

Rockies to Alaska Year Equipment List

[Jump to Spring Rocky Mountain Equipment List](#)
[Jump to Summer Alaska Equipment List](#)

Welcome to NOLS!

Learning to choose the right equipment for your adventure is an essential part of the NOLS curriculum. We know that walking into an outdoor store can be a daunting experience, but preparing for your course need not feel overwhelming. This list is designed to help you make smart, prudent choices about the gear you bring on your trip.

When you arrive, your instructors will first look through all 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. The list below is comprehensive; however, the actual equipment needed for your course will vary depending on location, season, and instructor judgment. For this reason, we do not recommend that you go out and purchase a lot of expensive, specialized gear for your course.

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. If an item is deemed suitable for your particular course, you can take it into the field; if not, you can leave it in storage at the branch. If in doubt, bring it to Lander!
- **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, 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.
- **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, hand sanitizer, bug

spray), and camping sundries (headlamp, batteries, lighter). We also carry a selection of clothing, including wool socks, ball caps, hats and gloves, rain jackets and pants, and base-layers. 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 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.

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, but don't get lured into splurging on the trendiest fabrics or unnecessary gadgets.

Questions?

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

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.
- You can use many of the same items for both semesters (ex. Your rain jacket, t-shirt, etc.)

Equipment for Spring Section in the U.S.

Upper Body Clothing			
We layer our clothing, combining different garments to achieve optimum insulation and protection from wind, rain, and snow. For base layers, we recommend synthetic or natural fibers, both of which insulate when wet; merino wool products are popular. We avoid cotton, which offers no insulation when wet. Down jackets are popular, though it takes work and planning to keep them dry. It is common to need at least 3 insulating layers.			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Base layer	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
Insulating layers (2)	X	\$165-250	A warm “puffy” jacket that fits over your base/mid layers. In colder weather, we recommend 2 “puffy” layers, one lighter jacket and one heavier jacket that have synthetic or down fill. Lighter puffy jackets include Mountain Hardwear Compressor, Montbell Thermawrap, Patagonia Nano Puff. Heavier puffy jackets include North Face Morph, Patagonia Das Parka.
Wind Shirt	\$40	\$70-110	A lightweight, breathable, durable nylon wind shell.
Rain jacket	X	\$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 (2-3)	X	\$40	Lightweight bras that offer adequate support. Synthetic/natural materials that dry quickly are preferable.

Optional Items			
Sun Hoody	X	\$60-95	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/down 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 Clothing			
You will need 2 synthetic insulating layers (usually a base layer and a pair of fleece or puffy pants), along with your hiking 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 third layer of mid-weight bottoms to the base layer and fleece/puffy 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.
Fleece or Puffy pants	\$40	\$60-200	Heavier-weight bottoms that fit comfortably over the base-layer bottoms. Puffy pants like the Mountain Hardwear Compressor Pant or the Montbell Thermawrap pants are popular. We have fleece pants available for all sections and rent insulated pants for the Winter section.
Wind pants/hiking pants	\$40	\$80	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 (3-6 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	X	Loose-fitting nylon athletic or river shorts. NOLS Rocky Mountain does not rent or sell this item.
Rain pants	X	\$90-110	Although not required, some people like to use rain pants in conjunction with a rain jacket.
An extra pair of long underwear	X	\$70	Mid-weight synthetic or wool bottoms (e.g. Patagonia Capilene, Icebreaker Bodyfit Zone). Cotton and cotton blends are not acceptable.
Our advice? Bring the synthetic base layers, leggings, rain gear, and other layers 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	\$20-30	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.
Sunglasses	X	\$30-80	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 and Optic Nerve.
Prescription glasses and contact lenses (2-3 pairs)	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.
Sunglasses retainer	X	\$8	Chums or Croakies for keeping track of eyewear
Gloves or mittens	X	\$17-40	We recommend having a range (lightweight to heavyweight) of wool or fleece gloves to use throughout your course.

Optional Items

Neck Gaiter	X	\$22	Neck gaiters are synthetic pieces of multi-functional headwear (hat, bandana, neck warmer, etc.) that many people use in the outdoors. Buff is a common brand.
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Our advice? As long as they're not cotton, bring your gloves, mittens, and shells. We'll check them and see if they'll work. Depending on the weather, you may need one or two pairs. On the winter section, you might need every pair of gloves/mittens you have.

