



Executive Leadership Canyons Expedition

Southeastern Utah

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.

If there are items you decide to rent or purchase from our Outfitting Department, you will submit a [gear request via Google Forms](#). Your request is due two weeks before your course start date; please contact your admissions officer with any questions. Your instructors will bring any items you request to the start of 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. 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 what 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. If an item is suitable for your particular course, you can take it into the field; if not, you can leave it in storage. If in doubt, bring it!
- **Second, rent key items from NOLS.** When it comes to equipment, everyone has their own preferences. In the field, you'll have the opportunity to perfect 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 equipment

from us, there are several reasons why we suggest it. Our rental equipment is high quality and chosen specifically for the heavy use it receives on course

- **Third, purchase specific items from our Outfitting Department.** To make shopping simple, we offer basic camping essentials and personal care items. 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, Target, Wal-Mart, and other department stores, Thrift stores, and Online. *We encourage you to keep the tags/receipts for all purchases, so that you may later return any items you don't use.*

How to Layer for a NOLS course:

We layer our clothing, combining different garments to achieve optimum insulation and protection from wind, rain, and snow. We use either synthetic or wool fibers, both of which insulate when wet; merino wool products are increasingly popular. We avoid cotton, which is poor insulation when wet. It is common to need three insulating layers, a wind layer, and a rain layer. Below you will find some examples of our layering system.





Questions?

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

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](#).

How to Use This List

Items under the **Required** heading are items that you **must** bring yourself, 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.

Prices provided are approximate costs when purchasing from a campus.

Upper Body Layers			
We layer our clothing, combining different garments to achieve optimum insulation and protection from wind, rain, and snow. We use either synthetic or wool fibers, both of which insulate when wet; merino wool products are increasingly popular. We avoid cotton, which is poor insulation when wet. It is common to need three insulating layers.			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Base layer (long underwear)	X	\$60-70	Mid-weight long underwear top, wool or synthetic (e.g. Patagonia Capilene series, Icebreaker Body Zone)

Middle layer (fleece jacket)	X	\$50-160	Fleece jacket (e.g. Patagonia Regulator and Mountain Hardwear Microchill) or a wool sweater
Top Insulating Layer (Puffy Jacket)	\$20	\$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	\$12	\$70-110	A lightweight, breathable, durable nylon wind shell.
Rain jacket	\$25	\$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)
T-shirt	X	\$25-50	A lightweight synthetic or wool t-shirt
Sports Bra (1-2)	X	\$40	Lightweight bras that offer adequate support. Synthetic/natural materials that dry quickly are preferable.
Optional Items			
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 sweaters, fleece jackets, and synthetic layers you think might work. We'll advise you on the best combination for your trip, depending on the season and course area.			
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	\$60-70	Mid-weight synthetic or wool bottoms (e.g. Patagonia Capilene, Icebreaker Bodyfit Zone). Cotton and cotton blends are not acceptable.
Middle layer (fleece pants)	\$12	\$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	\$12	\$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 (2-3 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 the season and course area.			
Head, Neck, and Hand Layers			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Baseball cap or wide-brim sun hat	X	\$20	Lightweight headwear to protect ears and face from the sun. We sell a variety of visors, trucker hats, and running hats.
Wool or fleece hat	X	\$20-35	Thick enough to keep your head and ears warm on colder days and nights.
Liner gloves	X	\$16-30	Lightweight, synthetic glove liner that can be layered under heavier-weight gloves for added warmth
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.
Packs and Bags			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			

Backpack	\$40	\$250-300	Our packs are large expedition models, with a volume of 80–110 liters, made by Deuter exclusively for NOLS. If you bring an internal frame pack, your instructors will examine it to determine its suitability for your course and route. It must have a volume of 80–110 liters.
Plastic trash bag (2-3)	X	\$1	2–3 heavy-duty lawn-and-garden bags (33 gallon, 3mm thick) to help waterproof your sleeping bag and backpack
Small stuff sack (1-3)	\$2 each	\$4	Small nylon or mesh sacks for organizing items in your pack. Ziploc bags work well too.

