

Winter Packing list for Southern Ontario

This list is for short duration (2-3 day) trips in Southern Ontario. As with all winter packing lists requirements need to be adjusted to match the predicted conditions. This list is focused on traveling through wooded areas in temperatures of -20C or warmer. This kit is not sufficient alone. Just as important is knowledge on how to cope with winter conditions. Do not travel alone.

You can find a checklist form of this list here

 [Winter packing list Southern Ontario spreadsheet](#)

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1. Gear
 - a. larger pack
 - i. Should hold everything below
 - ii. can strap snowshoes and sleep pads to the outside
 - b. snow shoes
 - i. straps to attach snowshoes to outside of pack
 - ii. Size up rather than down on snowshoes
 - c. Sleeping system
 - i. Normal “free standing” dome tent
 1. Bigger (fatter) stakes
 2. Several short ropes to build snow anchors.
 3. You can use the same tent you use in the summer.
 4. This can be shared making sure there is enough space for large winter bags.
 - ii. Sleeping bag
 1. -15C / 0F or lower rating (adjust as conditions dictate)
 2. You can add a layer outside as a lower rated bag (fleece quilt, another sleeping bag, down quilt) to boost warmth. Please consult your host about the proposed combo.
 3. You likely want to use a compression sack
 4. Use a waterproof sack or line your bag with a trash bag
 - iii. Two sleeping pads!
 1. At least one should be foam (non-inflatable)
 2. Ideally you do not use breath to inflate pads, it will form frost in your pad and cause issues. On short trips this shouldn't be an issue if the pad is dry..
 - d. Utility items
 - i. pocket knife
 1. scissors are nice to have
 - ii. Pencil and paper
 - iii. Head lamp
 1. extra set of batteries

- 2. lithium batteries work best in the cold
- iv. 10-20m of rope
- v. Packable snow shovel
 - 1. This can be shared between 4 people.

2. Clothes

a. Basic principles

- i. No cotton!!!!!!
 - 1. Denim is cotton!
 - 2. Even cotton blends should not be carried
- ii. Layers!!!!!!!
 - 1. Can you wear it all at once?
 - a. Seriously test everything zipped up at home.
- iii. If it is warm out (0C is warm when breaking trail in snowshoes) can you dress with a single light layer head to knee (boots should always be warm)?

b. Hats

- i. Balaclava/ski mask
 - 1. It is important you can cover your face and ears. Lacking this bring a face mask.
- ii. toque

c. Sun protection

- i. sun screen
- ii. sun glasses

d. base layer

- i. synthetic light-mid weight long johns (tops and bottoms)
 - 1. very nice to have zipper in the top
 - 2. Form fitting but not tight

e. Insulating layers

- i. fleece pants
 - 1. Or puffy (synthetic or down) pants
 - 2. Insulated ski pants could work.
- ii. Synthetic top to layer over base layer (for example mid-heavy weight fleece jacket)
- iii. Light jacket with a smooth face, a.k.a. wind jacket.
 - 1. Tight weaves will shed snow and ice as well as wind.
- iv. "Puffy" jacket
 - 1. must be able to fit all insulating layers plus the shell
 - 2. does not need to be water resistant
 - 3. Ideally should compress well

f. Shell

- i. Hard shell/rain jacket
 - 1. must be waterproof/rainproof!!!
 - a. Water resistant is not good enough

- 2. breathable
 - a. i.e. Goretex or similar products. Brand is not very important
 - 3. Pits zips are very nice but not required
 - 4. Front and high pockets nice but not required
 - a. When wearing your pack you will not be able to get into side pockets
 - 5. Must be large enough to easily fit base layer plus insulating layer but not the “puffy”
 - ii. Rain pants
 - 1. Should have full zips (ankle all the way up to lower hip)!
 - a. Waterproof breathable are best
 - i. Again brand is not that important here
 - b. Should be able to fit over your fleece pants
 - c. If you are using ski pants then it can be layered below them
- g. Footwear
- i. boots
 - 1. Look for boots with removable liners (pak boots)
 - 2. Size them such that you can wear all you socks and the boot will still fit well (not too big, not too small)
 - a. Tight fits will constrict blood flow and thus give you cold or frostbitten feet, if in doubt choose the bigger size
 - ii. Socks
 - 1. layers
 - a. liner sock (synthetic)
 - i. At least 2 pairs
 - b. vapor barrier
 - i. Sub sandwich bags (long thin bags), small oven bags
 - ii. At least 4 pair, worn two pair at a time
 - iii. Ask Tim, he may have some to lend to you.
 - c. Thick wool or synthetic sock
 - i. at least two pair
 - ii. You checked to make sure these don't have cotton, right?
 - iii. Gaiters
 - 1. “High gaiters”, should be just below knee high
 - a. Breathable is nice but not needed
 - b. These come in various sizes.
 - i. Make sure yours fit over your boots
- h. Gloves
- i. liner gloves
 - 1. at least two pair, maybe more