Packs and Bags

Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Backpack	\$120	\$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.
Small stuff sack (2-3)	\$2	\$4	Small nylon sacks for organizing items in your pack
Optional Items			
Backpack (50 - 70L)	\$40	X	If you have a smaller backpack (50L or more) that you really like but it is too small for the canyons section, you can use it in the winter and climbing sections. The other option is to use the larger NOLS backpack for every section.
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. If you have a smaller backpack (50-75L) that you really like, you can use it in the winter and climbing sections. It will be too small for the canyons section.			
Sleeping Gear			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Sleeping bag	\$100	\$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 0° or 15°F. Fall and spring semester students will also need a separate bag for the winter section (synthetic filled bag rated to at least -20°F).
Compression sack	\$12	\$40	Stuff sack with compression straps designed to compress your sleeping bag when not in use
Plastic trash bag (2-3)	X	\$1	2 heavy-duty lawn-and-garden/contractor bags (48 gallon/3 mil) to help waterproof your sleeping bag and backpack.
Foam or inflatable sleeping pad	\$15	\$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.
Ground cloth	\$8	X	A waterproof nylon sheet to go between your sleeping pad and the ground
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 (4-5 pairs)	X	\$13-30	Mid to Heavyweight wool socks (eg. Smartwool, FITS, Wigwam)
Camp Shoes	X	\$40-50	Lightweight, packable running/athletic shoes. Closed-toe required. Many students use Crocs, which we do not currently sell.
Optional Items			
Gaiters	X	\$45-55	Lightweight, ankle or shin-high gaiters to prevent debris from entering your boots while hiking.
Hiking shoe	X	\$160	Some students appreciate having a low-top hiker or approach shoe to wear during their Climb/Canyon section. (eg. La SportivaTX4, Salomon X Ultra, Scarpa Crux)
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.			
Rock Climbing Section			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Climbing shoes	\$40	\$85-100	We rent Black Diamond, Scarpa, La Sportiva and Butora shoes. Available size range: 37-48 (Euro). If you bring your own, make sure they are comfortable enough to spend all day in.
Harness	No charge	X	We have harnesses to rent, free of charge, but if you own one, bring it along.
Helmet	No charge	X	We have helmets to rent, free of charge, but if you own one, bring it along.
Optional Items			
Crag Pack	\$40	\$50-100	A medium-sized daypack with 50-60L capacity. This can double as a ski pack on your Winter section.
Climbing pants/shorts	X	\$60-100	Comfortable pants to wear while climbing, either cotton or synthetic. Short shorts are not optimal for climbing with a harness.

T-shirts (1-2)	X	\$25	An extra t-shirt or two is always nice to have at climb camp. These can be cotton.
Chalk Bag	\$6	\$20	Some people like to rock climb with a chalk bag to keep their hands and fingers dry. It is not necessary.
Our advice? If you own a harness, helmet, chalk bag, or climbing shoes, bring them along. If your instructors approve, you can use them. We will use NOLS' protection, belay devices, slings, carabiners, and ropes.			
Winter Section			
For semesters with winter sections only. Winter sections will require additional insulating layers, and skiing and winter camping gear.			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Winter Sleeping Bag	\$50	\$220-350	Students will need a separate bag for winter conditions (synthetic filled bag rated to at least -20°F).
Insulated parka	\$40	\$350	A synthetic-fill winter parka with a hood. Must fit comfortably over all your upper body layers. We have specially-made, heavy-duty parkas that we rent. (ex. Patagonia Das Parka, Black Diamond Stance Belay Parka)
Insulated pants	\$30	\$150	Synthetic-fill pants. Must fit comfortably over all your lower body layers. NOLS has specially-made, heavy-duty pants that we rent to students.
Insulated Bootie System	\$30	NA	Three-part custom winter insulated bootie system containing an inner, outer, and over bootie to wear in camp and while sleeping.
Insulated mittens	\$12	\$80	Synthetic-fill mittens that fit over your other mittens and gloves
Mitten shells	\$12	\$38-45	Water-repellent nylon shells that fit over your mittens or gloves
Extra mittens/gloves	X	\$12-60	You should bring any liner, wool, fleece, heavy gloves or mittens that you have. Students often take as many as 6 pairs of gloves/mittens into the winter section.
Thermos	X	\$30-40	We recommend having .5-1.2L capacity. Some people even bring more than one thermos.
Ski Socks	X	\$28	If you have ski socks, bring them! Most students bring at least 5-7 pairs of socks on their Winter section.
Ski boots	\$85	\$400-600	We rent Black Diamond/Scarpa alpine touring (AT) ski boots and typically size our boots at least a half size larger than in a resort setting. Our boots range from

