



## Alaska Mountaineering Course Equipment List

The weather in Alaska 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 is unacceptable. Please test out your gear before you arrive in Alaska.

If you own any of the following “provided” personal gear, we encourage you to bring it to your course. This will allow you to become proficient with the gear you will continue to use post course.

### 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="#">Mountain Hardware</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 Top	1		To be worn over the base layers and medium weight top and should be synthetic or wool. <a href="#">Black Diamond fleece</a> or insulating soft shells layers work well.	-
Synthetic Down Parka	1		In a maritime climate in the mountains, a burly synthetic parka will be your best friend on those cold wet nights or windy summit mornings. It should easily fit over all layers. A down jacket with a water proof finish is acceptable, but if it gets wet you won't be happy...or warm. Most of our guides use the <a href="#">Black Diamond Stance Belay Jacket</a>	YES
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. <a href="#">Mountain Hardware shells</a> are breathable, dry, and windproof	-





# IWLS

International Wilderness Leadership School

## 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 layered together to increase warmth.	-
Underwear	2-4 pairs		Synthetic briefs and underwear will keep you comfortable and hygienic during high output. Plan on bringing one pair per 4-6 days of use.	-
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 <a href="#">Black Diamond Stance Belay pant</a> .	-
Shorts or Lightweight Pants	1		These are optional, but are nice to wear at lower elevations on the hike to base camp. 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.	-

## 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 frostbite and 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. Should layer underneath a climbing helmet. <a href="#">Mountain Hardware</a> has a wide selection of warm hats.	-
Sun-Hat	1		The sun can be very bright (especially with reflection). The more protection your cap offers from the sun, the better.	-
Balaclava or Neoprene Face Mask	1		Used to protect the face from wind/snow, and can be a real life-saver under stormy conditions.	-
Goggles	1		Double lens models with vents work best. <a href="#">POC</a> makes some great goggles.	-
Sunglasses	2		Dark lenses with good side protection are a must. The sun can be very bright (especially with reflection off of the water/snow/ice) and can cause permanent eye damage.	-
Light Weight Gloves	1		Windstopper fleece works best. Work gloves with a water proof palm are nice to have along when dexterity is more important than warmth. 'Dura-Therm' or like models (synthetic glove with rubber palm & fingers) work well, just ensure you find the warmest model available. <a href="#">Black Diamond</a> makes some great gloves.	-

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

1-800-766-3396

[www.iwls.com](http://www.iwls.com)

A Division of Alaska Mountain Guides & Climbing School Inc.





# IWLS

International Wilderness Leadership School



Heavy Weight Gloves/Mitts	1		Removable shell is a must. These should be warm, water-proof and breathable, with removable liners for easy drying. The <a href="#">Black Diamond Guide Glove</a> is a great option.	-
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.	-
Mountaineering Boots	1		Plastic boots with a removable liner work best because they are easy to dry out and extremely warm. They also need to be fully crampon compatible. Please don't hesitate to call us before making any major purchases. Koflach, Scarpa or La Sportiva all make good options.	YES
Gaiters	1		These should fit over your mountaineering boots, and are used to keep water/snow/rocks out. They should be tall and water/abrasion resistant. The <a href="#">Black Diamond Apex</a> gaiter works well.	-

## Technical Hardware

For technical gear we recommend [Black Diamond](#). We run their equipment on every mountain trip we operate, and find it to be among the best in the industry. For tents and sleeping bags we recommend [Mountain Hardware](#).

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 60 lbs. of weight. Please don't hesitate to call us before making any major purchases. <a href="#">Mountain Hardware</a> packs are versatile and rugged	YES
Trekking poles	1		Lightweight and adjustable length work best. Snow baskets are a must. <a href="#">Black Diamond poles</a> are a great fit.	YES
Lightweight Harness	1		Should fit over all layers and be comfortable when wearing a pack. Adjustable leg loops are best. The <a href="#">Alpine Bod</a> harness is an ideal harness for mountaineering.	Provided
Crampons	1		Light weight, sturdy, and easily adjustable are best. The <a href="#">Black Diamond Sabretooth</a> works well.	Provided
Avalanche Transceiver	1		Transceivers must use the 457 kHz frequency. Equipment rental is available. Consider the <a href="#">Pieps DSP pro</a> .	YES
Ice Axe	1		Should be light weight. The <a href="#">Raven</a> is a classic.	Provided
Locking Carabineers	2		Large aluminum locking carabineers (such as the <a href="#">Black Diamond Rocklock</a> ) are used on your harness for glacier travel and technical climbing.	Provided
Non-locking Carabiners	4		Oval or lightweight wiregate carabiners used for glacier travel and technical climbing systems. We use <a href="#">Black Diamond Carabiners</a>	Provided
6mm Cord	20 ft.		6mm accessory cord used for tying prussics.	Provided
Helmet	1		Should be light weight and rated for rock climbing/ mountaineering. The BD <a href="#">Vector or Half Dome</a> are great options.	Provided
Large Duffel	1		Used for transporting gear in planes and vehicles on route to trip locale. 'Cordura' or other heavy duty nylon duffel bags are burly and handle large loads with ease. 6000 cubic inches (100 liters) or larger are best. The <a href="#">BD Huey</a> is bombproof.	-



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

1-800-766-3396

[www.iwls.com](http://www.iwls.com)

A Division of Alaska Mountain Guides & Climbing School Inc.