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 Gear

Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Sleeping bag	\$30	\$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° - 20°F a hydrophobic down bag or a down bag with Gore-Tex or DWR finish will work also.
Compression Sack	\$5	\$40	Stuff sack with compression straps designed to compress your sleeping bag when not in use
Sleeping pad	\$6	\$100-105	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.
Ground cloth	\$5	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 (2-3 pairs)	X	\$13-30	Mid to heavyweight. A combination of both weights is recommended for hiking and sleeping.
Camp shoes	X	\$30-50	Comfortable shoes to change into in camp. Must be closed-toe. Lightweight and quick-drying running or tennis shoes work well. Crocs are also a good option.
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 boots.
Gaiters	\$5	\$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.
Personal Medications	X	X	Any prescriptions/supplements that are part of your system should be brought in sufficient quantities.
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.

Optional Items			
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.
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			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Bowl	X	\$11	A plastic bowl with a screw- or snap-on lid is handy.
Spoon/Spork	X	\$3-5	Lexan spoons are light and durable. We also sell plastic and titanium sporks
Water bottle (1-2)	X	\$16-18	Wide-mouth, hard sided Nalgenes work well. We recommend that everyone have 2 liters of capacity.
Bandana (1-2)	X	\$2	Useful for a variety of purposes from wiping post-pee to sneezing, from a cooling neck tie to wiping your bowl.
Headlamp	X	\$30	Durable and lightweight. Bring spare batteries.
Batteries	X	\$1	AA/AAA are available for sale. We recommend 2 full sets for your headlamp.
Lighter	X	\$2	For lighting your camp stove
Watch	X	\$25	A watch with an alarm is a nice feature.
Pen/pencil	X	\$0.75	For journaling and taking notes during classes
Notepad	X	\$10	A small, lightweight pad is fine.
Sunglasses	X	\$30-80	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, clip-ons, or over glasses. We sell Suncloud 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.

(2-3)			
Optional Items			
Book or e-reader	X	X	A lightweight paperback book or e-reader. Tablet-style e-readers (e.g. Kindle Fire) are not acceptable. We recommend bringing a padded case as well.
Trekking Poles	\$5 each	X	Sturdy, telescoping poles that can be used for increased stability while walking and minimize impact on your legs. Rental price is for an individual pole.
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	\$35	Bonus for camp life, we sell Crazy Creek chairs.
Hydration system	X	X	An alternative hydration system to bottles, whether a Camelbak, Platypus, etc.
Stand-to-pee device	X	\$12	If you plan to use a stand-to-pee device on your NOLS course, make sure it is one you have practiced with and are confident it works well for you.
Sunglasses retainer	X	\$8	Chums or Croakies for keeping track of your glasses or sunglasses.
Pocket knife	X	\$25-35	One small knife is sufficient; simple folding knives are popular.
Our advice? Keep the toiletries, pocket knife, camera, optional items, and other gear to small sizes. We work to keep our pack weight as low as possible.			

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

Boot Recommendations

NOLS has been outfitting students with boots for many years and our priorities have remained the same: we want your footwear to provide adequate protection for your feet, be durable enough to withstand extended rugged wear, and be comfortable! Many boots available on the market do not meet these criteria, and footwear that is good for weekend day-hiking use may not be a good boot for your NOLS course.

Medium-weight, off-trail backpacking or lightweight mountaineering boots provide good support for extended hiking with heavy packs and usually require less break-in time than heavyweight mountaineering boots. 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.
- A Gore-Tex liner can be beneficial, but is not required. Your foot will get wet when water comes in over the top of your boot. A Gore-Tex liner will also slow drying time once the boot is wet.
- A sole that provides good traction, like Vibram® or other lugged sole
- 1/2- to 3/4-length shank or full poly mid-sole stiffener within the sole to provide foot support and protection.
- Mid-top or high-top ankle coverage. Trail running shoes and below-the-ankle hiking shoes are not encouraged.
- Comfortable fit with your preferred hiking socks. Boots that are even slightly 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.

- Altra: Lone Peak Hiker
- Asolo: TPS series, Equalon, Altai, Finder, Fugitive,
- Keen: Targhee II/III Mid
- HOKA ONE: Anacapa Mid, Kaha
- La Sportiva: TX4, TXS GTX
- Limmer: Lightweight
- Lowa: Camino, Ranger, Trekker, Mauria, Explorer, Lady Light
- Merrell: Moab Mid, Forestbound Mid, Siren Traveller
- Oboz: Sawtooth
- Salomon: X Ultra Mid, Quest 4D GTX
- Scarpa: Kailash, Mescalito
- Vasque: Talus

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