

Spring Semester in the Pacific Northwest Equipment List

Welcome to NOLS! It's important to choose the right equipment for any outdoor adventure. We fundamentally believe that you don't need to own a lot of expensive gear to live and travel comfortably in the outdoors. We recognize that the process of getting ready for a course can be an intimidating experience, especially if you have never done anything like it before. This list is designed to help you make decisions about what you take on your course and hopefully help you feel confident about entering 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 season 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 clothing than you think you'll need; your instructors will help you choose your best options. You can always leave items in storage at the campus. You may not think you have some of the clothing items on the list, but it is really common for sports and athletic wear to fit the bill. As long as it meets the description of the item, it will probably work.
- **Second, rent what you can from NOLS.** We recommend that you rent items when possible, especially items that tend to be expensive (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, 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 at a reduced cost; this is a great way to begin building your personal system if you intend to keep exploring the outdoors.
- **Third, purchase specific items from our Outfitting Department.** To make shopping simple, we offer camping essentials and personal care items. The items we sell in our Outfitting Department are tailored to what works well on our

courses. Approximate price ranges for the items we sell are listed below - you can use these price ranges to help you decide whether to purchase items ahead of time.

- **Fourth, go shopping before your course.** A few options:
 - **REI or a local gear store:** Pro: Employees often have some sense of what you will need. Con: Gear at these locations is often expensive.
 - **Target, Wal-Mart, and other department stores:** Pro: The active wear and camping sections can have inexpensive options. Con: Employees are unlikely to be able to offer suggestions.
 - **Thrift stores:** Pro: Likely the least expensive option. Con: Can take a lot of time to find what you need.
 - **Online:** Pro: Can find a wide variety of options. Con: The variety of options can be overwhelming to sort through.
- If you're shopping ahead of time, it may be helpful to call someone at NOLS to chat through your plan for packing and purchasing so you can get some guidance. There is contact info at the bottom of this list.

Equipment fees

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 or any loss or damage to our equipment. Total charges will vary depending on the amount of equipment you rent or purchase from us; the prices listed below will help you estimate your costs. At the end of your course, you will be billed for any amount that exceeds the equipment deposit, or refunded any balance from NOLS headquarters in Lander, WY.

Feedback?

NOLS is trying to update this list to be more welcoming and effective. If you are willing to provide some feedback to help our effort please take this [survey](#).

Questions?

Please contact NOLS admissions at:

Phone: 800-710-6657

Email: admissions@nols.edu

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 as indicated.

Upper Body Clothing			
<p>You will wear layers of clothing that include base layers, mid-layers, and shell layers. The base layers are designed to wear close to your skin and provide moisture management, light insulation, and sun protection. Warmer mid-layers are for insulation. On the outside, wind and rainproof jackets and pants made of nylon or Gore-Tex prevent heat loss by protecting you from wind, rain, and snow. You should look for synthetic materials that retain their warmth when wet and dry quickly, which cotton does not do. It's also important to make sure that your layers all fit together in case you need to wear all of them at the same time.</p>			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
T-Shirt	X	\$40-50	A lightweight synthetic or wool t-shirt
Base Layer (mid-weight)	X	\$49-120	Light- or midweight long-sleeve top, wool or synthetic
Mid-Layer (expedition weight)	X	\$49-169	Heavier than base layer top, but lighter than an outer jacket. Aim for material that is fleece, wool, or synthetic.
Top Insulating Layer (insulated jacket)	\$10/week	\$70-200	A synthetic-fill insulated jacket that fits over your other layers and under your rain jacket. A hood is recommended.
Rain Jacket	X	\$109-180	Durable, waterproof, non-insulated jacket with a hood. Coated nylon or breathable fabrics (like Gore-Tex, H2No). It is important that you can wear your rain jacket over all your base and mid-layers.
Optional Items			
Fleece or Insulated Vest	X	X	A lightweight, breathable, durable nylon wind shell, in either pullover or zip-up style

