

# Teton Valley Winter Courses

## Equipment List

**Welcome to NOLS!** It's important to choose the right equipment for any outdoor adventure. This list is designed to help you make smart decisions about the gear you take on your course.

Please take a moment to fill out this [ski/splitboard equipment sizing form](#) so our outfitting department can best approximate your equipment needs before your course.

When you arrive, your instructors will look through the equipment you've brought and help you decide what to take into the field. You'll then go into our Outfitting Department to rent or purchase any remaining items. We've made every effort to ensure that this equipment list is reflective of what you will need on your course, but your actual needs will vary depending on seasonal variations and instructor judgment. We encourage you to keep the tags on all clothing, and the receipt at home, so that you may later return any unneeded items.

**Here are some thoughts to guide you as you pack:**

- **First, use gear you already own!** You'll be comfortable in tried-and-true clothing. Bring more layers than you think you'll need; your instructors will help you choose your best options. You can always leave items in storage here.
- **Second, rent key items from NOLS.** When it comes to gear, every adventurer has their own preferences. In the field, you'll have the opportunity to hone your preferred system. We recommend that you rent, rather than purchase, several big ticket items, such as a sleeping bag and backpack. While you are not obligated to rent gear from us, there are several reasons why we suggest it. Our rental gear is high quality and chosen specifically for the heavy use it receives on courses. Rental prices are reasonable, so you can try out gear and make informed decisions on future adventures. After your course, you may purchase any of the items you rented; this is a great way to begin building your personal gear closet.
- **Third, purchase specific items from our Outfitting Department.** To make shopping simple, we offer basic kitchen utensils (mug, bowl with lid, spoon, 32-ounce water bottle), personal care items (lip balm, sunscreen), and camping sundries (headlamp, batteries, lighter). NOLS is a not-for-profit organization, and revenue from our Outfitting Department goes to serve the mission of the school.
- **Fourth, visit a local outdoor store.** Most gear shops, from REI to mom-and-pop shops, are familiar with NOLS and its courses. We encourage you to keep the tags on all equipment and clothing, and the receipt at home, so that you may later return any items you don't use.

## Equipment Deposit

In addition to your course tuition, you will pay an equipment deposit. This deposit will be applied directly to the charges you incur for gear rentals and purchases. At the end of your course, you will be billed for any amount that exceeds your equipment deposit, or refunded any balance.

## Quality over Quantity

At NOLS, we fundamentally believe that you don't need to own a lot of expensive gear to live and travel comfortably in the backcountry. By purchasing high-quality items and learning to care for them, you're making a lifetime investment. Spend money on the few items that really matter, and don't get lured into splurging on the trendiest fabrics or latest gadgets.

## Layers

You will wear layers of clothing that include base, mid, insulating and shell. The **base layers**, like long underwear, are designed to be worn next to your skin and provide moisture management and light insulation. **Mid-layers**, like a fleece, are warmer and provide more insulation. **Insulating layers**, like jackets, are primarily for really cold days or time in camp when you are less active. On the outside, **shell layers**, like wind jackets, provide wind and snow protection. When you fit your clothing, it is important to make sure you can wear your layers all at the same time

## Questions?

If you have any questions, please contact the NOLS admission office at 800-710-6657, visit our web site at [nols.edu](http://nols.edu), or contact NOLS Teton Valley directly at (208) 354-8443 or [teton\\_valley@nols.edu](mailto:teton_valley@nols.edu).

See how you'll use some of your equipment with our videos:

- [Winter Layering System](#) (clothing)
- [The Bootie System](#) (footwear)
- [Camping and Sleeping in the Winter](#)

## How to Use This List

Items under the **Required** heading are items that you **must** either bring yourself or rent or purchase from NOLS as available. Items under the **Optional** heading are not required, and you may bring them from home, buy, or rent from NOLS as available. If you see an **X** in the price column, that means that an item is not available for rent or for purchase. Items marked **No Charge** are provided by NOLS at no additional charge to you.

Head, Neck, and Hand Layers			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
<b>Required Items</b>			
Wool or fleece hat	\$3	\$20-30	Warm hat for cold weather that should cover your ears. We recommend bringing two hats—one lighter weight and one that's heavier weight, so you can wear a different hat for when you're active and when you aren't.
Balaclava	\$4	\$40	Full head and neck covering with an opening for the face. Wool or fleece.
Neck gaiter	X	\$20-40	Wool or synthetic neck warmer. Offers great insulation in combination with a hat. Lightweight versions offer sun and wind protection. Buffs and Smartwool products are popular and comfortable.
Sun hat	X	\$25	To protect ears and face from the sun. Consider a full brim (packable, lightweight) for maximum protection. Baseball caps protect your face and are easy to pack.
Sunglasses	X	\$40	Lenses should be dark and block UV and infrared light.
Sunglasses retainer	X	\$7	Chums or Croakies to keep track of your glasses.
Ski goggles	X	X	Recommended for low visibility/stormy days.
Your hand layers should look something like this: 3-5 pair liner gloves; 2 pair other gloves/mittens; 1 pair glove/mitten shells; 1 pair insulated mittens.			
Liner gloves	X	\$12-20	These thin synthetic or wool gloves are essential, as you never want bare hands in the winter.
Wool gloves/mittens	X	\$12	Lightweight synthetic fleece or wool. These can be combined with a liner glove and a mitten or glove shell. Gloves offer more dexterity, whereas mittens offer more warmth.
Insulated gloves	X	\$28-45	Many prefer to have an everyday, moderate warmth insulated glove with an integrated snow-repelling shell for daily activities.
Mitten shells	\$8	\$35	Water-repellent nylon or Gore-Tex mitten shells should fit over a pair of liner gloves and a pair of

