



IWLS

International Wilderness Leadership School

North Cascades Pre-Departure & Travel Information

Reminders

Please make sure you have completed the following before you course departure date:

- Registration Form (needs to be submitted along with a deposit to secure your space on a course)
- Health Form (30 days prior to departure)
- Rental Equipment Form (30 days prior to departure)
- Release, Acknowledgment of Risk and Indemnity Agreement (30 days prior to departure)
- Travel itinerary to IWLS office (30 days prior to departure)
- Copy of Passport to IWLS office (30 days prior to departure)
- Paid in Full (90 days prior to departure)

North Cascades, Washington

This course starts and ends in Seattle, Washington. The North Cascades region in the state of Washington is home to the largest area of sustained glaciated alpine terrain in the contiguous United States. Over 75% of the glaciers in the lower 48 are found in this region. It forms an extremely rugged, remote, and challenging mass of glaciated alpine mountains. The skiing, rock climbing, and mountaineering are world class.

The Park encompasses landscapes with over 9,000 feet of vertical relief. This large change in elevation results in regions of high biodiversity with over 1,600 different plant species identified.

Arrival Information

We ask that you arrive the evening before your course starts, and it's often easiest to stay in Seattle the day your course ends as well.

Day 0: Pre-trip meeting at 6:00pm (unless otherwise noted) at the Ramada Suites SeaTac Airport. Bring your backpack and gear; we will go over equipment, itinerary, questions, etc.

Day 1: This is the start date listed on the website. Meet at Ramada Suites SeaTac Airport at 9:00am.

An IWLS representative will pick you up from the airport on your arrival date and drop you off for your departure. Please notify the IWLS office of your expected arrival or flight information as soon as possible and let us know of any delays or changes.

Airline Tickets

Make certain that your ticket matches the full name on your driver's license or passport. Plan your arrival into Seattle no later than 6 PM the night before your course start date. If time permits, we recommend arriving one day early to provide leeway for any flight or baggage connection trouble. Always reconfirm your flights within 72 hours of departure time.

Experts in **Technical Instruction**
and **Outdoor Leadership Training**

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Travel Options

Please forward along your travel itinerary as soon as possible so we can make the appropriate pick-up/drop-off arrangements.

Seattle Tacoma International Airport is a major hub with multiple daily flights from most major cities in the United States.

Baggage

Typically you are allowed two 50 lb. bags at no extra charge. For bags weighing 50-70 lbs. there is usually an additional charge per bag. It is often cheaper to have two bags over 50 lbs. than a third bag. If you travel through other countries for a stopover you may be charged excess baggage fees for anything over 44lbs. (20 kilos) each flight. If possible, pack your backpack and gear inside a large duffle bag.

Photocopy all Documents

Make certain to copy your passport, airline tickets, credit cards, traveler's checks, immunization book, etc. This can be very helpful in the event that anything is lost or stolen. It is also a good idea to send an electronic copy of your documents to a personal email account.

Sending Money

We recommend bringing at least \$250 USD for domestic courses in cash or travelers checks. This money is to cover any personal expenses before or after your course. If you are planning on traveling in-conjunction with your course the suggested amounts above may not be enough. Always carry a credit card for emergencies as well, however they are not accepted in all locations so make sure you have enough cash for the necessary expenses.

Local Transportation

An extensive network of public transportation and taxis exists in the Seattle area.

Time Zones

The North Cascades are located in the Pacific time zone.

Climate

The North Cascades of Washington is a coastal mountain range which receives a large amount of snow each season. Precipitation generally increases with elevation. Temperatures in the winter months are generally cold.

Photography

A small, lightweight, digital camera with a view finder (to save battery life), is recommended. Consider how many batteries and memory cards you will need to bring. Remember to keep the bulk and weight to a minimum.



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Medical

Please consult your physician and have them complete the health form provided by IWLS. If you require any personal medications, or, have any pre-existing medical problems, make certain to reconfirm with your instructor upon arrival. Furthermore, IWLS requires that all students have their own health insurance. Individuals are solely responsible for any medical costs, including all associated rescue, evacuation, and transportation costs. Please take time to review your medical insurance policy. Make certain that your coverage extends to the location of your course, and that it provides coverage for any potential, associated costs. Many policies will provide coverage for travel abroad for a small additional fee. [AIG travel guard](#), listed below, offers temporary health insurance for an additional fee.

Medications

Please make sure you have the following medications for personal use on your IWLS course:

- All prescription and/or non-prescription medications you are currently taking.
- A broad-spectrum antibiotic prescribed by your doctor (this is required).
- Aspirin or Ibuprofen

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is required for international courses and highly recommend for domestic courses. In many case travel insurance will cover medical expenses, evacuation costs, lost baggage, travel delays, and other costs in the event you need to cancel your trip. We have worked with almost every provider of travel insurance and feel strongly that the Adventure Travel Protection Plan from AIG/ Travel Guard is the best one available. It is one of the only plans that covers high altitude climbing and has significant benefits if purchased within 15 days of making your trip deposit. Details can be found on [our website](#).

Lodging / Hotels

During the course, we have rooms reserved at the Ramada Inn and Suites just minutes away from the Seattle/Tacoma airport. If flying into SEATAC, we suggest arrival the evening before the course starts. You can book a room at the Ramada Suites SeaTac Airport at www.ramada.com or call the hotel directly at 206-277-0700. If you would like to share a room pre or post trip email us and we will help you find a room with another course participant. Tell them you are with the International Wilderness Leadership School and you should receive a discounted rate.

The Green Tortoise Hostel (www.greentortoise.net) is a travelers hostel in the heart of downtown Seattle. For those who may stay in Seattle before or after the course, dorm rooms and private rooms are available.

Will there be a place for me to store my things while I'm on the course?

While in the field, we will be storing extra gear and personal items in the Ramada Inn and Suites SeaTac Hotel. The Ramada Hotel has assured us this space is secure however IWLS is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items. Therefore, we recommend you do not leave any valuable items.

What should I bring on the first day?

Please bring all of your personal clothing and equipment for your course.



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Training and Fitness

Your course will consist of long days of moderate activity which will require good aerobic (endurance) conditioning. You should create a well-rounded work out plan prior to your course which combines endurance, strength, flexibility and balance. Depending on the nature of your course the training program will vary slightly but the underlying principle should be aerobic conditioning. Examples of aerobic exercises include running, cycling, Nordic skiing, and swimming. Ideally you want to start your work out with a warm up of 5-10 minutes at 50-60% of your maximum heart rate, then continue for another 20-60 minutes at 65-80% of your maximum heart rate, and finish with a cool down of 5-10 minutes at 50-60% of your maximum heart rate. This should be practiced 3-4 times a week for up to eight weeks before your course start date. A strength training workout (ie. weight-lifting) could be a good supplement to your work out plan, but not a substitute. Good conditioning will not only improve your chances for success but will also improve the quality of your course. Don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions on specific training programs. The possibilities are endless, so get creative and have fun!

Our Instructors

IWLS instructors are widely recognized as some of the very best in their field and have practical leadership experience from around the globe. They are well trained and have an uncommon enthusiasm for sharing their skill and knowledge, borne out of a passion for outdoor exploration. IWLS leaders are technically skilled, passionate about wilderness, and committed to each and every student. Their dedication insures each student an educational experience that will exceed their expectations!

In addition to the technical skills, IWLS instructors are equally experts in the “softer skills” of risk management, client care, and group dynamics. Not only will they insure a quality experience for each student, but will also work to impart this judgment to them.

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