			23.5/36.5 to 33.0/49 (Mondo/Euro sizing); if you are outside the size range or typically purchase WIDE shoes, please contact us before your course begins.
Skis, poles, and skins	\$100	\$400	We use backcountry Black Diamond/G3/ Blizzard alpine-touring skis and Dynafit bindings.
Avalanche transceivers	No charge	X	NOLS provides avalanche transceivers for all students to use, free of charge.
Helmet	No charge	X	A helmet is not required. You can bring your own or borrow one from NOLS for free.
Optional Items			
Ski Pant/Rain Shells	X	X	If you have ski or waterproof shell pants bring them. You might want to use them on your winter section.
Our advice? Our winter gear is specialized for our expeditions. If you own a pair of ski bibs/pants, or a thick winter parka, bring it along and we'll check it. If you already own alpine touring (AT) skis or a splitboard you'd like to use, please give us a call before your course begins; we'll make sure they're appropriate for winter backcountry travel.			
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			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Bowl	X	\$7	A plastic bowl with a screw- or snap-on lid is handy.
Spoon	X	\$3-13	Lexan spoons are light and durable. We also sell plastic and titanium sporks
Water bottle (1-2)	X	\$16-18	1–2 wide-mouth quart- or liter-size plastic bottles
Bandana (1-2)	X	\$2	A few of these are always handy.
Headlamp	X	\$30	Durable and lightweight. Bring spare batteries.
Disposable lighter (2)	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	\$6-15	A small, lightweight pad is fine.
Optional Items			
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.
Trekking poles	\$12-24	X	A sturdy telescoping pole for easy packing. We rent trekking poles for the hiking sections only.
Camera	X	\$70	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	\$40-50	Crazy Creek–style, or a sleeping-pad adapter.
Hydration system	X	X	An alternative hydration system, whether a Camelbak, Platypus, etc.
Pocket knife	X	\$25-50	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.

Wilderness First Aid & Responder (WFA/WFR) Section

Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Clothing and shoes for indoor and outdoor class environments	X	X	You will need clothing appropriate to an indoor and outdoor class environment. Many of your layers for your field sections will be relevant during the WFR, but it is nice to have more in-town options available. We suggest a comfortable pair of indoor shoes or slippers. Spring temperatures will range from -20° to 60°F, with multiple feet of snow. 3-5 days of clothing.
Warm boots	X	X	You may be outside on a simulated rescue for multiple hours. Please bring a winter boot that will keep your feet warm.

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.

Tents and shelters
 Trowel or shovel
 Stoves, fuel bottles and fuel
 Pots and pans
 Maps and compasses
 Equipment repair kits
 Reference books
 Binoculars
 First aid kits
 Bear-resistant food containers*
 Fishing gear*
 Climbing protection*
 Climbing ropes*
 Helmets and harnesses*
 Ice axes*
 Snowshoes*

**if applicable to course type*

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.
- 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.

Equipment for Summer Semester in Alaska

(Most of this gear will overlap with the gear needed in the Rockies.)

Upper Body Clothing			
<p>You need at least three insulating layers, a windproof layer, a rain layer and a t-shirt. Make sure your layers fit comfortably over each other. If you get cold easily, we suggest that you take four insulating layers, or three layers plus a vest. You should have two lightweight insulating layers: one to wear on the water, and one to wear in camp.</p>			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Base Layer	X	\$25-80	A lightweight synthetic or wool T-shirt or long-sleeve layer. (1-2)
Mid Layer	X	\$55-160	Lightweight fleece jacket that fits over your base layers.
Top Layer	\$60	\$250	A warm, synthetic-filled jacket that fits over your base layer and mid-layer.
Wind Shirt	\$32	\$80	Nylon wind shell, roomy enough to fit comfortably over your base and mid layer top. Excellent protection in dense bushes and from bugs.
Rain Jacket	\$40	\$150	Your rain jacket should be roomy enough to fit comfortably over all your layers. Ponchos are not acceptable. We highly recommend bringing your own rain jacket. We may have limited rental Gore-Tex Pro Shell jacket options available. For sea kayaking, you may use the same jacket, or we recommend PVC or PU fabric (fisherpeople jackets).
Paddle Jacket with Hood	\$20	X	We rent a waterproof, breathable pullover with a hood. We recommend bringing a splash paddling jacket or a dry suit if you own one.
Lower Body Clothing			
<p>You need two to three lower-body insulating layers that fit comfortably over each other and underneath your wind or rain pants. You should have two lightweight insulating layers: one to wear on the water, and one to wear in camp.</p>			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			

