

APPALACHIAN PACK HIKE

INTRODUCTION

WEIGHT: The AT is unique and requires specific skills, not the least of which is how to pack and organize your pack. While there are many required items, aggregate allowable weight (28-34 lbs.) is absolute. Novices believe, for example, that cutting 3-4" off a tooth paste brush handle or squeezing half the toothpaste out of the smallest size they can find is quite silly, however, ounces quickly add up to pounds. A heavy pack is NOT the sign of a macho mountain man prepared for anything, instead, it is an surest sign of a dangerously ignorant novice.

ORGANIZATION: Equally critical to weight is how gear is packed and organized. This is particularly true with today's modern internal frame packs which are, essentially, a big, and mostly undivided, sack that collapses into a shapeless blob as it is emptied. "Dumpster Diving" through your pack to find an item on the trail is absolutely unacceptable! Assume, rather, that you will have to instantly locate any needed item in a driving thunderstorm, in the dark, AND when you are exhausted. Assume, further, that everything will get wet. "ENTIRE" functions (taking a dump, showering up, eating, etc.) must be capable of being performed by quickly locating and grabbing the required items that have already been grouped into a pre-organized single package, the packing and location of which is prioritized so as not require searching through and exposing other lesser priority items to the elements.

The critical assets for this required organization are:

Zip Lock Bags - freezer weight in quart & gallon sizes with zipper slides ... NOT the press together style!;

Stuff Sacks - small, lightweight, not really waterproof & different colors so contents can be identified w/o opening. (for example, I carry three small (4'x9') draw string nylon sacks, one for all of my eating & KP gear; one for my hygiene required gear; and one for items I take into the hammock or tent with me); and

Dry Bags - lightweight backpacking style, not heavy watercraft type, for items that MUST stay dry: Clothes & Sleeping bag. Note that if this gets too pricey, such items can be wrapped in a garbage bag within a conventional stuff/compression sack.

FOOD: Must also be organized into a single grab and go bag (remove all unnecessary pre-packaging) with the addition of three other considerations:

Bear Bag - Bear Boxes are not always available and, therefore, your food bag may have to be hung from a line. Most of us organize our food into a 1 gallon Zip Lock Bag and place that into a stuff sack or light weight dry bag so that it can be hung at night (HAVE ALL OF YOUR FOOD IN ONE BAG - AND - YOUR NAME ON IT for ease of collection & hand out each evening and morning); and

Resupply - Whenever possible, vehicles will be positioned or re-positioned along the trail to permit resupply so that a hiker doesn't have to carry an entire week of personal food or his group dinner longer than necessary. These resupply points will be noted on the Itinerary so that hikers can figure out how to apportion their personal food or when they need to carry their group meal. Coolers (not to refrigerate but just to prevent too extreme a temperature) will be marked ("Resupply 1" & "Resupply 2") and set out upon departure for hikers to deposit their personal & group meal bags. These should be marked with the hiker's name & Resupply # for quick swap out on site.

Group Meals - Each hiker will be responsible to dehydrate, package, carry, rehydrate, cook, lead grace, serve & clean up for a group of 8 at least one night. Hikers are encouraged to develop new meal recipes, however, tried and true recipes are on the Troop Web Site. Hikers MUST practice their meals at home BEFORE attempting to cook on the trail! When practicing, be sure to use only the type of equipment that will be available on the trail: a 2 qt. pot, a 3 qt. pot, a single small burner on high setting, and basic utensils. Read [Dehydrating Basics – OSU Extension](#) and [General Meal Ideas & Tips](#) on the Troop Web Site. Dehydrators, and help using them if necessary, are available from key Adult Leaders. Hikers MUST print out, and insert into their group meal bag, their recipe in case another hiker has to prepare their meal on the trail.

TRAVEL KIT: Hikers will travel to and from the Trail in Class A's and will, therefore, need to have a "small" bag (a cloth grocery bag works fine) with the clothes they need to change into to hike - and - to clean up after the hike. This kit should include: **hiking boots, socks, underwear, pants & shirt; hanger** (for Class A's), **toiletries** (to clean up after), a **separate towel & garbage bags** (one large enough to seal pack & one large enough to seal boots and last day's hiking clothes with a **few sheets of Bounce** to deodorize).

TRAVEL & TRAIL MONEY: Hikers will need enough funds for road trip fast food meals to and from the trail and "The Feast" (post event celebratory meal) on the way home on the scale of a "Texas Roadhouse" sort of restaurant. Hikers also carry what is known as an "AT Wallet" (Ziplock Bag) with enough cash for moments of "Trail Magic" (passing through town, gas station, fast food source or a vending machine).