			fleece/wool gloves or mittens. If you are only bringing gloves and no mittens, you can bring glove shells.
Insulated mittens	\$8	\$35	Synthetic-fill mittens that fit over your other mittens or gloves. These are for cold days or around camp.
<b>Optional Items</b>			
Helmet	No charge	X	Preferred by some to use in the backcountry
<b>Upper Body Clothing</b>			
Your upper body layers should ultimately look something like this: 1 t-shirt (optional); 1 long-sleeved base layer; 1-2 mid-weight insulation layer; 2 insulating (puffy) jackets; 1 ski shell. If you get cold easily, bring along a fleece vest, too.			
<b>Equipment</b>	<b>Rent</b>	<b>Buy</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Required Items</b>			
Synthetic or wool T-shirt	X	\$35	No cotton.
Sports Bra	X	\$49	Synthetic or wool sports bra or sports tank.
Mid-weight top	X	\$69-130	Light or mid-weight base layer made of polypropylene, Capilene, or wool.
Expedition weight top	X	\$159-180	Expedition-weight top such as Patagonia R1, lightweight fleece or a wool sweater/hoody.
Vest	X	\$35-50	Fleece, down or synthetic-filled vest.
Fleece/ Insulated jacket	\$10	\$50-75	Thick fleece, Polartec, Primaloft, Patagonia R2 or a lightweight down jacket.
Wind Shirt	\$12	\$55	Lightweight, breathable nylon wind shell is great for times when you're very active.
Insulated Parka	\$40	X	Synthetic or down fill winter parka with a hood. Must fit comfortably over all your upper body layers. This is a really warm jacket for around camp. We suggest you rent one from us if you don't already have one.
Waterproof Shell	X	\$100	Gore-tex or Event jackets are useful on days at Grand Targhee and on big storm days in the backcountry. (A good rain jacket is sufficient.)
<b>Lower Body Clothing</b>			

Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
<b>Required Items</b>			
Your lower body layers should ultimately look something like this: 1 pr. mid-weight bottoms; 1 pr. expedition weight bottoms or fleece pants; 1 pr. wind pants or Gore-Tex pants; 1 pr. insulated pants.			
Mid-weight bottoms	X	\$59-110	Light or mid-weight base layer made of wool, polypropylene, Capilene 1 or 2, or ZeO2.
Expedition weight bottoms	X	\$35-65	Expedition-weight bottoms such as Patagonia R1, fleece, or wool.
Soft shell or Gore-tex pants	X	X	Gore-Tex or soft shell pants without insulation are the preferred option.
Insulated pants	\$35	X	Synthetic-fill ski warm-up pants that fit comfortably over all your lower body layers.
Underwear	X	\$22-30	Silk, synthetic, wool or none. We recommend bringing 2-3 pairs. We sell briefs, boxers, and boxer briefs.

### Footwear

Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
<b>Required Items</b>			
Your sock system should ultimately look like this: 3-4 sets of travel socks (this may be 4 pr. liners + 4 pr. wool or 4 pr wool); 1 pr. camp socks; 1 pr. sleeping socks			
Wool or polypro socks	X	\$25	Knee high ski socks recommended.
Inner booties, outer booties	\$9 for each set	\$20-40	This is a bootie system for in camp. Inner and outer booties are synthetic or down-filled. Inner booties should fit inside outer booties.
Overboot	\$17	\$60-90	Overboots are a mukluk made of nylon shell that comes up to just below the knee, and should fit over both the inner and outer booties. Your in-camp bootie system should ultimately look like this: 1 pair inner booties (down or synthetic); 1 pair outer booties; 1 pair overboots.
Alpine touring boots	\$85	\$200-300	We rent Scarpa, Black Diamond, Scott, and Dynafit, sizes 8-14. If you are outside the size range we carry, please contact us before your course starts to talk about options.

			If you bring your own boots, make sure they are roomy enough for you to wear thicker socks. Warm feet are more important than performance fit in the backcountry.
Snowboard Boots	\$65	\$350	We rent Deeluxe and Salomon boots sizes 6-12. We use strap bindings on our boards.

