



EASTERN SIERRA ROCK EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

This list was designed for the “worst case scenario,” a trip with significant inclement weather. In serious conditions it’s not uncommon for a climber 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.

On the first day of your program, an AAI guide will work with you to refine your mountain kit to ensure that you bring exactly what’s needed given the forecast. If you have questions about items you may bring them along for consideration and extra items can be left locked in your car.

The Sierra summer climbing season is defined as May 1st through November 1st. This list references Early, Mid, and Late-season conditions. These periods of the climbing season are roughly defined by the different types of weather and snow conditions you are likely to encounter:

- **Early-Season Conditions (Early-May to mid-June):** Lingering winter snow may still blanket the ground into late spring. Sometimes the final snows don't melt off until early or mid July. Use of ice axe and crampons are likely to be needed on approaches and routes. Overnight temperatures range from 15-degrees to 40-degrees Fahrenheit (-9-4C). Daytime highs range from 35-degrees to 70-degrees Fahrenheit (1-21C). Snow or rain is likely in the early season. Days are getting longer.

- **Mid-Season Conditions (Mid-June to Mid-September):** Daytime temperatures often hit 70-degrees Fahrenheit (21C). Evening temperatures range from 40 to 50-degrees Fahrenheit (4-10C) at night, with occasional dips down below freezing.

- July to Mid-August is usually the hottest time of the year. Approaches are generally snow free. There may be lingering snow in shaded slopes and gullies if it was a big snow year. Though mid-season tends to be dryer in the Sierra, the possibility of a thunderstorm is still there. Long daylight hours. Mosquitos. ©American Alpine Institute 2019

- Mid-August to Mid-September. Snow is melted out, exposing more scree. Late afternoon thunderstorms are common. Warm days with cooler mornings and evenings.

- **Late-Season Conditions (Mid-September to Early-November):** October is a varied month. Temperatures begin to drop both during the day and at night. Snow falls in the mountains. Daylight hours getting shorter. Cool to cold days.

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

[NOAA Mammoth Lakes area Weekly Forecast](#)

PROVIDED EQUIPMENT: Climbing rope, anchors, solid waste bags

RENTALS: Equipment that is available for rent through our AAI Sierra Equipment cache is designated with a “ Rent” check box. Your instructor will bring these items to you on the first morning of your course during your rendezvous. Please reserve rentals ahead of time and we will send you an invoice for these items. Don’t forget that AAI climbers receive a 15% discount off full-price items purchased through our gear shop! [Sierra Rental Form.](#)

Call or email the Equipment Shop for Advice on Gear: Please feel free to contact us to get you ready for your climbing trip. 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.

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 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.

Call: (360) 671-1570

Email: shop@AlpineInstitute.com

Clothing	Packing Checklist
<p>Beanie/Toque Wool or synthetic, must fit under helmet. Easily replaced with hooded layers in warmer months.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Sun Hat Preferred to fit under helmet.</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 climbing.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<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>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>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 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>Hard Shell Jacket Non-insulated jacket with a waterproof and breathable membrane. Three layer construction is recommended. It must have a hood, ideally a helmet compatible hood. When sizing make sure it can fit over other layers. <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>Climbing Pants Thin, weather-resistant, breathable, and stretchy AKA softshell pants recommended. Any light to mid-weight comfortable pants that don’t restrict movement will work. <i>★ Materials: Exolite, Matrix, Schoeller</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Hard Shell Pant 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>*You only need to worry about bringing these if rain is in the forecast or if you have an alpine objective included in your course (Usually only private rock courses).</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy

★ <i>Materials: Gore-Tex, eVent, Drilite, H2NO, Pertex Shield</i>	
Socks Wool or synthetic socks that are over the ankle height. 1-2 pairs or more depending on the duration of your trip.	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
Approach Shoes or Athletic Shoes These will be used for approaches and some climbing. Look for approach shoes with “sticky rubber” on them as they will climb better. Waterproof approach shoes are not recommended. Size them to be snug and comfortable. A trail runner type of shoe is also sufficient for this course.	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
Comfortable Pants or Shorts Comfortable cotton clothing that will be used in the front country and for car camping.	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
Climbing	
Packing Checklist	
Hydration 3L capacity is recommended, though some people need more and some people need less. Hard side water bottle or Camelbak bladder style will be sufficient for this course.	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
Food Bring a packable lunch/snacks for each day.	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
Harness Make sure the harness has a belay loop and gear loops. When sizing make sure it can fit over your clothing layers when you have multiple layers on.	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy <input type="checkbox"/> Rent
Helmet Must be UIAA rated for climbing.	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy <input type="checkbox"/> Rent
Rock Shoes Focus on comfort, so they can be worn all day. Avoid technical or aggressive rock shoes with a downturn. Avoid curled toes when sizing. <i>*Available for Rent through Mammoth Mountaineering Supply in Mammoth Lakes, CA.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy <input type="checkbox"/> Rent*
Slings Bring one 48in.(120cm) and one 24in.(60cm) pre-sewn nylon sling. Slings must be UIAA rated for climbing.	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
Belay Device Bring an auto-blocking device that accepts two ropes like the Petzl Reverso or Black Diamond ATC Guide. <i>Included with Sierra harness rental</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy

<p>Carabiners Must be UIAA rated for climbing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two large pear shaped munter-style locking carabiners. - Two non-locking wire gate carabiners. <p>*Bring at least two more of each if you are taking a course other than the Beginner Rock.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Day Pack 25L to 35L is an ideal size. This will be used during rock climbing portions and can also be used as a summit pack.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Rappel Backup Sterling hollow block 13.5" or 4ft length of 6mm nylon accessory cord. Must be nylon, Dyneema has a lower melting point. This is used as a rappel backup, the Sterling hollow block is recommended for its heat resistant properties.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Belay Gloves Lightweight and breathable glove with a durable leather palm. They protect your hands from rope burn, pinching, and sharp elements.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Camping</p> <p><i>You are responsible for your own camping or lodging for this course. This is to serve as a general packing list, feel free to modify to suit your personal camping needs.</i></p>	
<p>Tent 3 season tent. We recommend a rain fly goes 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.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<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.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<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 One inflatable or closed cell foam pad.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Stove/Fuel/Cooking Pots ★ 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 Bring a plastic bowl or mug, preferably with insulation in cooler months</p> <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 two. One serves as back-up.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Water Joshua Tree Campgrounds <u>do not</u> have water access. You must provide your own.</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 should arrive on the first morning of your course with your food for the day or the duration of your course depending on how long your trip is.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<h2 style="margin: 0;">Other Essentials</h2>	
<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"/> 6-10ft 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="margin: 0;">Other Optional Items</h2> <p style="margin: 0;"><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>	
<p>Rock Climbing Rack</p> <p>If you have it then bring it. Any cams, stoppers, hexes or other equipment that you own will be useful. Make sure and mark your gear so it doesn't get mixed up.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Chalk Bag and Chalk</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Trekking Poles</p> <p>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
<p>Climbing or Athletic Tape</p> <p>Used for taping up hands, this protects your hands when you are crack climbing.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Assisted Braking Device</p> <p>If you have a Petzl GriGri or similar assisted braking device bring it with you for front country climbing.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Altimeter Watch</p> <p>If you have one then bring it, it is a great tool to have in the backcountry especially for navigation.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Gaia Navigation App</p> <p>Optional Smartphone App.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Map and Compass</p> <p>Compass must have declination adjustment.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Pee Bottle</p> <p>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, etc. 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 Breathable footwear -- like flip-flops -- as well as some comfortable cotton clothing can be nice to change into after you get back to your vehicle.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p>Car Charger Consider bringing an extra battery pack as well, having a lot of people using car charger cables is difficult.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy