
EQUIPMENT LIST for Odyssey

Congratulations on starting out on one of your greatest summer experiences! Gear is never the most important part of any trip, but it is necessary to have the proper equipment for this hike!

While some of the equipment listed may not seem to fit your idea of summer weather, it is ALL very important. In the mountains and in the northern reaches of some of our trips, temperatures can range from 40 to 90 degrees even in the summer. Please follow the guidelines below:

- **Boots:** Nothing is as important to hiking comfort as a good pair of boots. We recommend:
 - High-cut with plenty of ankle support
 - Waterproof synthetic (Gore-tex) or full leather
 - Heavy Sole for Hiking (Deep lugs)Comfort is the most important quality. If possible visit a backpacking or outdoors store to try on different pairs of boots, even if you end up purchasing boots elsewhere. While tightly laced up, knock the toe of your boots against the ground behind you. If your toe touches the front of your boot, you should buy a larger pair to avoid bruising toes on long downhills. Try on the boots late in the day when your feet have swelled to see if they still fit. And finally, break them in for *at least* 2 months. There is no such thing as breaking your boots in too much. Three days per week of daily wear plus a few practice hikes over the course of a couple months should do it.
 - **Fabrics:** Please only bring synthetic (i.e. 100% Polyester, Polypropylene) fabrics or wool where indicated on the list. These important items cannot be cotton or poly/cotton blends, as cotton loses its insulating properties when wet. **Please check your clothing tags prior to arrival.** Polypro is a thin fabric generally made of 100% polyester, and fleece, on this list, indicates a thick, fuzzy fabric made of 100% polyester such as Polartec.
 - **Raingear:** Your raingear is one of the most important pieces of clothing for keeping you comfortable. It must be waterproof. As some raingear wears out after several years, please check your raingear in the shower before bringing it to Merrowvista. (Seriously! It's fun!) You can purchase a wash-in substance to re-waterproof your raingear at most outdoor stores.
 - **Layers:** Make sure that your trip clothing allows ample room for layering clothing on top of one another. Your rain jacket should be big enough to allow you to wear 3 layers underneath it without feeling tight or restrictive, and your heaviest insulation layer should fit comfortably over a lighter layer which should fit comfortably over your thin long underwear. Clothing that is too tight makes insulation hold less air and be less effective.
 - **Sleeping Bags:** We require synthetic fill bags (no down) and we prefer 'mummy'-style bags with hoods. Bags must be rated to 30 degrees. Warmer 10-20 degree bags are also great.
 - **Label with Name:** Please make sure all items are clearly labeled with camper's name.
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Please feel free to contact us with any questions or requests for information!

We have supplementary materials on purchasing, sizing, or maintaining equipment.

Remember, your gear does not have to be expensive, but it does have to keep you warm and dry.