- ii. Warm mittens
 - 1. should fit easily over liner gloves
 - 2. should have at least two pair
 - 3. If not using a shell these must be water resistant.
 - iii. [Optional] Waterproof mitten shells
 - 1. Some brands come with mittens that have velcro inside making it possible to use two “mittens” with one shell.
 - i. Plastic whistle on neck strap
- 3. Kitchen
 - a. Stove that runs on white gas/coleman fuel
 - i. You should know how to use this stove well as you may be operating it in low light while wearing gloves
 - ii. Don't forget to bring a windscreen!
 - iii. Bring a small platform (wood, metal) that can hold the stove
 - 1. Stove will melt the snow below it without a platform
 - iv. This can be shared with up to three people.
 - b. Estimate 16oz of fuel per day per person
 - i. Bring fuel in bottles ready to use.
 - 1. It is dangerous to pour cold fuel between containers.
 - c. Matches or lighter
 - i. Lighters do not work when very cold
 - 1. If you bring one bring matches as well
 - ii. Have at least two sources of fire packed separately.
 - d. At least 2 “wide mouth” Nalgene bottles
 - i. The bottles must be able to handle boiling water
 - e. Insulative sleeves for each bottle, a.k.a. bottle cozy.
 - i. At least one should be attachable such that it is reachable without taking your pack off.
 - ii. These can be bought or easily made using tape and “reflectix” wrapping found at the hardware store.
 - f. Insulated container suitable for holding for and drink
 - i. 16oz/500ml min capacity
 - 1. Large plastic coffee mugs work great for this.
 - 2. 20oz/600ml capacity is even better
 - g. Plastic spoon
 - i. Must be fairly durable as plastic will get brittle in cold temps
 - h. A pot that is at least 1.5 L in capacity
- 4. Food
 - a. Pre-cut large foods to bite size pieces
 - i. Cheese, meat, butter, etc
 - b. Food that is bendy in warm temps is likely too hard to eat or cut when frozen
 - c. Plan on a lot of calories, 3000-5000 calories min depending on activity level and your weight

- d. Use prepackaged, eat out of bag, dinners where possible.
 - e. Plan to be able to eat all of your food, minus dinner and breakfast, while standing and without a stove
 - f. Have plenty of snacks.
 - i. They should be in portions that can be carried in your pockets
 - 1. You should always have a few snacks accessible while walking so you don't need to remove your pack
 - 2. You should plan on eat at least once an hour
 - g. Your food should weight about 1 - 1.75 kg per day
 - h. Chose dense high calorie foods
 - i. Bring hot drinks for breakfast and dinner.
 - j. Bring a soup course with dinner
 - k. Extra flavoring for your water (tea bags or something else) is very nice.
 - l. Bring a candy bar to keep in your sleeping bag for a late night snack
 - i. Eating late at night is a good way to warm back up if you're feeling cold in your sleeping bag
5. Hygiene
- a. Toothbrush and toothpaste
 - b. Hand sanitizer
 - c. a zip lock that contains
 - i. small roll of TP (roll some up from a larger roll)
 - ii. small bottle of hand sanitizer
 - d. Feminine supplies (if needed) with an additional zip lock bag to carry out the used supplies
 - e. Lip balm (with sunscreen)
6. Nice to haves
- a. Trekking poles
 - i. You will fall down a lot less with them
 - b. "Down" Booties
 - i. These are very nice to wear around the campsite and in your tent.
 - c. iPod like device and headphones
 - i. The nights are long and if you wake up early this is a good way from getting bored without having to get out of your sleeping bag.
 - d. Termos
 - e. "Pee" bottle
 - f. disposable hand warmers
 - g. A small "sit" pad for sitting.
 - h. Sleep clothes
 - i. Shouldn't be needed
 - 1. layer of long johns
 - ii. can layer up in bag
 - iii. Loose/Non binding socks