# IWLS

International Wilderness Leadership School



## 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 southeast Alaska, 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 Fahrenheit. However, on bigger mountains and in early season a down bag is more appropriate. <a href="#">Mountain Hardware</a> bags work well. Please don't hesitate to call us before making any major purchases.	YES
Sleeping pads	2		A system of one compact inflatable pad ( <a href="#">Thermarests</a> work well) and one closed cell foam pad works best to insulate when sleeping on snow.	YES

## Miscellaneous

Equipment	Quantity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Comments	Rental
Passport	1		You'll need this to cross into Canada	-
Watch	1		Should have an alarm. Our instructors prefer the <b>Suunto Core</b> .	
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. Black Diamond <a href="#">SPOT</a> or <a href="#">ICON</a> headlamps work great.	-
Toilet Paper	1		Bring your own in a Ziploc bag.	-
Personal Med-Kit	1		A personal prescription of a broad-spectrum antibiotic like Ciprofloxacin or Erythromycin is <b>REQUIRED</b> . Your kit should also include <b>ALL</b> 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.	-
Blister Kit	1		This should include mole skin/foam and cloth athletic tape for personal use.	-
Lip Balm	1-2		Should have some type of SPF protection.	-
Sunscreen	4-8oz.		Should be SPF 30 or higher and be waterproof.	-
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 tee-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. Consider using compression sacks for both your sleeping bag and clothes to maximize usage of space.	-



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

1-800-766-3396

[www.iwls.com](http://www.iwls.com)

A Division of Alaska Mountain Guides & Climbing School Inc.



# IWLS

International Wilderness Leadership School



Garbage & Ziploc bags	variety		An invaluable method used to keep your gear dry inside of your pack. (i.e. line your stuff sack with a garbage bag before you stuff your sleeping bag in there)	-
<b>Optional</b>				
Equipment	Quantity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Comments	Rental
Summit Pack	-		Used on day excursions, should be between 35L - 55L (many people use their big pack for this purpose). <a href="#">Black Diamond</a> offers some great climbing packs in this range.	-
Ascender or Tibloc	0-2		<a href="#">Black Diamond</a> ascenders or <a href="#">Petzl</a> tiblocs are great for ascending/descending fixed lines and crevasse rescue.	-
Locking Carabiners	2		Small, lightweight pear-shaped carabiners used for rescue practice and building anchors. Black Diamond makes great carabiners.	-
Belay Device	1		A standard belay plate can be used for technical climbing and rappelling. The <a href="#">ATC-Guide</a> is a great, versatile option.	-
Pulleys	2		Climbing pulleys are used to reduce friction on the rope during rescue practice. <a href="#">Black Diamond</a> makes a variety of lightweight options.	-
6mm Cord	20 ft.		Additional accessory cord can be used to build anchors.	-
Technical Climbing Tool	1		A mountain axe with a curved shaft that will allow climbers to ascend steeper pitches and ice. A hammer will also allow climbers to place pitons and set ice screws. The <a href="#">BD Venom</a> with a hammer is a great option for mountaineering as a 2 <sup>nd</sup> tool.	-
Camp Booties	1 pair		A good pair of synthetic fill camp booties will keep your feet warm and dry after big days in winter environments. <a href="#">Sierra Designs</a> makes a great goose-down version with a rubberized bottom.	-
Hand Warmers	4		A good thing to keep in your pack for those brisk alpine starts.	-
Sleeping Bag Liner	1		For increased warmth.	-
AA and AAA batteries	4 pair		Replacements for both your avalanche beacon & headlamp.	-
Pee Bottle	1		1-liter wide-mouth Lexan with a SECURE LID. 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.	-
Book	1-2		Leave the 15 pound hardcover at home.	-
Journal	1		'Rite in the Rain' or similar water resistant paper work best.	-
Camera	1		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. Otherwise, it's best to have 1 or 2 extra batteries. Bring an extra memory card.	-



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

1-800-766-3396

[www.iwls.com](http://www.iwls.com)

A Division of Alaska Mountain Guides & Climbing School Inc.



# IWLS

International Wilderness Leadership School

## 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

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

1-800-766-3396

[www.iwls.com](http://www.iwls.com)

A Division of Alaska Mountain Guides & Climbing School Inc.

