



# IWLS

International Wilderness Leadership School



## North Cascades Backpacking Equipment List

The weather in the North Cascades can be volatile. Clothing systems need to be capable of meeting the demands of an ever-changing environment. A layering system, which allows articles of clothing to be added or subtracted as the weather changes, has proven most versatile. The clothing items listed below will layer together to provide appropriate insulation in the most demanding conditions. Because it can snow or rain, materials used in clothing should keep you warm even if they are wet. Synthetics such as polypropylene, Capilene, Synchronia, fleece, and pile are best, wool will also work. Cotton, with the exception of a t-shirt for the sun, is unacceptable. Please test out your gear before you arrive in Seattle.

### Upper Body Layers

Upper body layers are some of the most important components of a good layering system. They should be comfortable, lightweight and breathable. Cotton is unacceptable, except for a sun shirt while hiking on warm days.

Equipment	Quantity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Comments	Rental
Base Layers	2		One silk weight and one heavy weight top made of synthetic material that can be layered together to increase warmth. A light-colored silk weight (white/tan/light blue/etc...) is a good idea, because it will decrease the amount of solar radiation (warmth) that your shirt absorbs. Conversely, your mid-weight base layers should be darker so that they do absorb the sun's warmth. <a href="#">Sierra Designs</a> makes good lightweight, wicking base layers.	-
Tee Shirt	1		To be worn as a sun shirt while hiking at lower elevations. Synthetic fabric is the way to go, and can double as a bandana or extra sun protection under a baseball cap.	-
Medium Weight Top	1		To be worn over the base layers and should be synthetic or wool. (a soft shell is an acceptable substitute)	-
Heavy Weight Jacket	1		Should be synthetic and fit over all your layers.	-
Outer Wear	1		A jacket made of waterproof / breathable material such as Gore-Tex is vital for keeping you warm and dry. It needs to fit over all layers. Consider the <a href="#">Sierra Designs</a> N2 Fusion jackets.	-

### Lower Body Layers

Lower body layers should be versatile and easy to change into and out of under changing weather conditions.

Equipment	Quantity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Comments	Rental
Base Layers	2		One silk weight and one heavy weight bottom layer made of synthetic material that can be worn together to increase warmth.	-
Fleece or Synthetic Pants	1		These should be either fleece or synthetic down. If the pants have side zips, it will make your life a lot easier by allowing you to layer without removing your foot wear. We recommend the Patagonia <a href="#">'micro-puff pants'</a>	-
Underwear	2-4 pairs		Synthetic briefs and underwear will keep you comfortable and	-





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			hygienic during high output. Plan on bringing one pair per 4-6 days of use.	
Shorts	1		These are optional, but are nice to wear at lower elevations. Cotton is unacceptable; synthetic will dry faster and be more comfortable for long periods of wear.	-
Outer Wear	1		Pants made of waterproof / breathable material such as Gore-Tex are vital for keeping you warm and dry. They need to fit over all layers and should have side zips. Consider the <a href="#">Sierra Designs Fusion</a> pant.	-

## Head, Neck, Hands & Feet

Keeping your extremities warm & dry is crucial. We lose a massive percentage of body heat through our heads, and our hands and feet are the most susceptible to inconveniences like trench-foot. Developing a system that works for your specific needs takes time; this guide is a good place to start.

Equipment	Quantity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Comments	Rental
Warm-Hat	2		Should be made of synthetic material or wool, cotton is unacceptable and dangerous.	-
Sun-Hat	1		The sun can be very bright (especially with reflection off the water), the more protection your cap offers from the sun, the better.	-
Sunglasses	1		Dark lenses are a must. The sun can be very bright (especially with reflection off of the water) and can cause permanent eye damage. Most of our instructors wear <a href="#">Costa Del Mar</a> sunglasses	-
Light Weight Gloves	2		Windstopper fleece works best. Work gloves with a water proof palm are nice to have along when dexterity is more important than warmth.	-
Outer gloves or mittens	1		1 pair made of Gore-Tex, StormH2no or equivalent. Heavy rubberized gloves are also appropriate. They should be waterproof and fit over inner gloves. Ski gloves are okay.	-
Socks	3-4		These should be synthetic or wool. Having a mix of light and heavy weight socks is nice to adjust to variable weather.	-
Hiking Boots	1		Should be well broken in and waterproof. We recommend full grain leather boots, especially those made by <a href="#">Vasque</a> . Please don't hesitate to call us if you have any questions about purchasing boots.	-
Gaiters	1		These should fit over your hiking boots, and are used to keep water/snow/rocks out. They should be tall and water/abrasion resistant.	-