Base Layer Bottoms	X	\$35-65	A lightweight synthetic or wool is best.
Insulated Pants	\$34	\$60-200	Fleece or synthetic-filled pants can be a nice addition. Your instructors will share recommendations depending on route and time of year.
Rain Pants	\$30	X	We highly recommend bringing your own rain pants. We may have limited rental Gore-Tex Pro Shell pant options.
Nylon Hiking Pants	\$32	\$80	Nylon hiking pants are recommended for protection from bugs and dense vegetation. We rent durable nylon shell pants .
Miscellaneous Clothing			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Sun Hat or Baseball Cap	X	\$12-40	Should be wide-brimmed to protect from the sun.
Fleece or Wool Hat	\$6	\$15-40	Any fleece or wool hat that will fully cover your ears.
Glove Liners	X	\$10-25	Lightweight gloves may be layered with heavier gloves for warmth or worn alone for sun protection.
Fleece or Wool Gloves	X	\$20	Durable gloves made from fleece, wool, or polyester.
Underwear/ Bra	X	\$20-45	Undergarments made from merino wool or polyester wick moisture away from your skin and are highly recommended. (2-3 pairs underwear, 1 bra)
Buff	X	\$20	Synthetic polyester fabric tube. Use it as a headband, neck gaiter, balaclava, cap, face mask, wristband, or scrunchy.
Footwear			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			

Midweight Hiking Boots	X	X	Please read the Boot Selection Guide at the end of this list. We do NOT sell hiking boots. You will need to get them before traveling to Alaska.
Hiking Socks	X	\$15-25	Must be 75 to 100% wool, merino wool, or thick polyester. No wool/cotton blends.(3-4 pairs)
Camp Shoes	X	\$40	The ground around camp is often wet, soggy tundra. A lightweight, closed-toe, waterproof shoe is ideal.
Optional			
Gaiters	X	\$35-60	Full gaiters provide good leg protection while bushwhacking and traveling over snow on early season courses. However, they may not be necessary on all routes and some feel that long pants provide adequate protection.
Sleeping Gear			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Sleeping Bag	\$80	X	We stock synthetic-filled sleeping bags with a temperature rating of 0-20 degrees F. Due to Alaska's extremely wet environment, down feather bags are not recommended.
Sleeping Pad	\$12	\$45-80	We rent closed-cell foam pads; however, we recommend and sell full-length self-inflating sleeping pads. We do not rent self-inflating pads.
Sleeping Bag Compression Sack	\$6	X	A compression stuff sack makes your sleeping bag smaller to pack.
Packs and Bags			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Backpack	\$120	\$250	Internal frame backpack with a volume of 75 to 85 liters is ideal for backpacking and 90-110 for mountaineering. If you bring a backpack, your instructors will examine it to determine its suitability for your course and route.

Small Stuff Sacks	\$1	\$15-20	Used to organize items in your pack. Lightweight dry sacks are convenient. Non-waterproof are fine too and they weigh less. (1-2)
Waterproof Bag Liners	X	\$1	3mm durable, sturdy, plastic trash compactor bags. We have a variety of sizes, and many students find it easier to purchase the size and quantity they need here. (2-3)
Mountaineering Gear			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Plastic Boots	\$70	X	We do not recommend purchasing boots before your course. If you already own plastic mountaineering boots or can easily borrow them, please bring them. We stock Asolo AFS Evoluzione, Koflach Degree and Scarpa Inverno plastic boots in men's sizes 5-14. If you wear a larger size please let us know immediately.
Insulated Booties	\$12	X	Polyester-filled insulated bootie. Must fit inside your boot shell and so cannot have a hard sole. We rent insulated booties. (Example: Baffin Base Camp Slipper)
Mitten Shells	\$12	X	Nylon shells to cover your liner gloves. Gore-Tex is acceptable.
Kayaking Equipment			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Neoprene Pogies or Paddling Gloves	\$8	\$30	We rent neoprene pogies.
Paddle Jacket with Hood	\$25	X	We rent a waterproof breathable pullover with hood. If you bring one it must be waterproof and have a hood.
Rubber Boots	\$20	X	harp rocks and barnacles along the beaches, we recommend you rent this item from us. We rent XtraTuf brand 16" Non-insulated Boots.
Large Equipment Bag	\$20	\$X	These nylon bags are made especially for NOLS paddling courses. (Example: Outdoor Products Deluxe Duffle 18x42)

