

# Alaska Mountaineering

## Equipment List 14 Day (AKC)

**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 activewear 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](#).

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## 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. Items with prices next to them indicate that this is available at the NOLS store in Alaska.

## Upper Body Clothing

You need at least three insulating layers, a windproof layer, a rain layer and a lightweight base layer. 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.

Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
<b>Required Items</b>			
Base Layer	X	\$25+	A lightweight synthetic or wool T-shirt or long-sleeve layer. Sun Hoody is recommended. (1-2)
Mid Layer	X	\$55+	Lightweight fleece jacket that fits over your base layers. (1-2)
Top Layer	\$30	X	A warm, synthetic-filled jacket that fits over your base layer and mid-layer.
Wind Shirt	\$15	\$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	\$25	X	We highly recommend bringing your own Gore-Tex rain jacket. We have a minimal stock of jackets available to rent. Your rain jacket should be roomy enough to fit comfortably over all your layers. Ponchos are not acceptable.

## Lower Body Clothing

You need two to three lower-body insulating layers that fit comfortably over each other and underneath your wind or rain pants. Example combination: Lightweight long underwear underneath insulated pants.

Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
<b>Required Items</b>			
Base Layer Bottoms	X	\$40+	A lightweight synthetic or wool is best.
Insulated Pants	\$17.50	\$60+	Fleece or synthetic-filled pants.
Rain Pants	\$22.50	X	We highly recommend bringing your own Gore-Tex rain pants. We have a limited stock available for rent.
Wind or Hiking Pants	\$12.50	\$80+	Wind or 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	\$15+	Should be wide-brimmed to protect from the sun.
Fleece or Wool Hat	\$5	\$15+	Any fleece or wool hat that will fully cover your ears.
Glove Liners	X	\$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+	Undergarments made from merino wool or polyester wick moisture away from your skin and are highly recommended. (2-3 pairs underwear, 1 bra)
Mitten Shells	\$8	X	Nylon shells to cover your liner gloves. Gore-Tex is acceptable.
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			
Plastic Boots	\$50	X	We do <b>not</b> recommend purchasing boots before your course. If you already own double mountaineering boots or can easily borrow them, please bring them. We stock Scarpa Inverno plastic boots in Men's size 5-14. We do <b>not</b> 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 size 5-14. If you wear a larger size please let us know immediately.
Hiking Shoe or Boot			Lighter weight "approach" shoe or running shoe to walk in when not on glacier. A sturdy running shoe or hiking boot will work well. Feel free to bring what you may already have. This can double as a camp shoe!

Hiking Socks	X	\$15+	Must be 75 to 100% wool, merino wool, or thick polyester. No cotton blends. Should be at least Shin high. (3-4 pairs)
Insulated Booties	\$8	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)
Gaiters	X	\$60	Full gaiters provide protection while in deep snow. They will need to fit over larger plastic mountaineering boots—you will need to size up.
Camp Shoes	X	\$40+	Crocs, lightweight shoes that preferably are above the ankle and have no holes to keep feet dry.
<b>Sleeping Gear</b>			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
<b>Required Items</b>			
Sleeping Bag	\$40	X	We stock synthetic-filled sleeping bags with a temperature rating of 0 degrees F. Due to Alaska's extremely wet environment, down feather bags are not recommended.
Sleeping Pad	\$6	\$45+	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	\$5	X	A compression stuff sack makes your sleeping bag smaller to pack.
<b>Packs and Bags</b>			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
<b>Required Items</b>			
Backpack	\$60	\$250	Internal frame backpack with a volume of 90 to 100 liters is ideal (5,500-6,000 cubic inches). If you bring a backpack, your instructors will examine it to determine its suitability for your course and route.
Small Stuff Sacks	\$2	\$15+	Used to organize items in your pack. Non-waterproof are fine 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)

Miscellaneous Items			
Equipment	Rent	Buy	Notes
<b>Required Items</b>			
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+	Tupperware type bowl, 1-2 pints, with a lid. Plastic or metal spoon/spork.
Eyeglass Retainer	X	\$8	Good brands are Chums and Croakies.
Lip Balm	X	\$2	Stick or cream with sun protection.
Notebook and Pen/Pencil	X	\$6+	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+	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+	Durable with 100% UV protection. Glacier sunglasses are recommended. If you wear prescription lenses, bring your own prescription sunglasses or look for a quality pair of clip-on shades. (Good brands: Julbo, Native, Optic Nerve, Smith)
Toilet Articles	X	\$2+	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.
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.
Watch	X	\$25+	Bring a waterproof watch with an alarm even if you do not normally wear one.

Water Bottle or Water Bladder	X	\$12+	Wide-mouth quart or liter size. A lightweight bladder system also works well. (2-liter total water capacity)
<b>Optional Items</b>			
Camera	X	\$60	Bring a small, durable camera with plenty of extra batteries and memory cards. No phones are allowed.
Book or E-Book	X	\$10+	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	\$5	\$60	Single or double telescoping poles are best. We sell adjustable trekking poles and rent heavy-duty ski poles.
<b>Climbing Gear</b>			
PLEASE DO NOT PURCHASE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING 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, but they may ask that you use NOLS gear. <b>We will provide the items below at no extra charge.</b>			
<b>Equipment</b>	<b>Rent</b>	<b>Buy</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Required Items</b>			
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	We have crampons with horizontal front points. Either strap on or step-in types are fine. We have Petzl Vasak Leverlock crampons.
Climbing Harness	No Charge	X	A sit harness designed specifically for alpine mountaineering. (Examples include BD Couloir Harness and BD Alpine Bod Harness.) We don't recommend rock climbing harnesses as our provided mountaineering harnesses are much lighter weight and more comfortable while wearing a pack.

Helmet	No Charge	X	We do not allow the use of personal helmets on our courses.
<b>Shared Group Equipment—NOLS will supply</b>			
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 several perspectives beyond those that an individual user might consider. Performance, durability and simplicity are all contributing factors towards our gear selection.			
Tents Trowel or Shovel Stoves, Fuel Bottles & Fuel Maps Fishing Gear Bear Spray GPS Repair Kits Cooking Gear/Spice Kits Avalanche Transceivers Soap and Hand Sanitizer Carabiners/Slings Climbing Ropes Climbing Hardware Snow Shovels & Saws Avalanche Probes Cordelettes Compass  <b>First Aid:</b> Our instructors carry adequate first aid kits. There is no need to bring your own.			