**Optional Items**

Liner socks (2-3 pairs)	X	\$7	Optional. Lightweight wool, polypropylene or Capilene socks if you want to use a liner sock and wool sock combination inside your ski/snowboard boots.
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**Packs and Bags**

Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
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**Required Items**

Zip (duffel) bag	\$3	\$15	Lightweight, medium-sized zippered nylon bag (approx 12" x 24") with nylon handles. Used in the packing system.
Small stuff sacks	\$1	\$29	Used for organizing items in your pack and sled.
Backpack	\$40	\$165-450	We recommend a pack with between 3000 - 4000 cubic inches of volume (40-65 liters). If you don't already own a pack this size, we recommend renting one from us in order to try before you buy. Our backpacks range from 40 to 70 liters, potentially slightly bigger than you need.
Pack Liner	\$8	X	NOLS Teton Valley rents reusable pack liners. You are welcome to bring a trash compactor bag (heavy duty is best) from home.

**Sleeping Gear**

Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
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**Required Items**

Sleeping bag	\$45	\$200-250	We rent synthetic-filled bags, as they are easier to care for. You need a bag rated to -15F to -20F at a minimum. Down and synthetic are both effective in the winter, although down can be more challenging to care for. A sleeping bag is an essential piece of safety gear. Instructors will exercise their judgment when evaluating your sleeping bag.
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Compression stuff sack	\$3	\$25	Stuff sack with straps attached on the sides to compress your sleeping bag. Make sure that your sleeping bag fits inside.
Sleeping pads (2)	\$3	\$10	You will need 2 pads to insulate you from the snow while sleeping. Many instructors bring a Therm-A-Rest type pad and a closed cell foam pad. 2 closed cell pads also works.

### Ski/Splitboarding Equipment

Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
<b>Required Items</b>			
Skis	\$85	\$250-550	We rent Atomic, G3 and Armada, and Icelantic skis with Dynafit and G3 bindings. If you bring your own Telemark or AT gear, please bring a binding repair kit.
Splitboard	\$100	\$500	For backcountry travel you will need a splitboard, not a snowboard; a splitboard comes apart so you can ascend, then reassemble as one unit to descend. We rent Venture, Never Summer and G3 splitboards with Sparks bindings.
Ski poles	\$15	\$70	A sturdy pair of adjustable poles with medium to large baskets. We rent Black Diamond 2 and 3 piece adjustable poles. Skiers and Splitboarders will need ski poles.
Climbing skins	\$15	X	We use synthetic hair, adhesive climbing skins. The skins need to be nearly as wide as the skis.
Transceiver	No charge	X	We issue BCA Tracker transceivers. There is no rental charge for these items.
Shovel	No charge	X	A sturdy, collapsible snow shovel.
Probe	No charge	X	A sturdy, collapsible avalanche probe.

### Eating Gear

Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
<b>Required Items</b>			
Stainless steel thermos 0.5- 1 liter	X	\$35	Highly recommended. This allows you to have hot tea, cocoa, or soup during a travel day. Glass-lined thermoses are not appropriate.

Bowl with Lid	X	\$6	A Tupperware bowl w/ lid works great.
Spoon	X	\$2	Lexan spoons are light and durable.
Water bottle	X	\$13	Wide mouth quart or liter size plastic bottles.
<b>Optional Items</b>			
Insulated mug	X	\$13	NOLS carries 12 oz & 20 oz insulated mugs with lids. A .5 L Nalgene bottle is another good option that warms your hands and cools off quickly.
*All together, your water holding capacity between water bottles and a thermos should be 2 Liters.			
<b>Miscellaneous Gear</b>			
<b>Equipment</b>	<b>Rent</b>	<b>Buy</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Required Items</b>			
Lip balm	X	\$4	Needs to have SPF 15 or greater.
Sunscreen	X	\$15	SPF 30 or greater. Small bottles recommended. Sunscreen that contains zinc and/or titanium zinc oxide recommended.
Bandana	X	\$7	Handy for cleaning glasses or protecting your ears and face.
Headlamp	X	\$35	Durable and lightweight.
Extra batteries	X	\$5	Bring 1 spare set for your headlamp.
Lighter	X	\$2	Used for lighting camp stoves.
Notebook & pen	X	\$1-8	A small, lightweight pad is ideal.
Candle	X	\$1-8	Plumber's candles. Used to light up snow shelters.
Knife	X	X	One small pocketknife is sufficient. Don't go out and buy one if you don't already own one. Typically, we bring 1-2 knives/course.
Watch w/ alarm	X	\$25	A waterproof watch.
Toiletries	X	X	Keep these to a minimum. Toothbrush, small tube of toothpaste, floss, comb/brush, tampons.
Book	X	X	A lightweight paperback reading book.
Slippers	X	X	A nice amenity during the days spent in town.

Casual clothes	X	X	Comfortable, casual clothes for in town at the beginning of your course (Snow boots optional but recommended!)
<b>Optional Items</b>			
Camera	X	X	Waterproof and shockproof and a small padded case are highly recommended. You are not permitted to bring cell phones, smart phones, drones, or tablets to the backcountry, even to use as cameras.