



ECUADOR EXPEDITION EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

Ecuador is named for its position on the Earth's equator, and certainly much of the country enjoys the tropical climate normally associated with that latitude. However, the ascent of any of Ecuador's highest summits involves climbing into an alpine environment more comparable to Alaska than to the tropics. Please take time to choose your clothing and equipment carefully.

Climate: At lower elevations, temperatures can get up to 80°F (27°C), though this is uncommon. During acclimatization hikes and approaches to the mountains, temperatures may range from 40°F to 75°F (4°C to 24°C), but they are most commonly between 50°F (10°C) and 65°F (18°C). Summit temperatures on Cayambe, Antisana, Cotopaxi and Chimborazo usually range from 25°F to 45°F (4°C to 7°C), but they can be as cold as 10°F (12°C) and be accompanied by a strong wind. We may enjoy clear skies and lots of sun, or we may experience periods of rain or snow.

Given the variability in weather, layering and versatility are key. The layering achieved with a number of thinner garments will be far more preferable than being limited to one or two warmer, thicker items. Clothing should allow good freedom of movement and be lightweight.

Gear preparation: Please take the time to properly label and identify all items of personal gear. Be sure to mark your name on a clothing or item tag.

When preparing your equipment for travel to Ecuador, protect your equipment by covering any sharp objects with cardboard or other protection to prevent puncturing or tearing. Please pack your boots and shell jacket/pants into your carry-on luggage just in case your checked baggage is delayed.

Rentals: All of our rentals are done in Ecuador at a local gear shop. You will fill out a [Rental Request Form](#) before your expedition to inform us of any rentals you may need.

Call or Email the Equipment Shop for Advice on Gear: Please feel free to contact the shop to help you get ready for your trip. We also offer free 30 min gear consultations through our gear shop for this course. To schedule a gear consultation, [click here](#). 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 - Email: shop@alpineinstitute.com - Website: <https://shop.alpineinstitute.com/>

CLOTHING

Beanie/Toque

Wool or synthetic. Must fit under a helmet.

Buy
 Own

Sun Hat

Ideally fits under a helmet. Visors or athletic hats are comfortable, vent well, and are easy to clean and dry out.

Buy
 Own

Buff/Neck Gaiter

Look for one that is UPF-rated. Lighter colors are better for warm conditions and darker for colder conditions.

Buy
 Own

Glacier Glasses

MANDATORY. Look for a pair that fits well and has side shields. The lenses should not let more than 12% of light through. Photochromic are more expensive, but usable in a wider range of light.

Examples: Julbo Spectron, Julbo Reactiv Performance, Julbo Reactiv High Mountain

NOTE: Those using contacts should also bring a pair of prescription glasses in the event that your contacts or solution are lost or damaged. If you only use glasses, get a pair of over-the-glasses glacier glasses.

Buy
 Own

Goggles (Optional)

Used in high winds or heavy rain, and can serve as a backup to your glacier glasses. Look for UVA/UVB protection and a lighter lens is recommended for better visibility in flat light.

Buy
 Own

Headlamp

Bring extra batteries or charger for rechargeable style. The ideal range is 200-350 lumens.

Examples: Petzl Swift RL, Petzl Actik

Buy
 Own

Liner Gloves

Thin, lightweight, wool or synthetic gloves. Size to fit snug but not too tight. You will wear these for much of your time on the mountain. UPF rated liner gloves are ideal for sun protection. 1 pair is required; 2 pairs are suggested.

Examples: OR Vigor Sensor, The North Face Etip Grip

Buy
 Own

Work Glove

The most desirable glove is one that is comfortable and dexterous, so that it can be worn all day. It should be durable enough (leather palms) to handle ropes, ice axes, and a bit of rock scrambling. These come in different weights, so choose the thickness that works with your glove system. Bring one pair.

Buy
 Own

Expedition / Hard Shell Glove

Waterproof shells with warm liners. Must be dexterous enough to handle ropes & carabiners.

Examples: Black Diamond Renegade, OR Highcamp.

Buy
 Own

Undergarments & Sports Bra

Wool or synthetic. Comfort is key. Avoid bras with adjusters and clasps, as they could get compressed by your pack straps.

Buy
 Own

Base Layer Top

This will be your base layer and should be "lightweight or silk weight" synthetic or wool. Long sleeves are preferred. No cotton.

Examples: Patagonia Capilene Cool Daily Hoody, OR Echo, Rab Pulse

Buy
 Own

CLOTHING CONTINUED

Base Layer Bottom

Look for the same features of your base layer top. Should fit comfortably under your trekking pants. This will be your primary layer on colder days and in the evening.

Buy
 Own

Active Insulation Layer

Lightweight “gridded fleece” or lightweight down or synthetic insulated jacket. Hood preferred.
Examples: Patagonia R1, Patagonia Nano Air, Arc’Teryx Proton LT

Buy
 Own

Soft Shell Jacket or Windproof Jacket

A soft shell jacket is considered an “action layer.” Its materials are designed to stretch and breathe while also maintaining wind and water resistance. This allows the user to leave this jacket on for a wide range of temps and conditions throughout the day without the hassle of constantly changing layers. Windproof jackets are lightweight and packable but lack the breathability and stretchy nature of the soft shell. Windproof jackets are ideal for blocking wind and light precipitation during low-output activities.

Example Softshells: Black Diamond Alpine Start Hoody, Rab Borealis, Patagonia Houdini Air
Example Windproof: Patagonia Houdini, Arc’Teryx Squamish Hoody

Buy
 Own

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.

Examples: Arc’Teryx Nuclei FL, Patagonia DAS Light, Arc’Teryx Cerium, Rab Alpine Series

Buy
 Own

Hardshell Jacket (Waterproof Rain Jacket)

Non-insulated jacket with a waterproof and breathable membrane. Three-layer construction is recommended. Hood should be helmet-compatible. Make sure it can fit over other layers.

Examples: Patagonia Torrentshell, Arc’Teryx Alpha AR, Mountain Equipment Lhotse

Buy
 Own

Hiking Pants

These should be light to mid-weight comfortable synthetic pants that don’t restrict movement. These will be worn while in town and on acclimatization hikes.

Buy
 Own

Soft Shell Pants

Thin, weather-resistant, breathable, and stretchy. You will wear these a majority of the time.

Examples: Patagonia Altvia, Mountain Equipment Ibex, Arc’Teryx Gamma FL

Buy
 Own

Hard Shell Pants

Non-insulated, waterproof and breathable membrane. Full side zips are recommended. Make sure these fit over a base layer and soft shell pants.

Examples: Patagonia Torrentshell, Arc’Teryx Beta Pant

Buy
 Own

Socks

Wool or synthetic socks that are over 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 2-3 pairs is recommended for this Expedition. Two pairs mainly used while climbing that can be switched out if one gets wet. As well as having a 3rd pair to sleep in and as a backup.

Examples: Darn Tough Coolmax Lightweight

Buy
 Own

CLOTHING CONTINUED

Approach Shoes or Trail Shoes

For use around Quito and on acclimatization hikes.

Example Approach: La Sportiva TX4, TX2, Scarpa Rapid

Example Trail Shoes: Altra Lone Peak, La Sportiva Kaptiva, Salmon Sense Ride

- Buy
 Own

Mountaineering Boots

Must be stiff and crampon-compatible mountaineering boots. Double boots recommended.

Some single boots with insulated liners may also be adequate in mild weather.

Example Double Boot: Scarpa Phantom 6000, La Sportiva G2SM

Example Single Boot: La Sportiva Nepal Cube, Scarpa Mont Blanc Pro

NOTE: Please consult our [Equipment Shop](#) if you are uncertain about the acceptability of your chosen model.

- Buy
 Own
 Rent

Gaiters

Knee or calf height. Help keep snow and ice out of your boots and help protect pants from crampon holes. Can omit if your pants have a built gaiter and scuff guard.

Examples: OR Crocodile

- Buy
 Own

CLIMBING

Ice Axe

A straight or slightly curved shaft ice axe is recommended. Adze is required. Please contact the Equipment Shop if you have any questions. Use the following info as a rough guide on length. Ice axe leashes are discouraged and not recommended.

Personal Height	Recommended Length of Axe
5'8" or shorter	50-55cm
5'9" - 6"	55-60cm
6'1" and up	60-65cm

Examples: Petzl Glacier or Sum'Tec, Black Diamond Raven Pro

- Buy
 Own
 Rent

Harness

Make sure the harness has a belay loop and gear loops. Make sure it fits over your clothes when you have multiple layers on.

Examples: Petzl Adjama, Arc'Teryx AR-395a

- Buy
 Own
 Rent

Helmet

Must be UIAA rated for climbing.

- Buy
 Own
 Rent

Crampons

Must be steel crampons with front points and compatible with your mountaineering boots.

Examples: Petzl Vasak, Petzl Sarken

- Buy
 Own
 Rent

CLIMBING CONTINUED

Carabiners

Must be UIAA-rated for climbing. Must have:

- 3 large pear-shaped munter-style locking carabiners
- 4 non-locking wire gate carabiners

Examples: Petzl Attache, Camp Photon Wire

- Buy
 Own

Trekking Poles

One is required, two are highly recommended. Help with balance while hiking with a heavy pack and also decrease the pressure on your knees during steep descents.

Example: Black Diamond Expedition

- Buy
 Own

Prusiks

These are specially tied loops of 6mm cord used for crevasse rescue. Bring three lengths; 13 ft, 6 ft, 5 ft. We recommend getting three different colors for easy identification.