PACK CHECKLIST – With Explanations

I. CLOTHES (***NOTHING COTTON!!!***)

- A. Change of **underpants, socks, & T Shirts (2 sets plus the one in travel kit for start of hike)**
 - roll into sets w/rubber bands, & pack into ziploc or dry bag
 - socks must be multi-composite hiking sock (Wigwam, SmartWool, Thorlo, etc.) & high enough to be above boot/gator &/or a polypropylene liner sock w/ outer wool hiking sock
- B. **2nd Pair of hiking pants (in addition to the pair in your travel kit)** ... Most hike in shorts and carry a long set for in camp together w/ **a long sleeve T-Shirt** (zip off style adds flexibility)
- C. **Hooded or Non-Hooded Fleece & Separate Fleece Cap** (to cover at night)
- D. **Hiking boots - in travel kit**, see [Backpacking Boots – How to Pick Out](#)
- E. **Crocks & polypropylene liner sock to wear in camp** (in plastic bag to keep pack clean inside)
- F. **Gators** - low style w/ Velcro seam so don't remove boots to get on & off
- G. **Hooded Rain Jacket & Pack Cover** - Pack to be VERY accessible (rain pants not generally used)

II. PERSONAL GEAR (minimize size & quantity and consider refills in resupply)

- A. **Toiletries Kit** (minimize size ... 1-2 oz squeeze flip top bottles at REI or US Plastics):
 - Biodegradable **Soap** (Sliver of Unscented Ivory in film can, Camp Suds or Dr. Bronners)
 - **Toothbrush & Tooth Paste** (travel size, cut 3-4" off handle & squeeze ½ paste out)
 - **Synthetic Chamois for Wash Cloth & Towel** (12"x12" & 4"x4" or not much bigger)
 - **Hand Sanitizer** (keep separate in accessible pocket to access at lunch & water breaks)
- B. **First Aid / Survival Kit** - in 1 qt. ziplock bag, see [1st Aid Kit Hiking & Backpacking](#) & [Blisters](#)
- C. **"S... Kit"** (in separate plastic bag & VERY accessible) see [Pooping in the Woods – How to](#)
 - **Backpacker Trowel**
 - **Length of TP** rolled & flattened
 - **2-3 individually wrapped Sani or Diaper Wipes** (WITHOUT isopropyl alcohol)
- D. **KP Kit** (for meals & KP ... use soap from Toiletry Kit)
 - **Light Weight Fork & Spoon - or - Spork**
 - **3M Scotch Sponge - Cut in Half**
 - **Synthetic Chamois for Wash Cloth & Towel** (12"x12" & 4"x4" or not much bigger)
- E. **Personal Kit** (to take to tent)
 - **Small LED Headlamp**
 - **Itinerary, Maps, Guide** (to look over for next day ... break down section into resupply)
 - **Small Notepad & Pen or Pencil**
 - **Ear Plugs** (can be hard to sleep in driving rainstorm beating on tent)
 - **Personal Daily Meds**
 - **Small Synthetic Chamois** (4"x4") to wipe any puddles or fly off in the morning
- F. **Sleeping Bag** (light weight 32-40°); **Liner** (Coolmax, Silk or Synthetic lightweight) & **Closed Cell Pad** (3/4 length NOT recommended) - Bag & Liner in separate compression/dry bags
- G. **Accessible Items** (kept in pocket, hip belt pockets or pack strap loops)
 - **Small Pocket Knife**
 - **Silva Style Compass**
 - **DEET & Hand Sanitizer** (as above)
 - **Emergency Whistle**
 - **Small Chamois or Paisley Farmer Style Handkerchief or Headband** to wipe face
 - **Small Biner & 4-6' length of lightweight line** to hang pack
 - **Map Set for the Day**
 - **Small Single Diode LED Light** (optional)
- H. **Garbage Bags** - **1 kitchen size** for laundry/dirty clothes & **1 leaf size** to cover pack or trash
- I. **50' Length of lightweight braided** (less extension) **nylon rope** for bear bag or clothes line
- J. **Lightweight Bowl & Cup** (Lexan, Titanium, etc)
- K. **Pack cover & Crocks** (to wear in camp)
- L. **Hydration Bag** (2-3 ltr) w/ bite valve cover & cap for tube connection **and small water bottle** For back up and to take into tent (old style wide mouth Nalgene or New Style Collapsible)
- M. **Stave or Hiking Sticks**

