

Wind River Hiking - 18 and older

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 outdoor store**
 - Pro: Employees often have some sense of what you will need
 - Con: Gear at these locations is often expensive
 - **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, 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.

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.

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?

Contact your Admission Officer if you have any questions or would like further information about the equipment list.

Upper Body Layers			
Your clothing will form a layering system of 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 and need to fit well together to give you options as conditions change. On the outside, wind and rainproof jackets prevent heat loss by cutting wind, rain, and snow. Look for synthetic materials that dry quickly and retain their warmth when wet, which cotton does not do.			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Base layer (long underwear)	X	\$70	Mid-weight long underwear top, wool or synthetic (e.g. Patagonia Capilene series, Icebreaker Body Zone)
Middle layer	X	\$50-160	Fleece jacket (e.g. Patagonia Regulator and Mountain Hardwear Microchill) or a wool sweater
Insulated jacket	\$15	\$165-250	A warm, synthetic-fill “puffy” or down jacket that fits over your base layers (e.g. Mountain Hardwear Compressor, Montbell Thermawrap, Patagonia Nano Puff).
Wind shirt/anorak	\$8	\$70-110	A lightweight, breathable, durable nylon wind shell.
Rain jacket	\$15	\$100-150	A sturdy waterproof jacket with a hood. Both coated nylon and breathable fabrics are acceptable (e.g. Gore-Tex, Marmot Precip, Mountain Hardwear Dry.Q, Patagonia H2No)
Sports Bra	X	\$40	Lightweight bras that offer adequate support. Synthetic/natural materials that dry quickly are preferable.
Optional Items			
T-shirt	X	\$25-50	A lightweight synthetic or wool t-shirt
Sun Hoody	X	\$60-75	A lightweight synthetic, wool, or bamboo hoody that provides both sun protection. For some, this will be their primary layer.

Our advice? Bring the non-cotton sweaters, fleece jackets, and synthetic layers you think might work. We'll advise you on the best combination for your trip, depending on the conditions.

Lower Body Layers

You will need 1–2 synthetic insulating layers (usually a base layer and, in early summer, a pair of fleece pants). All must fit comfortably over each other so that they can be worn at the same time. If you tend to get cold easily, add a middle layer of midweight bottoms to the base layer and fleece pants.

Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Base layer (long underwear)	X	\$70	Mid-weight synthetic or wool bottoms (e.g. Patagonia Capilene, Icebreaker Bodyfit Zone). Cotton and cotton blends are not acceptable.
Middle layer (fleece pants)	\$8	\$60-150	Mid- or heavy-weight bottoms that fit comfortably over the base-layer bottoms. Fleece pants or insulated (puffy) pants are both acceptable.
Wind pants/hiking pants	\$8	\$70	Nylon shell pants. These should fit comfortably over all lower-body 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. The NOLS wind pants are the most popular piece of equipment we've ever designed!
Underwear (2 pairs)	X	\$20-35	Clean underwear is essential for backcountry hygiene. Though you will have opportunities for laundry, having a supply of underwear for your semester is helpful. Synthetic or natural fibers (non-cotton) are great options.

Optional Items

Shorts	X	\$40-60	Quick dry, loose-fitting athletic shorts.
Rain pants	X	\$80-110	Although not required, some people like to use rain pants in conjunction with a rain jacket.

Our advice? Bring the synthetic base layers, rain gear, and exercise clothing you think might work. We'll advise you on the best combination for your trip, depending on conditions.

Head, Neck, and Hand Layers

Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
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Required Items			
Baseball cap or wide-brim sun hat	X	\$16-30	Lightweight headwear to protect ears and face from the sun. We sell a variety of visors, trucker hats, and running hats.
Warm hat	X	\$16-35	Thick enough to keep your head and ears warm on a chilly night. Wool or fleece hats are ideal.
Liner gloves	X	\$15	Lightweight, synthetic glove liner
Mosquito head net	X	\$5	A light, nylon head net. Can also double as a hair net.
Optional Items			
Neck Gaiter/ Buff	X	\$22	Neck gaiters are synthetic pieces of multi-functional headwear (hat, bandana, neck warmer, etc.). Buff is a common brand.
Religious Headwear	X	X	Headwear associated with religious custom (Hijab, Pagri, Chunni, Yarmulke, etc.)
Hair Care Headwear	X	\$5-10	Wave cap, hair wrap, or bonnet whatever you are used to. Cotton, satin, or synthetics are all good.
Warmer gloves/ mittens	X	\$18-65	Fleece or wool, can be combined with a thin liner glove and/or mitten shell. Recommended for courses that start in May/June.
Packs and Bags			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Backpack	\$120	\$250	Our packs are large expedition models with a volume of 80 –100 liters. We recommend you rent one of our packs. If you bring a backpack, your instructors will examine it to determine its suitability for your course and route. It must have a volume of 80 –100 liters.
Plastic trash bag (2-3)	X	\$1	2–3 heavy-duty lawn-and-garden/contractor bags (33 gallon, 3mm thick) for waterproofing
Small stuff sack (2-3)	\$2	\$10-20	Small nylon sacks for organizing items in your pack
Our advice? An expedition backpack is a major purchase. If you don't already own one, we think you should rent ours, gain some experience, then make an informed decision after your course.			
Sleeping Bags and Pads			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes

Required Items			
Sleeping bag	\$20	\$220-350	Synthetic-fill bags (e.g. Thermolite, Thermal.Q, APEX, etc.) perform well in the variety of conditions we encounter on courses. A bag rated to 5°-15°F.
Compression Sack	\$2	\$40	Stuff sack with compression straps designed to compress your sleeping bag when not in use
Plastic trash bag (2-3)	X	\$1	2–3 heavy-duty lawn-and-garden bags (33 gallon) to help waterproof your sleeping bag and backpack
Sleeping pad	\$3	\$35-110	Used for padding and insulation between sleeping bag and ground. Foam pads, which we rent, should be closed-cell and at least 3/8-inch thick and have at least an R-Value of 2.0. Inflatable pads, which we don't rent, work as well; Therm-a-Rest and REI are reliable brands.
Optional Items			
Ground cloth	\$2	X	Waterproof nylon sheet to layer between sleeping pad and ground for extra warmth. Helps protect your gear from sand, dust, and dirt.
Our advice? A sleeping bag is another major purchase. If you don't already own one, we think you should rent ours, gain some experience, and then make an informed decision after your course.			
Footwear			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Boots	X	\$170-250	Sturdy, expedition backpacking footwear with adequate support for extended wilderness courses. See information at the end of the equipment list for more ideas about boots.
Wool socks (3 pairs)	X	\$13-30	Mid- to heavyweight wool socks
Camp shoes	X	\$30	Running, tennis, or cross-training athletic shoes, closed toe required
Optional Items			
Liner socks (2-3 pairs)	X	\$6-8	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

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			boots. (Note: liner socks are mandatory if you are renting rock shoes for a climbing course.)
Gaiters	\$6	\$50	Lightweight, ankle or shin-high gaiters to prevent debris from entering your boots while hiking.
Our advice? Your boots will be a critical piece of gear. If they're not sturdy, don't provide enough support, or don't fit properly with wool socks, we won't let you use them. If you have any doubts about boots, feel free to give us a call.			
Toiletries			
Self-care in the outdoors is an essential component of any expedition. Whatever systems you use to take care of yourself in your daily life can often be modified to the appropriate size/quantity for your course. Any starred (*) item is something that we sell at NOLS.			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Lip balm	X	\$3-5	Stick, cream, or tube-type moisturizing balm, SPF 15 or greater. Products with zinc provide superior protection.
Sunscreen	X	\$5-10	At least 3-6 oz., SPF 30 or greater. Products with zinc provide superior protection.
Dental Care	X	\$3-6	Whatever your oral hygiene system is (toothpaste*, toothbrush*, floss*, retainer, etc.), you can likely adapt it to your course using trial or travel size versions.
Skin Care	X	\$7	You may want to consider lotion* (preferably unscented) or Vaseline in 3-5 oz travel-sized bottle, wash cloth-sized pack towel for backcountry bathing, and ointment for scrapes if you are prone to scarring.
Hair Care	X	X	You may want to consider a comb* or brush*, bands*, chopsticks, headwrap, ties, or whatever your system is.
Menstrual products	X	\$5-35	Required if you menstruate. Bring the products which work well for you, and bring slightly more supplies than you think you might need. This might mean tampons*, pads*, a menstrual cup*, or some combo thereof.
Personal Medications	X	X	Any prescriptions/supplements that are part of your system should be brought in sufficient quantities.
Our advice? Bring what you think will support your health on course, minimizing bulk and extra quantity where possible. Travel-size containers can be helpful in this process.			
Miscellaneous Items			