Wind Shirt	\$7/week	\$80-100	A lightweight, breathable, durable nylon wind shell. Pullover or zip-up style
Lower Body Clothing			
For your lower body, you'll need two insulating layers plus a wind and a rain layer. The layers should be able to fit comfortably over each other. Warmer (late July) courses may only need one insulating layer.			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Underwear/ Sports Bras (3-4 pairs)	X	\$24-49	Clean underwear is essential for backcountry hygiene, and you'll learn how to wash underwear by hand on your course. Synthetic or natural fibers (non-cotton) are great options.
Hiking Pants	X	\$60-80	Nylon or synthetic pants. These should fit comfortably over lower-body base layers. Soft-shell fabrics are acceptable, but lightweight "running pants" are not durable enough.
Base Layer (mid-weight synthetic) (1-2)	X	\$59-75	Mid-weight synthetic or wool bottoms. Cotton and cotton blends are not acceptable.
Fleece pants/Puff Pants	\$6/ week fleece pants \$9/week puff pants	\$200-250 *puffy pants only	Mid- or heavy-weight bottoms that fit comfortably over the base-layer bottoms. Fleece pants or insulated (puffy) pants work, too. (ex. Montbell UL Thermawrap pants).
Rain Pants	X	\$109-160	A durable, waterproof pant that can fit over lower body layers. A full-length zipper is convenient for changing layers without removing footwear.
Optional Items			
Wind Pants	\$7/week	X	Nylon or synthetic pants. These should fit comfortably over lower-body base layers. Side-zippers

			allow the pants to be put on over boots. Soft-shell fabrics are acceptable, but lightweight “running pants” are not durable enough. We recommend renting NOLS wind pants.
Head, Neck, and Hand Layers			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Liner Gloves	X	\$15-35	Lightweight, synthetic glove liner that can be layered under heavier-weight gloves for added warmth
Fleece/Wool Gloves	X	\$20-45	Mid-weight insulating fleece or wool glove. These can be combined with a thin liner glove and/or mitten shell
Mitten Shells w/ Liner	\$6/week	X	Lightweight, water-repellent nylon shells that fit over mittens or gloves
Baseball Cap or Wide-Brimmed Sun Hat	X	\$20-30	To protect ears and face from the sun. Consider a full brim for maximum protection, but a typical baseball cap works well. Flexible fabric is recommended over straw or other stiff materials, which are hard to pack. A nylon model will dry more quickly, but canvas works well too. Avoid hats made from Gore-Tex or plastics, as they get too hot.
Wool or Fleece Hat	X	\$20-42	A warm hat for cold weather that should cover your ears. We recommend wool or fleece.
Packs and Bags			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Backpack	\$23/week	X	Our packs are large expedition models, with a volume of 80–110 liters. We recommend you rent one of these packs. If you bring a pack, it must have a volume of 80 - 110

			liters. Your instructors will examine it to determine its suitability for your course and route.
Plastic Trash Bags (2-3)	X	\$1	Heavy-duty, extra large, lawn-and-garden bags for lining and waterproofing backpacks and other bags. These are thicker and more durable than normal trash bags.
Assorted Zip Duffels (2-3)	\$3/week	X	Small and medium-sized lightweight zip bags to help organize and protect clothing and gear in your boat or backpack.
Dry Bags (1-2)	\$5/week	X	Small, medium, and large size (5-20 L) dry bags to pack and organize your gear in the boats and around camp.
Large Nylon Zip Duffel	\$6/week	X	This is a large, waterproof zip duffel that is used during the kayak section to store all your smaller bags while loading and unloading boats and in camp. Make sure it is sturdy, as this item will get a lot of abuse.
Optional Items			
Small Stuff Sacks (2-3)	\$1/week	\$13-27	Small nylon or mesh sacks for organizing gear in your pack. These should be between 2- and 5-liter capacity.
Our advice? An expedition backpack is a major purchase. If you don't already own one we think you should use ours, gain some experience, then make an informed decision on your needs.			
Sleeping Gear			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Sleeping Bag	\$18/week	X	A synthetic-fill mummy bag with approximately 3 pounds of fill, rated to 0° or 10°F. Down bags are not suitable for the wet conditions often encountered in the Northwest.

Compression Stuff Sack	\$4/week	X	Stuff sack that packs sleeping bag or clothing into a smaller size than a regular stuff sack would. Also functions as a small backpack.
Foam or Inflatable Sleeping Pad	\$3/week *foam only	\$80-180 *inflatable only	Used for padding and insulation between sleeping bag and ground. Foam pads must be closed-cell and at least 3/8 inches thick. If you bring an Inflatable pad, make sure to bring a repair kit so you can patch it if it gets holes. We sell Therm-A-Rest full- and 3/4-length pads.

Our advice? A sleeping bag is another major purchase. If you don't already own one, we think you should use ours, gain some experience, then make an informed decision on your needs.