III. Food - see above & Resupply Bags

IV. Troop Common Gear - as assigned (tents, shower bag, water tanks, filter, stoves, fuel, pot sets, etc.)

PACK CHECKLIST

Clothes / Sleeping Bag

- 2 Pair of Socks - or 2 Sock Sets if using Liner & Outer Sock
- 2 T-Shirts
- 1 Long/Zip Off Pants
- 1 Long Sleeve T-Shirt
- 1 Pair of Polypropylene Socks - for in camp use
- Fleece/Loose Shirt
- Head Cap - wool or synthetic
- Crocks
- Sleeping Bag
- Liner
- Sleeping Pad
- Camp Pillow or Stuff Sack for Pillow

Mess & KP Kit

- Spork or Spoon & Fork
- 3M Scotch Pad
- Chamois Dish Towel
- Cup & Bowl
- Bleach (optional and only if certain can package so as to not leak)

Shower Kit

- Soap
- Chamois x 2 (wash cloth & towel)
- Comb / Mirror / Razor
- Tooth Paste & Tooth Brush
- Contact Lens Kit (if applicable)

Sh Kit**

- Trowel
- TP
- Sani-Wipes

Personal Kit

- Map Sets
- Headlamp
- Phone &/or Camera (optional)
- Baby Powder
- Water Bottle
- Note Pad & Pencil or Pen
- Ear Plugs
- Chamois
- AT Wallet

Misc

- Nylon Line - Clothes/Bear Bag
- Bear Bag
- Small Biner - for Bear Bag & Misc Uses
- Garbage Bags (1 Kitchen & 1 Leaf - in 1 qt. Ziplock Bag)
- Hydration Bag, Tube, Bag Cap & Bite Valve Cover

Accessible Items

- Biner & Cord - to hang pack when arrive at camp
- Pack Cover
- Rain Jacket
- Compass
- Day's Map Set
- Pocket Knife
- DEET
- Hand Sanitizer
- Whistle
- Single Diode LED (optional)

1st Aid Kit/Survival Kit - in 1 qt. Ziplock Bag

- Ace Bandage
- Needle & Thread (in Ace Bandage as pin cushion)
- Assortment of Band-Aids (few each & include fingertip & knuckle)
- Disinfectant Ointment
- 4x4's &/or Gauze
- Leukotape P & Moleskin
- Gloves
- ½ Lens Kit - with Vicks for sinuses and/or Bacitracin for monkey butt
- Small sunscreen - only if hike not under canopy of bloomed trees
- Tweezer/Scissor/Knife - Mini Swiss Army has all three
- Meds: Personal Rx, Benadryl, Motrin, Sudafed, Tylenol, Imodium, Miralax
- Water Purification Tablets (Chlorine Dioxide, NOT Iodine)
- Matches in Waterproof Case & Mini Lighter
- Fire Starter (if Vaseline cotton balls, can wrap Leukotape around can)

Food Bag - In Ziplock w/ Name & Hangable Bear Bag available

- Group Meal w/ Printed Recipe
- Lunches (# Days till Resupply): Tuna w/ may packets; PB&J; Pitas/Bagels
- Breakfasts (# Days till Resupply): Oatmeal; Pop Tarts; Cereal Bars
- Trail Mix
- Energy / Granola Bars
- Powdered Drink Mix
- Jerky

TRAVEL KIT - 'Small' bag for car

- Boots (to change into when arrive at trail head)
- Socks (" ")
- Gators (" ")
- Pants (" ")
- T-Shirt (" ")
- Hiking Sticks with some Duct Tape wrapped on pole
- Hanger (to hang up Class A's)
- Towel (to shower up after get off trail)
- Toiletries (" ")
- Garbage Bags (1 to completely enclose pack & 1 for boots/hiking clothes)
- Bounce (few sheets to throw in boots before bag up for trip home)
- Music to share on ride to & from trail

RESUPPLY KITS - In Ziplock Bags with Name & Resupply # ("1" or "2")

- Group Meal w/ Printed Recipe
- Lunches (# Days till Resupply): Tuna w/ may packets; PB&J; Pitas/Bagels
- Breakfasts (# Days till Resupply): Oatmeal; Pop Tarts; Cereal Bars
- Trail Mix
- Energy / Granola Bars
- Powdered Drink Mix
- Jerky
- Soap Refill
- Sani-Wipe Refill
- TP Refill
- Batteries if needed
- Other Replenish Consumables: Fuel, Bleach, Repair Parts, etc.
- Laundry Supplies - for Laundromat Opportunities (Quarters & Tide)

MONEY - transfer to AT Wallet when on trail

- Enough funds for fast food to & from, opportunities on trail & Feast
- Driver's License & Credit Card - if applicable