

SAMPLE ENTRY-LEVEL GEAR LIST

(NOTE: S2 develop Gear Lists and Requirements tailored to each of our destinations and your personal comfort. Please contact your assigned guide for information and requirements for your destination.)

The truth about gear for any mountain . . .

Many climbers and trekkers arrive in-country with unnecessary, inadequate or “over” adequate equipment. The problem (and expense) can be easily avoided.

Getting help from professionals is easy. Your gear should be carefully selected for the conditions, level of difficulty and length of your expedition. At S2, we’re available to provide individual advice on equipment performance and selection based on decades of mountaineering experience around the world. In addition, S2 staff are updated on the latest outdoor technology to keep you informed of the best available equipment on the market. Some of our staff have professional retail experience in the outdoor industry to assist with specific product design and performance questions.

Gear trials are great. Whether you’re concerned if your puffy will keep you warm enough on summit day or you need baskets for your trekking poles, S2 can zero in on the right gear for you. You’ll have the opportunity to conduct gear trials with an S2 guide and, importantly, get professional advice to make sure you have the right gear. Join us for one of our regularly scheduled conditioning treks and a proper pack fitting comes standard with our enthusiasm for your comfort. Are those new boots a little tight in the toe box on a downhill slope? Not sure what a hydration pack is or if you should use a bottle insulator on summit day? Our favorite question – “Milky Way or Snickers?” We know gear (and snacks!), and we’ll share our experience to make sure your trip is comfortable and enjoyable.

Personal Gear List. Our personal gear list is premised on weight and performance. Members on entry-level trips are usually required to carry a small pack with necessary personal items each day (i.e. water, snacks, jacket, etc.) while professional S2 porters carry all remaining personal gear and group equipment. Most member day packs range from 15-20 lbs in weight. Although experience informs us our list is comprehensive, we appreciate that many members require additional items and equipment for personal comfort. Please don’t hesitate to contact us for a consultation on individual gear.

Foot Gear

Light Hiking Boots: Your “wheels” are your most important gear. Leather or a leather/gore-tex combination with a sturdy mid-sole (Vibram sole is best). Boots should be warm and fit well over light and heavy sock combinations. Fit is more important than brand or cost. Take the time to select a pair that fits your foot and break them in well before departure (*Asolo, Merrill, Scarpa and La Sportiva all have great boots*).

Guide Advice - We recommend you have 75-100 miles of experience in your boots before departure to ensure a proper fit. As part of this mileage, you should also have no less than two trekking days that each covers a distance of 8 miles or more.

Gaiters: Short, simple gaiters that fit comfortably over your boots are best. Gaiters provide warmth and seal the top of the boot from mud and moisture.

Sport Sandals: These are excellent during evenings when worn over wool socks (Teva, Chaco or similar brands are fine).

Lightweight Liner Socks: 2 pairs of synthetic/wool blend (Bridgedale, Patagonia, Wigwam and Fox River).

Heavy Socks: 3 pairs synthetic/wool blend (Smartwool, Bridgedale, Wigwam, Fox River).

Small Plastic Bags: 4 small plastic bags that easily wrap around your feet. These bags act as liners and are fitted over your socks as a barrier during especially wet conditions.

Guide Advice – you don’t need to spend any money on these. Plastic shopping bags work great!

Clothing

Guide Advice - Clothing items described here are recommended to provide comfort in a range of both warm and cold conditions. As we gain altitude, we’ll add layers of clothing. This method is commonly referred to as a “layering system.”

Lightweight Hiking Pants: 1 pair of stretch-woven pants designed for easy movement and layering.

Lightweight Long Underwear Bottom: Dark colors are preferable because they don’t show dirt (Patagonia, Capilene, REI, Mountain Equipment Co-op).

- Briefs:** 3 pairs of synthetic or cotton. Running shorts also work well for underwear.
- Lightweight Long Underwear Top:** 1 pair can be used for both sleeping and additional insulation at higher altitude (Patagonia, Capilene, REI, Mountain Equipment Co-op).
- Short-Sleeved Shirts:** 2 synthetic shirts are adequate. Most nylon running shirts or athletic shirts work well. Shirt material should have vapor wicking capabilities (North Face, Patagonia, Capilene).
- Lightweight Long Sleeve Shirt:** 2 synthetic shirts are adequate. Most nylon running shirts or athletic shirts are fine.

Guide Advice – You can easily save money on clothing items by shopping for items made with the same material. Curiously, traditional mountaineering brands are quite expensive in comparison to brands marketed to runners. Oftentimes, the product is even higher quality.

- Jacket - Synthetic or Fleece:** Synthetic jackets or pullovers are a great alternatives to fleece because they're lighter and compressible. Primaloft type fill or Polartec 100 or 200 fleece is recommended (NorthFace, Mountain Hardware, Patagonia).
- Waterproof/Breathable Jacket & Pants:** This jacket is your primary weather barrier. We recommend jackets with hoods that provide insulation, as well as resistance to wind and rain. Pants should be of similar quality with full-length side zips for easy entry and exit with boots on (Arc'Teryx, Marmot, Mountain Equipment Co-op).
- Jacket – Down Puffy (optional but highly recommended):** Although these jackets generally have low utility until we get to altitude, trekkers with lower tolerance to cold conditions may benefit from this type of jacket. Puffies are also great during the evening when it's chilly and you're sitting around the mess tent.
- Wet Weather Poncho:** We recommend ponchos with hoods that drape over the entire body while wearing a daypack.

Head and Hand Gear

- Liner Gloves:** Lightweight and synthetic is best (Patagonia, Capilene).
- Windstopper Fleece Gloves:** Make sure these gloves fit comfortably over your liner gloves (Any brand of wind resistant fleece).

- Sun Hat:** Any lightweight hat with a good brim or visor.
- Wool or Fleece Hat:** Any brand of warm hat that can cover the ears.
- Sunglasses:** 1 pair of high quality 100% UV and 100% IR with a minimum of 80% or more light reduction. Size and shape of lens should offer maximum protection from bright light at altitude.

Trekking Gear and Accessories

- Adjustable Trekking Poles:** We highly recommend trekking poles to improve balance and reduce musculoskeletal impact, especially on the downhill trek (Leki or Black Diamond).

Guide Advice - Trekking poles should be telescoping for portability and travel. Make sure you also have baskets for snowfields commonly encountered near the summit. Most brands include them with your purchase.

- Headlamp w/ Spare Bulb:** AA or AAA battery powered (Petzl or Black Diamond).

- Daypack:** This is your second most important piece of equipment. A small (30-40 liters), comfortable day backpack for carrying personal items for each hiking day. We also recommend using your daypack as a carry-on bag during travel.

Guide Advice - We recommend you spend no less than 40 hours in your pack with 15-20 lbs. of weight to ensure a proper fit. Similar to a pair of boots, your pack should be professionally sized and fitted to prevent back injury and improve comfort. If your retail specialist doesn't know how to fit a pack correctly – walk away! If you have questions or concerns about how to correctly select a pack, please don't hesitate to contact us for a consultation. Better yet, join us on a conditioning trek and we'll teach you how to carefully fit your own pack.

- Hydration System (Bottles and Bladder):** We recommend 3.0 liters or more of capacity using a combination of bottles and a hydro-pack system with a hose. Note that hoses on bladder systems often freeze at altitude, especially on the last day when hydration is crucial. A minimum of one Nalgene bottle is required in the event of a frozen hydro-pack hose.

Guide Advice – When using a hydration system, we recommend using heavy duty pipe insulation to cover the entire length of the hose to prevent freezing. This is especially important on summit day when temperatures are the coldest. Pipe insulation can easily be found in most hardware stores.

Sleeping and Travel

Sleeping Bag: Minimum 0 to -10 F rated sleeping bag. Down 700 fill minimum is preferred (Marmot, Mountain Hardwear, Moonstone, The North Face). Be sure to also purchase a compression sack if your sleeping bag does not already have one.

Sleeping Bag Liner (optional): Although optional, many experienced trekkers prefer the comfort of a fleece or similar liner over the nylon liner typical to most sleeping bags.

Guide Advice - Fleece liners improve the cold weather rating of your sleeping bag by up to 12 degrees. As an added benefit, they also make great warm weather sleeping bags.

Self Inflating Pad (definitely optional): One 3/4 or full length pad with a minimum 1/2 inch of loft for insulation and comfort.

Guide Advice - Make sure to include a valve stem and patch repair kit in the event of a puncture to your pad.