Zip Duffel or Large Stuff Sack	\$5	X	Used to keep clothing and personal gear organized. Waterproof stuff sacks are convenient; non-waterproof are fine too and weigh less.
Rain Hat	\$10	\$60	Your sun hat might work fine for rain or vise-versa.
Miscellaneous Items			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Bandana	X	\$3	For multiple uses. 1 is highly recommended for hygiene use.(1-2)
Lighter	X	\$2	Used to light stoves. (1-2)
Eating Gear	X	\$5-15	Tupperware type bowl, 1-2 pints, with a lid. Plastic or metal spoon/spork .
Eyeglass Retainer	X	\$8	Good brands are Chums and Croakies.
Mosquito Headnet	\$4	X	You can rent this if bugs will be a problem on your course.
Lip Balm	X	\$2	Stick or cream with sun protection.
Notebook and Pen/Pencil	X	\$6-12	A small spiral notebook is fine. Avoid hardcover. We sell a durable notebook with waterproof pages.
Prescription Glasses and Contact Lenses	X	X	If you wear prescription glasses or lenses, you should bring a spare set. Even if you wear contact lenses daily, plan to carry a pair of glasses into the field.
Sport Sunscreen	X	\$4-8	A tube or bottle of 2-4 oz. should be plenty. A sun protection factor of 30 or greater is necessary. A physical sunblock, such as zinc oxide, is strongly recommended for people who burn easily.
Sunglasses	X	\$25-100	Durable with 100% UV protection. If you wear prescription lenses, bring your own prescription sunglasses or look for a quality pair of clip-on shades. Glacier sunglasses are recommended for mountaineering. (Good brands: Julbo, Native, Optic Nerve, Smith)
Toilet Articles	X	\$2-4	Toothbrush, toothpaste, comb/brush, moisturizer, prescription meds, tampons. Sample sizes of 2 oz

			are preferable. No deodorant or excessive items. We have basic toiletries for sale if you forget something at home.
Watch	X	\$25-60	Bring a waterproof watch with an alarm even if you do not normally wear one.
Water Bottle or Water Bladder	X	\$12-25	Wide-mouth quart or liter size. A lightweight bladder system also works well.(1-2)
Optional Items			
Camera	X	\$60	Highly Recommended!! There are good lower-priced, durable cameras like Pentax WG-1000 . GoPro is also popular but uses a lot of battery power. Bring at least 1 extra battery per week. <u>No phones are allowed.</u>
Book or E-Book	X	\$10-40	You may bring an e-reader or a small book for pleasure reading. We have many books to choose from at NOLS!
Knife	X	\$15	A small pocket knife or multi-tool.
Headlamp or Flashlight	X	\$20	Good idea for August courses, unnecessary for June or July. Should be lightweight.
Trekking Poles	\$6	\$60	Single or double telescoping poles are best. We sell adjustable trekking poles and rent heavy-duty ski poles.(1-2)
Umbrella	X	\$30-40	Nice for those really rainy days. We sell Montbell Trekking Umbrella and large golf umbrellas.
Thermos	X	\$30	Vacuum bottles are great. Be sure yours is stainless and not glass. We sell Stanley thermos with NOLS logo.

Climbing Gear			
PLEASE DO NOT PURCHASE ANY OF THESE ITEMS FOR YOUR COURSE. We have found that it works best if everyone uses NOLS-issued climbing gear. If you have your own already, bring it to Alaska and your instructors will examine it to see if it is suitable for use on the course.			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
Required Items			
Snowshoes	No Charge	X	We stock MSR snowshoes.

Ice Axe	No Charge	X	We stock 50 to 70 cm mountaineering ice axe suitable for steep snow and ice climbing.
Crampons	No Charge	X	10- or 12-point crampons with horizontal front points. Either strap-on or step-in types are fine. We have Petzl Vasak Leverlock crampons & Black Diamond Sabretooths. (Other good brands: Grivel, Black Diamond, Lowe and Chalet Moser)
Climbing Harness	No Charge	X	A sit harness. If you have a high-quality harness with adjustable leg loops which you think might be appropriate, bring it along. Your instructors will examine it and decide whether it is adequate.
Helmet	No Charge	X	We do not allow the use of personal helmets on our courses. We will provide helmets at no extra cost.

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 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.

Shelter
Compass and GPS
Maps
Stoves, fuel, fuel bottles
Trowels or shovels
Reference books
Cooking gear/spice kits
Repair kits
Binoculars
Fishing equipment (hand lines and lures)
PFDs (Personal Flotation Device, Type 3 U.S.)
Diving gear (depending on season)

First Aid:

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