- Buy
 Own

Internal Frame Pack

50L pack recommended. Choose a pack that fits your body best. It is very important that your pack is in good working condition and not prone to failures of any sort. Our packs are a hugely important item and a climber may not be able to continue due to a pack failure. An external frame is not adequate.

Most climbers on this expedition will use the same pack for hut approaches (~35 lbs for up to 1 hour) as well as for their trekking/summit pack (~20-25 lbs for up to 8 hours). For this purpose, it is nice to have a backpack that has adjustable compression straps. Removable hip belt, suspension parts, and lid are ideal options.

Examples: Hyperlite Headwall 55, Mammut Trion 50

- Buy
 Own

Day Pack

25 L to 35 L is an ideal size. Used on acclimatization hikes or as a summit pack.

Examples: Black Diamond Blitz 28, Mountain Equipment Tupilak 37+

- Buy
 Own

Duffle Bag

Bring one large, sturdy duffle bag. Durable coated nylon is best. This will be tied on the roof of our jeeps as we drive to base camp. Models with wheels are not allowed.

Example: Mountain Hardware Camp 4 Duffle 95

- Buy
 Own

CAMPING

Sleeping Bag

Synthetic or down, rated to ~15°F. 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 choosing down, water-resistant treatment is preferred to help prevent matting and loss of insulating ability if the sleeping bag gets wet.

Examples: Mountain Equipment Fireflash, Rab Mythic Ultra 180

- Buy
 Own
 Rent

Compression Stuff Sack

For your sleeping bag. If it is a down bag, a waterproof compression sack is recommended.

- Buy
 Own

CAMPING CONTINUED

Sleeping Pad - *Only required for those pursuing the Chimborazo Ascent*

Bring one full-length inflatable pad. Your inflatable pad should be lightweight and packable with an RValue of at least 4. Please bring a patch kit for inflatable pads.

- A closed cell foam pad will be provided to each climber at no extra cost.

Buy
 Own

Hydration

3L capacity is recommended, though some people need more and some people need less. 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.

For Camelbak style hydration bladders, bring a drinking tube insulator, as the tube can freeze up. If you choose to use this system, be aware that they require constant vigilance in order to avoid freezing.

Buy
 Own

Water Bottle Parkas

These are insulating jackets for your water bottles, one for each bottle. Must cover the entire bottle, including the lid.

Buy
 Own

Favorite Snack Foods

We can get a lot of candy bars, granola bars, dried fruit for hiking and climbing days; however, you may have personal favorites or things that work well for you such as Power Bars, beef jerky, or Guu packets. You may not be able to purchase these specialty items in South America, so please feel free to bring some with you. Around one pound.

Buy
 Own

OTHER ESSENTIALS

Passport

Required. This must be valid for six (6) months after your scheduled return date.

Buy
 Own

Wrist Watch

A model with an alarm that will wake you up is preferable. It doesn't need to be anything fancy.

Buy
 Own

Toothbrush and Toothpaste

Travel size recommended.

Buy
 Own

Hand Sanitizer and/or Wet Wipes

Required. Used after going to the bathroom and before eating.

Buy
 Own

Sunscreen

SPF 30+, zinc based is preferred. Small travel size tubes are recommended.

Buy
 Own

Lip Balm

Make sure it is SPF rated.

Buy
 Own

Foot Powder

Useful especially on longer trips or for people with sweaty feet. Can help dry your feet and promote warmth on cold weather trips.

Buy
 Own

Toilet Paper

We recommend bringing half a roll to a roll of toilet paper in it's own ziplock bag.

Buy
 Own

OTHER ESSENTIALS CONTINUED

Hand/ Foot Warmers

Recommended for people that are susceptible to cold hands and toes.

Buy
 Own

Personal First Aid Kit

- Band-aids; Blister Treatment
- Prescription Drugs; Ibuprofen; etc
- If you wear contacts, make sure you have spare lenses or glasses

Buy
 Own

Repair Kit

- Inflatable sleeping pad patch kit
- Duct tape (can be wrapped around a trekking pole or water bottle)
- Zip ties
- 6-10ft of 3mm accessory cord
- 2 trash bags (must be large enough to line the inside of your pack)

Buy
 Own

OTHER OPTIONAL ITEMS

These items 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.

Entertainment

Books, games, cards, music player, kindle, etc.

Buy
 Own

Portable Charging Device

Phone charger, battery pack, or solar panel.

Buy
 Own

Ear Plugs

For defense against snoring and high winds.

Buy
 Own

Camera

Phone cameras or small point-and-shoot cameras are preferred. SLR cameras are not recommended due to their size and bulk.

Buy
 Own

Menstrual Cup

There are many things to consider about backcountry menstruation, click on the [link](#) for more information.

Examples: Diva cup, Saalt, Lunette

Buy
 Own

Urination Device

Pee funnels such as the GoGirl or Freshette. Rigid pee funnels hold their shape better.

Buy
 Own