## Backpacking Gear

Equipment	Quantity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Comments	Rental
Backpack	1		Should have a capacity of at least 5,000 cubic inches (or 80 Liters), and should be comfortable with 40-60 lbs. of weight.	YES
Backpack Cover	1		Should be waterproof and fit over your backpack when it is completely full.	-
Trekking poles	1		Ski poles work, however adjustable ones work best.	YES





## Sleeping Bag & Pads

Having a good sleep system is essential in the mountains. While down bags are very warm and pack incredibly small, they lose all insulating properties when they get wet. In a maritime climate like the North Cascades, a synthetic fill sleeping bag is a must.

Equipment	Quantity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Comments	Rental
Sleeping bag	1		We recommend a synthetic fill bag with a comfort rating of 0 degrees F. The Catalyst 0 by <a href="#">Sierra Designs</a> is an excellent option. Please don't hesitate to call us before making any major purchases.	YES
Sleeping pads	2		A system of one compact inflatable pad (Thermarest) and one closed cell foam pad works best to insulate when sleeping on snow.	YES

## Miscellaneous

Equipment	Quantity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Comments	Rental
Eating Utensils	-		Bowl & Spoon (Lexan or titanium work well), as well as a 14oz mug with a lid for hot drinks.	-
Headlamp	1		We recommend LED headlamps, because they are lightweight, long-lasting & durable. Bring extra batteries.	-
Toilet Paper	1		Bring your own in a Ziploc bag.	-
Iodine	1		A bottle of 'Polar-Pure' Crystals is the most convenient, but 'Potable Agua' works well also.	-
Lip Balm	1-2		Should have some type of SPF protection.	-
Sunscreen	4-8oz.		Should be SPF 30 or higher and be waterproof.	-
Personal Med-Kit	1		A personal prescription of a broad-spectrum antibiotic like Ciprofloxacin or Erithromycin is <b>REQUIRED</b> . Your kit should also include ALL personal medications, as well as a stash of Ibuprofen, Aspirin, Band-Aids, and Neosporin. A group Med-Kit will be available for everyone, however bringing a personal kit is mandatory. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to call us.	-
Water Bottles	2		Wide mouth 1-liter Lexan bottles ('Nalgene') work best.	-
Bandana or ' <a href="#">Buff</a> '	1		Used for extra sun-protection. Your t-shirt can be used in place of a bandana if you are trying to shave weight (which is a good thing).	-
Stuff Sacks	2-4		For organizing your gear inside of your backpack.	-
Garbage & Ziploc bags	variety		To keep your gear dry inside of your kayak. (e.g. line your stuff sack with a garbage bag before you stuff your sleeping bag in there)	-

## Optional

Equipment	Quantity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Comments	Rental
Sleeping Bag Liner	1		For increased warmth.	-
Pee Bottle	1		1-liter wide-mouth Lexan with a <b>SECURE LID</b> . Nice to have when there is really inclement weather outside.	-
Energy/Candy Bars	0-20		Bring bars that taste good!	-
Moist Towelettes	0-20		This will be as close to a shower as you will get, we recommend one wipe per day.	-





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Book	1-2		Leave the 15 pound hardcover at home.	-
Journal	1		'Rite in the Rain' or similar water resistant paper work best.	-
Bug Spray	1		The bugs at lower elevations can be bothersome during certain seasons.	-
Camera	2-4		Digital or Film. If you are buying a digital camera; one with a view finder allows you to take photos when it is too bright to see the screen and helps save batteries. A camera that is compatible with AA's allows you to bring extra batteries that don't cost an arm and a leg. Bring an extra memory card.	-

## Additional Information



We use gear from these select companies on every trip we run! Their gear has proven itself again and again on the highest mountains, roughest water, and steepest ice. We endorse these companies because they make gear that is functional and reliable.



**We provide the following:** tents, group climbing equipment, expedition first aid kits, cooking equipment, and trip food.

Please don't hesitate to call us with any questions 1.800.985.4957