Gear Duffel Bag: A large-size duffel suitable for all of your personal gear. This bag is typically your primary luggage for airline, vehicle and porter travel while back-country. Make sure this bag can be secured with locks (if you prefer) and can take a beating from airline baggage handlers and the porters who carry it. You may also want to have a small empty duffel bag to keep in secure storage while you're trekking. This bag normally contains travel clothes, toiletries and other items you don't need on the hill, but want to have upon return (e.g. clean clothes).

Medical and Personal

Sunscreen: SPF 30 or higher, non-oily.

Lipscreen: SPF 30 or higher.

Toiletry bag: Toilet paper, small packages of wet wipes are always great for hygiene (1-2 a day), hand sanitizer, toothbrush and toothpaste. You'll also need a shower kit while in Arusha (soap, shampoo, etc.). Bring travel sizes to keep your kit small.

Guide Advice – We recommend trekkers have a small personal supply of toilet paper and wet wipes for the trail.

Water Purification Tablets: Only a small bottle is needed to purify water such as Potable Aqua brand iodine tablets. You will be given plenty of purified and bottled water during your trip, but one bottle of backup purification tablets is always a good idea for your travels. You should not drink untreated tap water at

any of our destinations and bottled water, in rare cases, might not be available.

Guide Advice – We recommend that you never use tap water to brush your teeth. Instead, please use bottled or treated water.

Large Trash Bags: Two large, heavy-duty bags for waterproofing some items inside your duffel.

Guide Advice – The most effective way to create a barrier protecting your gear from rain is to sleeve the inside of your duffel bag with your belongings inside.

Earplugs: Useful for sleeping in tents with noisy tent mates.

Personal First-Aid Kit and Medications: Keep it simple and Light. Moleskin, Molefoam, waterproof first-aid tape, athletic tape, duct tape, Band-Aids, personal prescriptions, topical antibiotic for scrapes and cuts, Cirprofloxin (Cipro) 500mg tablets for diarrhea and urinary tract infections, Zithromycin (Zithromax) 500 mg tablets for upper respiratory infections, Loperamide (Lomotil) or Immodium for diarrhea, Bizmuth tablets for upset tummies, Acetazolamide (Diamox) 125 or 250mg tablets for altitude sickness, Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) 200mg tablets for altitude headaches, sprains, aches, etc. Excedrin for headaches, Acetaminophen (Tylenol) 325mg tablets, saline nasal spray for dry air conditions.

Guide Advice – S2 requires that guides be professionally trained and certified in wilderness first response. In addition, guides have specialized training in the assessment and management of health conditions common to high altitude. Your senior guide will be prepared to provide care in the event a health condition arises and, if necessary, employ medevac protocols for removal from the area for advanced medical care.

Travel and Other Items

Nylon Stuff Sacks: 3 or 4 for organizing your gear and clothes. Lighter colors are preferable for easy labeling.

Guide Advice – Buy bags with different colors to better organize and identify groups of equipment (e.g. red bag is for base layer clothing).

Clothes for Walking Around Villages and International Travel: 2 or 3 three changes of comfortable simple travel clothes. Members participating in safaris may require additional clothing. These items will be in secure storage while you're trekking.

Passport Belt/Pouch: We recommend that items such as passports, cash, jewelry and other valuables be kept in a secured belt or pouch underneath clothing for safety.

Small Padlocks: Small locks are useful for locking duffel bag(s).

Small Duffel Bag: This bag will be used primarily to store travelling clothes in while you're climbing. The bag will be left in secure storage until your return to Arusha.

Guide Advice – If you're traveling with a friend, it's best to share a duffel bag for storage.

Personal Items: Books, journal, cameras, music players and other comfort items are great.

Trip Insurance: We highly recommend travel insurance in the event an unforeseen circumstance (e.g. family event, illness, etc.) prevents you from participating in a trip.

Guide Advice – Carefully review the terms of your insurance coverage to ensure you are compensated for your most expensive items (e.g. deposits, airfare and other payments) in the event of a cancellation. Also, some credit cards automatically provide trip insurance just by using their card.

Snacks: If you have a preference for a particular gum, candy bar, power bar or snack food while on the trail, by all means bring it. Our destinations have wonderful food, but it's usually difficult to find western energy snacks.

Guide Advice – Porters love North American snacks and munchies, so please feel welcome to bring a little extra to share on the trail.