

WESTERN MAINE HUT HIKE

European-Style Hiking Through Maine's Western Mountains

What to Bring and Packing List

Though we encourage you to pack as lightly as possible, don't skimp on the essentials. To be prepared for inclement weather we cannot emphasize enough the need for warm clothes, good rain gear and comfortable hiking boots. Having the appropriate clothing and gear will add to your enjoyment, comfort, and safety. We are happy to answer any questions you may have or put you in touch with past participants.

Weather Conditions: The days can be warm, but it can also be cool and rainy. For all our trips, you can expect to be outdoors for most of the day and not always within quick reach of shelter. This being the case, we are more at the whim of Mother Nature than your average traveler. Naturally, we hope the weather will cooperate, but as often is the case in Maine, and elsewhere, it can change quickly and without much notice. Though we will be checking forecasts daily, you should be prepared for some hiking in wet conditions, or for a change in itinerary.

EQUIPMENT AND SPECIAL ITEMS

Hiking Boots/Trail Shoes: We recommend either over the ankle or sturdy trail shoes. Many companies make sturdy trail shoes and hiking boots that are lightweight and adequate for the type of hiking we will be doing. Good, comfortable boots, whether over the ankle or trail shoes are the important. It is worth it to take time to break in your footwear prior to your trip. Please call L.L.Bean or visit your local L.L.Bean store for advice on hiking boots.

Rain Gear: You need to bring both jacket and pants. Good rain gear is important. You can purchase waterproof/breathable rain gear made for hiking at L.L.Bean. Gear with GoreTex®, NeoShell or Tek waterproof fabric is recommended.

Daypacks: You will need a good quality daypack with a hip belt. There are any number of good daypacks available. You will need one that comfortably accommodates all those items you wish to bring on a full day's hike: 1- 2 liters of water, camera, sweater, jacket, rain gear, lunch, sun hat, warm hat and gloves. To be prepared for rain, you should pack your items in waterproof stuff sacks or zip-lock bags inside your pack and use a waterproof pack cover. Backpacks are not waterproof.

Sleeping bag, Towel and Pillowcase: The Maine Huts provide bunks with mattress and a pillow. You will need to bring a 3-season sleeping bag, a towel, and a pillowcase for use in the huts. While the rooms do have heat, it will most likely not be turned on, even for trips later in the season.

Blisters: Nothing can make a hiker more uncomfortable than a small blister. Even properly fitting boots can cause "hot spots," which can lead to blisters. In your small first aid kit we recommend that you carry a supply of moleskin and Compeed (this is great stuff, readily available in pharmacies, and now in the US market sold under Band-Aid brand in blue-green containers.) "Second Skin" is also good.

Walking Poles: Walking Poles are very useful and we strongly recommend you bring them. They add a third point of contact helping with balance and take strain off your knees on descents. Many past participants have told us hiking poles are invaluable. Hiking poles must be in checked bags if you are flying.

Water shoes: Our hike through Gulf Hagas on Day 3 involves a river crossing. The Pleasant River is generally very shallow at this time of year, though the riverbed is rocky and the current can be swift. It is helpful to have Teva-type sandals or water shoes that you can wear while crossing the river.

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PACKING LIST

When selecting clothing, think about dual-purpose items and about layering for warmth and keeping dry. It is better to have several layers you can take off and put on one at a time versus one heavy layer. This list has been thoughtfully prepared. If you follow it closely, you will be well prepared for all weather conditions.

We recommend fleece, merino wool, and synthetic materials for your hiking clothes. Unlike cotton, these materials retain their insulating qualities even when damp. They wash easily and dry quickly. There are many excellent jackets, sweaters, shorts, pants and hiking shirts made from these materials, which are known by many different names: quilted synthetics, nano, Icebreaker, silk weight, quick dry, merino wool, etc.

APRÈS HIKING: It's nice at the end of the day to have a change of clothing from your hiking gear, but don't go overboard. One or two outfits above and beyond what you'll need for hiking will suffice. Comfortable, casual sportswear is most appropriate for the times when you will not be hiking.

SPECIALIZED GEAR

- 1 day pack
- 1 pair hiking boots or sturdy trail shoes
- 1 pair hiking poles – these are optional, but we recommend them
- 1 set rain gear – tops and bottoms
- Water shoes for a stream crossing
- 3-season sleeping bag for use in the huts
- Towel and pillowcase

CLOTHING

- 1 midweight fleece sweater, PrimaLoft, or puff jacket
- 1 lightweight fleece sweater
- 1 vest – optional
- 1 super lightweight wind breaker – optional but these are great
- 1 pair long underwear: light or midweight – tops and bottoms (for Fall trips)
- 1-2 pair hiking shorts
- 1 pair long hiking pants or capris and warmer fleece type pants if you know you get cold easily
- 1-2 synthetic T-shirts
- 2-3 pairs hiking socks
- 1 pair shoes other than hiking boots
- 1 warm hat and mittens/gloves – these are important, regardless of the time of the year
- 1 sun hat

OTHER ITEMS

- 2 one-liter water bottles or Camelback (hydration system)
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- Bandana
- Pocketknife
- Small flashlight or head lamp – always useful when traveling
- Personal items including small first aid kit and personal toilet items
- Small plastic container to carry lunch items for trailside picnics – optional
- Camera and chargers
- Ear plugs – always useful when traveling
- Travel umbrella – optional
- Bathing suit – there might be an opportunity for swimming.