Mountain Travel Gear

Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
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Required Items

Double Plastic or Double Synthetic Mountaineering Boots	\$25/week	X	<p>Double plastic (these have an insulated inner bootie plus outer shell) or double synthetic boots are required for their warmth, water resistance, and drying time. These should fit comfortably with 1-2 pairs of wool socks. We highly recommend renting boots from us. If you are purchasing boots, please contact us and ensure they are fit by a professional. They must be able to accept crampons with a heel clip.</p> <p>If you wear a Men's Size 12.5 or above, please contact us at pacific_northwest@nols.edu to check for size availability.</p>
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Sea Kayaking Gear

Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
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Required Items

Paddling Jacket	\$19/week	X	A paddling-specific jacket with neoprene closures on the neck and
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			wrists will keep you much drier than a regular rain jacket.
Paddle Bibs	\$19/week	X	This piece of gear will help you stay warm and dry during your kayak section. However, it is a high-price item that most students do not own. We recommend you rent NOLS' Kokatat Hydrus paddling bibs with relief zipper and socks.
Paddling gloves/ Pogies	\$5/week	X	Neoprene mitten-like hand covers that fit over a paddle shaft for cold, wet days on the water. These are warmer than neoprene gloves.
Water Shoes/ neoprene booties	\$7/week	X	This shoe will be worn in conjunction with the paddle bibs while you are paddling and will be wet the entire kayak section. It will be worn with wool or synthetic socks and the paddle suit (built in) socks so be sure to purchase ½-1 size larger than you normal wear. An old lightweight running shoe or sneaker also works well.
Optional Items			
PVC Foul weather jacket	\$10/week	X	These storm items are worn for the kayak section only. If you bring your own, think "heavy-duty fisherman style." If you do not already own these, we recommend that you rent from NOLS.
PVC Foul Weather Bibs	\$10/week	X	These storm items are worn for the kayak section only. If you bring your own, think "heavy-duty fisherman style." If you do not already own these, we recommend that you rent from NOLS.
Rain hat/ Sou'wester	\$2/week	X	We suggest a Sou'wester-type rain hat even if your foul weather jacket has a hood.
Umbrella	X	X	An umbrella is a great option for rainy days. It could be a small

			collapsible umbrella, or a golf-style umbrella (it should not have a hook on the end).
Miscellaneous Items			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Hot Drink Container	X	\$11-40	0.5L Nalgene water bottles work well. A durable mug with a lid or thermos is also an option.
Bowl	X	\$12	Durable and able to handle hot liquids. A screw-on or snap-on lid is useful.
Spoon	X	\$2-10	Light and durable. Convenient if it fits inside your bowl.
Hydration System	X	\$13-40	Bring durable plastic bottles. 2L capacity minimum. Wide mouths are convenient.
Lip Balm (1-2)	X	\$3	Stick, cream, or tube-type moisturizing balm, SPF 25 or greater. We recommend Reef Safe products with zinc oxide as the active ingredient.
Sunscreen	X	\$15-22	A 3- to 6-oz. tube, SPF 30 or greater. We recommend Reef Safe products with zinc oxide as the active ingredient.
Sunglasses	X	\$30-90	Good-quality sunglasses with 100-percent UV protection; lenses must be dark. If you wear prescription lenses and have limited vision without them, bring your own prescription sunglasses or look for a quality pair of clip-on polarized shades at an outdoor store. We sell Julbo and Optic Nerve.
Chums	X	\$8-15	Chums or Croakies for keeping track of your glasses or sunglasses. Available with NOLS logo.
Bandanas (2)	X	\$3	Useful for various purposes. People who wipe after they pee typically

			designate one bandana as a pee rag . A Kula Cloth is also a great option and is available for purchase in the equipment room.
Prescription Glasses and Contact Lenses	X	X	If you wear them, bring a spare pair of glasses or lenses. Contact-lens wearers should also bring a pair of glasses as backup. Prescription sunglasses are also nice to have in reserve.
Headlamp	X	\$30-45	Durable and lightweight. Bring spare batteries.
Batteries	X	\$0.85/ea.	We have AA and AAA for sale.
Disposable Lighters	X	\$2.00	For lighting your camp stove.
Personal Hygiene Articles	X	\$1.50-32	Bring essential items that are core to your personal care needs. Travel-sized is best. Consider: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, tampons/pads/menstrual cup , and lotion/balm if needed. We sell travel-size toothpaste, toothbrushes, and pads/tampons/menstrual cups. We provide biodegradable soap for the field, and shampoo, soap & conditioner for use in-town.
Notebook	X	\$5-10	A small, lightweight notebook or pad for taking notes during class and journaling.
Pen or Pencil (1-2)	X	\$0.75	For journaling and taking notes during classes. Bring more than one.
Watch	X	\$20-30	Durable and waterproof, with an alarm feature.
Soap	No Charge	X	A 2 oz. bottle of non scented Dr. Bronner's.
Hand Sanitizer	X	X	A 2 oz. bottle, alcohol-based is preferable.
Our advice? Keep your toiletries to small sizes. We work to keep our pack weights as low as possible. Saving every ounce is essential!			
Optional Items			

Coffee	X	\$15/bag ground or \$1.75/packet instant	Bring if you enjoy coffee for yourself in the morning. Coffee is not supplied in the NOLS ration.
Vitamins	X	X	Not necessary, but a small quantity of multi-vitamins is popular among staff and students for this length of course.
Adjustable Trekking Poles	\$5/week /single pole	\$60-70/pair	Strongly recommended. Used for support while hiking/mountaineering. Should be sturdy.
Camera	X	X	GoPros and lightweight digital or 35mm cameras are acceptable; bring a protective case. A waterproof container is recommended. Inexpensive disposable cameras are also an option. Avoid elaborate lenses and heavy SLRs. Bring extra batteries and memory cards. (Please note: you may not bring your smartphone or tablet to use as a digital camera.)
Mosquito Headnet	X	\$5	A light, nylon head net
Insect Repellent	X	\$6	Small bottles; no aerosol spray cans.
Stamps and Envelopes	X	Varies	You can send out stamped mail during section changes.
Reading Book	X	X	A small paperback reading book or lightweight e-reader, such as a Kindle; bring a protective case. Tablet-style e-readers (e.g., Kindle Fire) are not permitted.
Footwear			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Hiking Boots	X	X	Durable hiking boots; a combination of leather and/or synthetic. Must have good support in the heel and

			ankle, and be sturdy enough to carry 50+ pounds of gear. We recommend taking the time to break in new boots before your course in order to prevent blisters.
Socks (3-4 pairs)	X	\$16-26	Mid to heavyweight. You may prefer socks of different thickness for different activities (ex. for travel during the day and wearing at night in your sleeping bag).
Gaiters	X	\$89	Nylon boot attachment that protects the ankle and shins from snow and dirt. Must be durable and large enough to fit over double mountaineering boots. Lightweight trail-running gaiters are not sufficient. If you purchase your own gaiters for a mountaineering course, be sure to leave the tags on until you test their fit with mountaineering boots. Often, mountaineering boots are significantly larger than hiking boots.
Camp Shoes	X	\$25	Comfortable shoes to change into in camp. Must be closed-toe. Lightweight and quick-drying running shoes or Crocs (without holes) work well. We sell lightweight Totes Ankle Rain Boots as a camp shoe option for this course.
Insoles	X	X	To be used with plastic mountaineering boots and leather boots. Superfeet, Soles, and Downunders are good examples. A pair of insoles from an existing pair of boots works as well.
Optional Items			
Liner Socks (1-2 pairs)	X	\$6	Lightweight wool or synthetic “wicking” socks. You will need at least two pairs if you are using a liner sock/wool sock combination in your hiking boots. (Note: liner socks are

			mandatory if you are renting rock shoes for a climbing course)
Our advice? Your boots are a critical piece of gear. Please be sure they are sturdy, provide enough ankle support, and fit properly with at least a liner and a wool sock. If you have any doubts about boots, please give us a call.			
Items for Entry Into Canada			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Passport	X	X	Required for entry into Canada.
Letter of consent (<i>minors only</i>)	X	X	Students under the age of 18 must bring written permission to enter Canada, including parents' or guardians' contact info. See your Travel and Logistics document for specific instructions.

Shared Group Equipment—NOLS will supply
Expedition members share both the use of and responsibility for the group gear that NOLS issues. NOLS charges only for group equipment that gets lost or damaged. Keep in mind that NOLS evaluates gear from a number of perspectives beyond what an individual user might consider. Performance, durability and simplicity are all factors we consider when we select our gear.
Tents and shelters Compass Trowels or Shovels Stoves, Fuel Bottles and Fuel Maps and Charts Bear Resistant Food Containers Fishing Gear GPS Equipment Repair Kits Reference Books Binoculars Cooking Gear Ground Cloths Sailing-specific Gear PFDs Kayaks and Accessories Wet/Dry Suits

Surf Helmets
Climbing Ropes
Climbing Protection
Climbing Harnesses
Climbing Helmets
Crampons
Ice Axes
Water Treatment
Hand Sanitizer

First Aid:

Our instructors carry adequate first aid kits. There is no need to bring your own.