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Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Bowl	X	\$7	A plastic bowl with a screw- or snap-on lid is handy.
Spoon	X	\$1-10	Lexan spoons are light and durable. We also sell plastic and titanium sporks
Water bottle (2)	X	\$11-13	1–2 wide-mouth quart- or liter-size plastic bottles
Lip balm	X	\$3	Stick, cream, or tube-type moisturizing balm, SPF 15 or greater. Products with zinc provide superior protection.
Bandana (1-2)	X	\$2	A few of these are always handy
Headlamp	X	\$30	Durable and lightweight. Bring spare batteries.
Disposable lighter	X	\$2	For lighting your camp stove
Watch	X	\$25	A watch with an alarm is a nice feature.
Pen/pencil	X	X	For journaling and taking notes during classes
Notepad	X	\$10	A small, lightweight pad is fine.
Sunglasses	X	\$50-100	Good-quality sunglasses with 100-percent UV protection; lenses should 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 Suncloud, Spokiz, and Optic Nerve.
Prescription glasses/ contacts	X	X	Bring a spare pair of glasses or lenses. Contact-lens wearers should also bring a pair of glasses as backup.
Optional Items			
Insect repellent	X	\$5-8	Small bottles; no aerosol spray cans. Optional
Book or e-reader	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 acceptable.

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Trekking poles	\$5/each	\$60	A sturdy telescoping pole for easy packing. We rent trekking poles for the hiking sections only.
Camera	X	X	GoPros and lightweight digital or 35mm cameras are acceptable; bring a protective case. Avoid elaborate lenses and heavy SLRs. (Please note: you may not bring your smartphone or tablet into the field to use as a digital camera.)
Camp chair	X	\$30-50	Crazy Creek–style, or a sleeping-pad adapter.
Hydration system	X	\$30-50	An alternative hydration system, whether a Camelbak, Platypus, etc.
Sunglasses retainer	X	\$5	Chums or Croakies for keeping track of your glasses or sunglasses. Available with NOLS logo
Pocketknife	X	\$25-35	One small knife is sufficient; simple folding knives are popular.
Our advice? Keep the toiletries, pocketknife, camera, optional items and other gear to small sizes. We work to keep our pack weight as low as possible. Saving every ounce is essential!			

Shared Group Equipment—NOLS will supply

Expedition members share both the use of and the responsibility for the group gear that NOLS issues. NOLS charges only for group equipment lost or damaged. Keep in mind that NOLS evaluates gear from a number of perspectives beyond those that an individual user might consider. Performance, durability and simplicity are all contributing factors towards our gear selection.

Shelters
Trowel
Stoves, fuel bottles and fuel
Pots and pans
Maps and compasses
Equipment repair kits
Reference books
Binoculars
First aid kits

Rocky Mountain Hiking Shoe/Boot Recommendations

Medium-weight, off-trail backpacking shoes or lightweight boots work best. They provide good support for off-trail hiking with heavy packs. Here are some features to look for:

- Durable outer material, such as leather or thick nylon, that will withstand hiking among sharp boulders and dense vegetation. Full mesh is not appropriate.

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- A waterproof Gore-Tex liner can be beneficial, but is not required. Your feet will get wet if water comes in over the top of your boot. A Gore-Tex liner can also slow drying time once the boot is wet.
- A sole that provides a stable footbed and protection from sharp rocks and other surfaces, like Vibram®. Typical running shoes are not supportive enough for a NOLS expedition.
- Mid-top or high-top ankle coverage can be helpful in snowy or wet conditions (June 1 - July 1). High-top ankle coverage can also be helpful if you have a tendency to roll your ankles. Below-the-ankle hiking shoes work well in drier conditions (later summer courses and the canyon courses)
- Comfortable fit with your preferred hiking socks. Shoes that are too small commonly cause blisters.

The following list of acceptable boots is not exhaustive and is to be used for suggestions only. It is fine to substitute a similar boot for one of those listed here.

These are the two brands we sell in our outfitting store:

- La Sportiva: TX4, TXS GTX
- Salomon: X Ultra 3 Mid, X Ultra 4 Mid, Quest 4D GTX

These are other good options:

- Asolo: Finder, Fugitive
- Keen: Targhee II/III Mid
- Altra: Lone Peak Hiker
- HOKA ONE: Anacapa Mid, Kaha
- Lowa: Camino, Ranger, Trekker, Mauria, Explorer, Lady Light
- Oboz: Sawtooth
- Scarpa: Kailash, Mescalito, Trek
- Vasque: Talus

Note that manufacturers often rename their product lines. Visit the manufacturer's website or contact us if you have questions.