



Denali Backcountry Adventures: Gear Checks & Packing Tips

Denali Backcountry Adventures takes participants into unpredictable and varied environments in the remote backcountry of Denali National Park. It is imperative that all participants are appropriately equipped to ensure a safe and comfortable expedition. The list provided serves as your checklist as you get your gear together. It lists both **required** gear and *recommended* gear, please consider the items on this list carefully and contact us with questions or concerns. We do have a limited supply of items that are available to borrow, let us know as soon as possible so we can reserve the items for you.

There will be two stages of **gear checks** for participants:

1. **Phone interviews:** The phone call will be set up a couple of weeks before the program. Parents may be involved, but we will expect to speak directly with the participant about their gear. The supplied comprehensive gear checklist will be your guide for this conversation. **Be prepared to tell us the details of your gear – it is just as important to know your gear as it is to have the proper gear!** In preparation for this conversation, participants should have their gear and clothing items set out so the instructor can ask specific questions about the items. More than one phone call may be necessary.
2. **Orientation check-in:** On the first morning of the trip, we will go through the gear with the checklists to double check that we all have what we need. **Please do not add, remove, or change any items after the phone interview unless you have been instructed to do so!**

Packing Suggestions

- All items must fit *inside* one backpack. Stuff sacks help maximize the space in your pack and keep your gear organized. No stuff sacks? Gallon size Ziplocs work great for everything from toiletries to clothing items. Fill the bag and compress the air out for maximum space saving.
- Waterproof your pack: Garbage bags add a waterproof layer to your backpack, use them to line the inside of your pack and your sleeping bag compression sack. Put the garbage bag liner in your pack/compression sack first, pack your gear/sleeping bag, gather the top of the bag and press down on your gear to compress the space even further. You'll be amazed how much space you find left!
- Gear and weight distribution in your pack: It is important for your comfort, safety, and energy to carry a well-balanced pack while hiking off trail.
 - 1) Put your sleeping bag in the bottom of your pack.
 - 2) Stand the pack up and let it balance on its own.
 - 3) Think about the order you put your gear in your pack – put things you will need quick access to (rain jacket) near the top and things you won't need often (pajamas) towards the bottom. Not sure what order to put them in? Give it your best guess, you'll figure out a method that works for you.



- 4) Place the other items in the pack one at a time and make sure the pack remains standing. If it falls over, change the location of the last item to redistribute the weight and balance the pack again.
- Folding vs. Rolling Clothes. When packing your clothes in stuff sacks or Ziplocs or just in your pack try folding your clothes in half the long way and rolling them up. You'll find they fit into all kinds of nooks and crannies.

Leave these items home:

- Cotton clothing. Cotton in the backcountry is dangerous. It stays wet, keeps you cold, and gets heavy. It also does not compress well in your pack. **Please** read the tags of your clothes and leave things like jeans, Carhartts, hoodies, cotton athletic socks etc. at home!
- Extra food. We will be supplying all of the necessary food items for the duration of the trip beginning with dinner on the first night. If you're concerned about the menu and/or amount of food we're bringing feel free to let us know, but please do not bring your own food.
- Pillows. Makeshift pillows can be made from stuff sacks or extra clothing and work great!
- Toothpaste, sunscreen, and mosquito repellent. Because these are scented items they must be stored in the BRFCs. We have a supply of these items (in compact sizes) that we will supply for the group. If there are medical or health concerns regarding these items be sure to indicate these on your Medical History Form.
- iPods, cell phones, any other electronics.

Program will provide:

- Tents
- Stoves/fuel/cooking gear
- Food
- Water purification
- First Aid Supplies
- Bear Resistant Food Containers (BRFC)
- Maps/Compasses/GPS Units
- Satellite Phone and Radio
- Toothpaste, sunscreen and mosquito repellent