teryx Atom LT, Rab Xenon, or similar.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Rain Jacket In the event of rain, a lightweight waterproof jacket will help protect you from the elements. ★ <i>Materials: Gore-Tex, eVent, Drilite, H2NO, Pertex Shield</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Undergarments Wool or synthetic.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Base Layer Pant (aka “Long Johns”) Wool or synthetic. Bring one for early or late-season conditions, optional for mid-season conditions (depending on the weather).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Soft Shell Pant (Optional) Thin, weather-resistant, breathable, and stretchy. ★ <i>Materials: Exolite, Matrix, Schoeller</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Hiking Pants Look for nylon, polyester, or stretch-woven material. This will be your outermost layer most of the time for your legs. “Convertible” zip-off legs allow conversion to shorts. ★ <i>Examples: Patagonia GI III Zip-off Pant, Patagonia Sidesend Pants</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Hard Shell Pant (Optional depending on weather) Non-insulated, waterproof and breathable membrane. Full side zips are recommended. When sizing make sure it is able to fit over a base layer and soft shell pants. ★ <i>Materials: Gore-Tex, eVent, Drilite, H2NO, Pertex Shield</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Socks Wool or synthetic socks that are over the ankle height. Focus on getting insulation from the boot and using a lighter weight sock, instead of using a heavy weight sock for warmth. Wearing a “silk-weight” liner sock beneath your hiking sock can reduce friction on the skin directly and mitigate blister development. Bringing 1-2 pairs is recommended.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Hiking Boots or Trail Shoes During mid season when conditions are more favorable, approach shoes or light hikers can be worn instead. Be sure to break in your boots several weeks to months in advance to ensure they fit properly and are comfortable on the trail. Choosing the right boots for your mountain ambitions is a process that should not be rushed. Visit our shop or another reputable retailer for advice, and try on as many kinds and models as you can.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy <input type="checkbox"/> Rent*

Camping	Packing Checklist
<p>Tent 3 season tents are recommended for this course. Be sure to find one where the rain flies go all the way to the ground on all sides. A “bathtub” floor for the inner tent is also recommended. This means that the inner tent isn’t all mesh but has water resistant floor material that scoops up from the floor for 4-12” before changing to mesh, like a bathtub. If there are any questions please consult our Equipment Shop to see if your tent is okay to use. <u>-Early-season:</u> Double wall 4 season tent recommended depending on conditions. <u>-Mid-season:</u> 3 season tent. <u>-Late-season:</u> 3 season tent recommended, 4 season depending on conditions.</p> <p>★ NOTE: 4 season tents are available to rent at AAI the morning of the course if they are needed. There is also the possibility to pair up with other students on your course and share a tent.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy <input type="checkbox"/> Rent*
<p>Sleeping Bag Synthetic or Down. If you bring a synthetic bag bring one on the lower end of the temperature range since synthetic bags tend not to be as warm as down. If you sleep cold it is recommended that you bring a warmer bag than required for the seasonal conditions. If choosing Down, water-resistant Down treatment is preferred to help prevent matting and loss of insulating ability if the sleeping bag gets wet. <u>-Early-season:</u> 0°F to 20°F (-18°C to -6°C) <u>-Mid-season:</u> 20°F to 30°F (-6°C to -1°C) <u>-Late-season:</u> 15°F to 20°F (-10°C to -6°C)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy <input type="checkbox"/> Rent*
<p>Compression Stuff Sack For your sleeping bag. If it is a down bag, a waterproof compression sack is recommended.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Sleeping Pad</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Early-season:</u> Bring two; one inflatable and one closed cell foam. The foam pad helps insulate from the snow and serves as a backup to the inflatable pad. <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Mid or late-season:</u> One inflatable or closed cell foam pad. 	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy <input type="checkbox"/> Rent*
<p>Stove and Fuel Liquid fuel or canister stove. Fuel is available at AAI the morning of the course. ★ NOTE: Many people choose to share stoves, fuel and tents to decrease weight. However, some people prefer to camp in their own tents and use their own stoves. This can be determined on the morning of the first day of your program.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy <input type="checkbox"/> Rent*
<p>Pots Bring one pot.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Early-season:</u> Bring a bigger pot for melting snow; 1.5L to 2L <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Mid or late-season:</u> 0.5L to 1L <p>★ NOTE: If you have a complete stove system like the Jetboil or MSR Reactor, and plan on eating out of your integrated pot, then you do not need to bring a pot.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy

<p>Utensils Don't forget the official "most forgotten item ever;" the spoon, or spork.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Bowl</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Early-season</u>: Bring a plastic bowl or mug, preferably with insulation. <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Mid or late-season</u>: Bring a plastic bowl, insulation is not necessary. <p>☆ NOTE: If you have a Jetboil or MSR Reactor type stove and plan on eating out of your integrated pot, then you don't need to bring a bowl. The same applies if you plan on only using commercially packaged dehydrated or freeze dried meals.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Lighters Bring one. You will have the opportunity to buy them the morning of the course.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Hydration 3L capacity is recommended, though some people need more and some people need less.</p> <p>Some people bring a bladder and a hard sided bottle. The bottle is an important backup to the bladder if it gets punctured. A hard-sided bottle may also double as a mug for hot water, though not every bottle is designed to hold boiling water.</p> <p>For Camelbak style hydration bladders, bring a drinking tube insulator, as the tube can freeze up. Drinking tubes must also have a lock on the bite valve. If you choose to use this system, be aware that they require constant vigilance in order to avoid freezing. Some people are not very good at this. Blow the water out of the tube after every use and place the bite valve in the neck of your shirt to keep from freezing.</p> <p><u>-Early-season</u>: Bring more water carrying capacity (3L to 4L) to reduce the number of times you need to melt snow.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Water Purification Water purification tablets are recommended, they are available at the shop the morning of the course. Pills that take an hour or less to purify are recommended. Steripens are an acceptable alternative to purification tablets.</p> <p>☆ NOTE: Pumps can be damaged by silt in the glacial water.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Food You are responsible to bring your own food for the duration of the course. Please consult our meal planning page.</p> <p>You will need two days and one night worth of food. Assume your first breakfast and last dinner will be in Bellingham.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Other Essentials</p>	<p>Packing Checklist</p>

<p>Trekking Poles One is required, but two are highly recommended. These increase balance while wearing a heavy pack and making stream crossings, while also decreasing pressure on the knees during steep descents. For the early-season, your poles should have a snow basket.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy <input type="checkbox"/> Rent*
<p>Internal Frame Pack 50L or more. Mountaineering specific packs, instead of backpacking packs, are a good way to shave weight. Should also have the ability to carry weight well (45 lbs+).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy <input type="checkbox"/> Rent*
<p>Headlamp Bring extra batteries, or if it has a rechargeable battery, make sure and bring a charger. 200-350 Lumens is an ideal range.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Toothbrush and Toothpaste Travel size recommended.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Hand Sanitizer and/or Wet Wipes Required. Used after going to the bathroom and before eating. Wet wipes can be used for the "mountain shower."</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Toilet Paper The provided solid waste bags have a small amount of toilet paper with them, but most people do not find this to be adequate. Estimate how much you'll need for a program of this length and place that in a plastic zip lock bag. An extra zip lock bag can be helpful for pack-out of used paper.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Sunscreen SPF 30+, zinc based is preferred. Small travel size tubes are recommended so you can put them in a close by pocket for easy access.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Lip Balm Make sure it is SPF rated.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Personal First Aid Kit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Band aids <input type="checkbox"/> Blister treatment <input type="checkbox"/> Prescription drugs <input type="checkbox"/> Ibuprofen etc. <input type="checkbox"/> If you wear contacts make sure and have spares if you can't see without them. 	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Repair Kit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Inflatable sleeping pad patch kit <input type="checkbox"/> Duct tape (Can be wrapped around trekking poles or water bottle. Gorilla Tape tends to be the best brand for the mountains.) <input type="checkbox"/> Zip ties <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 ft of 3mm accessory cord <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Trash bags that are big enough to line the inside of your pack with. 	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy

<h2 style="text-align: center;">Other Optional Items</h2> <p><i>The items below are not required, although many are nice “luxury” items that can make your expedition more enjoyable. Remember that a few ounces here and there add up to extra pounds on your back and knees during your expedition.</i></p>	<h3 style="text-align: center;">Packing Checklist</h3>
<p>Buff/Neck Gaiter Look for one that is UPF rated. Brighter colors work better for warmer conditions and darker colors for colder conditions.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Pee Bottle Used at night or when the weather is poor so you don’t have to get out of your tent.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Women’s Specific Items</p> <p>Female Urination Device Pee funnel such as the GoGirl or Freshette. Many female guides prefer a rigid pee funnel.</p> <p>Click here for more info</p> <p>Menstruation Collection Cup There are many things to consider concerning backcountry menstruation.</p> <p>Click here for more info</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Entertainment Books, games, cards, music player, kindle, ect. For evenings or rainy days in the tent.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Portable Charging Device Phone charger, battery pack, or solar panel.</p> <p><i>★ NOTE: Solar panels should only be used to charge battery packs. Battery packs should be used to charge devices. Inappropriate use of a solar panel could lead to the depletion of a device’s power.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Ear Plugs For defense against snoring and high winds.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Insect Repellent Biting insects such as mosquitoes and blackflies can be prevalent during different times of the season depending upon conditions and location. This is a nice item to have just in case.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Camera Phone cameras or small point-and-shoot cameras are preferred. SLR cameras are not recommended due to their size and bulk.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Comfortable Clothing and Footwear</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own

Breathable footwear -- like flip-flops -- as well as some comfortable cotton clothing can be nice to change into after you get back to the van.	<input type="checkbox"/> Buy
Car Charger Consider bringing an extra battery pack as well, having a lot of people using car charger cables is difficult.	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy