

### **Lighten your load and make backpacking more fun!**

It is possible to keep your personal gear in your pack to 15 pounds (6.8 kg). On top of this, you can expect to carry between 2 ½ to 3 pounds (1.3 kg) per day of trip food, 5 pounds (2.2 kg) of group gear, and carry 2 ½ pounds (1 kg) minimum of water. Keeping your personal gear as light as possible will greatly enhance your hiking pleasure.

The below list will keep you very comfortable in the field. When making your decisions on which item to bring, pull out the scale and weigh it! You will be tempted to bring all the comfort items, like heavy creams, folding washing sinks, heavy towels, folding chairs, even your own stove and gas for personal hot water. Even though they can be light weight, all the items add up. There are alternatives your guide can help you with in the field for your personal comfort. If you leave behind all the luxury items, you'll have more fun backpacking.

One thing not to leave behind are hiking poles. The long, steep ascents and descents in the Canadian Rockies make trekking poles vital. Hiking poles help us switch into 4X4 mode when hiking, as our arms and other parts of our body now take close to 15% of our body weight. This helps reduce the weight on our feet, knees and lower back. Hiking poles also help with endurance and stability.

The major items that you will bring with you will be a backpack, a sleeping bag stuffed in a garbage bag lined compression stuff sack, a sleeping mat, your clothing, eating utensils and a water bottle. For details about how to pack your backpack, please view our [video](#). Please note the video includes equipment that your guide will bring, i.e. VHF radio and a SPOT. You may also want to stuff your clothes in a lightweight small stuff sack, lined with a garbage bag.

### **Backpacks**

Internal frame backpacks have become the standard because they offer more features and hug closer to your body. It's important that your pack fits you. Packs are sized from XS to Large, and the size is determined by a person's torso length. It is also important that your pack has a good suspension system. A heavier load with a good suspension system is easier to carry than a lighter load with a poor, or no suspension system. Most backpacks around 65 litres will do the job perfectly for any trip between 3 and 10 days. Make sure you bring a waterproof, lightweight pack cover. Sil is a nice material.

For backpacks and sleeping bags, we recommend Deuter, the official sponsor for Canadian Rockies Hiking by Yamnuska.



<p><b>Deuter Air Contact Liter 65 + 10 Liter</b></p> <p>Made entirely of ripstop nylon which makes for a light pack. The majority of the weight of the pack is in the suspension system.</p> <p><b>Weight:</b> 4 lbs. 1 oz./1.8 kg</p>		
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### Sleeping Bags

With the fluctuating temperatures of the Canadian Rocky Mountains, it is necessary, even in the summer, to consider a sleeping bag with a lower rating. A typical summer bag is often rated for above freezing, which can lead to some cool, uncomfortable nights. You will want to bring a three season sleeping bag which should be rated between 0°C to -7°C. Another way to increase the warmth and comfort of your sleeping bag is to use a liner.

There are two options for fill; synthetic and down. Down is lighter and compresses better than a synthetic bag of the same rating. Down fill only maintains its loft and warmth when kept dry, so it is important to line your sleeping bag stuff sack with a garbage bag. It also helps to air your bag periodically. A mummy style bag is the warmest.

<p><b>Deuter Atmosphere Down Bag</b></p> <p>With the Atmosphere series, Deuter started a new era in down sleeping bags. The fill is tried and tested, and have helped benighted mountaineers and explorers stay warm.</p> <p>Rated 0°C to -6°C Weight 2.2 lbs. / 1080 g</p>	
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## Sleeping Pads

The two basic types of sleeping pads are a self-inflating foam mattress and a closed foam mattress. Mattresses may be full or  $\frac{3}{4}$  quarter length, the longer ones being warmer and proportionally heavier. A self-inflating foam mattress (such as a Therm-a-Rest) is more comfortable than a closed foam mattress. A new generation of lightweight self-inflating foam mattresses has come on to the market, making camping very comfortable. We suggest the following:

### Therm-a-rest Pro Lite

A lightweight, three-season comfortable mattress, when minimal weight and packed size are as much a priority as reliable performance and comfort.

8 oz to 1.6 lbs; 360 g to 725 g, depending on length



### Therm-a-rest Neo Air

Lightweight, durable and extremely warm, the NeoAir All Season mattress is the ultimate solution to year-round backcountry comfort.

1.2 lbs. to 1.9 lbs; 544 g to 860 g, depending on length



## Clothing

At all costs avoid cotton t-shirts, cotton socks, and blue jeans. These clothes do not wick away water and sweat, and lose their warmth when wet. To add insult to injury, they are heavy!

Look for light weight synthetic and Merino wool clothing that you can layer. By using layers, you can adjust for the significant changes in temperatures between day and nighttime.

For hiking trips into the mountains, pack the following clothing:

- Lightweight synthetic or Merino wool long underwear, top and bottoms
- Synthetic or Merino wool t-shirt
- Midweight synthetic or Merino wool long sleeve shirt/wind proof is nice.
- Puff jacket
- Hiking pants with zip off legs
- Puffy jacket
- Lightweight breathable waterproof jacket
- Lightweight breathable waterproof rain pants
- 2 – 3 pairs Wool hiking socks; a synthetic liner worn with the sock is nice and prevents blisters
- Ball cap or sun hat
- Light warm and waterproof gloves
- Warm hat
- Crocs camp shoes recommended. These are light, comfortable and good for river crossings. Use the liner from your hiking boot inside them for extra comfort at night while your hiking boot airs out and dries quicker.
- Pair of gaiters (optional) Not necessary

**patagonia** is the official clothing sponsor of Canadian Rockies Hiking by Yamnuska and our guides have tested these items extensively in the field:

**BASE LAYERS:** They should be synthetic such as Patagonia Capilene or Patagonia Merino Wool



**INSULATING LAYERS:** An insulated jacket like a Patagonia Down Sweater and a mid-weight top, whether it is synthetic Polartec material or Merino Wool are essential for staying warm when the weather gets cold and nasty. Wind proof mid-weight top is nice.



**OUTTER LAYERS:** A light weight hiking pant and waterproof Pants and Jacket are essential for when the weather turns really wet. Because you end up carrying the rain gear around a lot of the time, pick lighter weight raingear such as Patagonia Torrentshell.



## ACCESSORIES



**BRING** good quality, wrap around sunglasses, 50 or higher SPF rating sunscreen, lip balm with SPF rating, Blister kit with moleskin, Compede, etc, 1 L minimum water bottle, and headlamp with fresh batteries. We recommend Petzl Headlamps. Don't forget your Camera, with a set of extra batteries.



## Boots

There is a huge selection of footwear available for hiking and backpacking. Day hiking boots are usually lighter, have less ankle support, and are generally cheaper than backpacking boots. A leather/fabric combination boot for day hiking is light, comfortable, dries quickly, and is not too expensive.

For backpacking trips, all leather boots are ideal because they offer stability for off-trail terrain, are water resistant, and durable. Look for all leather boots with few seams, such as Hanwag or Scarpa.



Whichever boot you choose, make sure that they fit. Some brands specialize in fitting narrow feet, while other brands accommodate a wider foot. You should be able to slide a single finger down the back of your foot, inside your boot.

Once you have worn them around indoors for a day (and have the option to return them if the fit is not quite right for you), you will want to break them in and waterproof them before heading out on a multi-day trip. A good way to break your boots in is to submerge them in water while on your feet in the socks you intend to hike in. Then go for a hike, wearing them until they are dry.

Warning! Poor fitting or new boots can cause serious blisters that will bring your trip to a halt. You'll need comfortable feet to hike across the magnificent landscape you've signed up for!

### Personal items

Hygiene is important in the backcountry, and you can keep clean and still travel light. Bring travel sized toothbrush, toothpaste and dental floss, along with a small Nalgene of biodegradable soap, a large sized ziplock and small wash cloth. Ask your guide for a cup of hot water to go with the cup of cold water you have in your bag for a delicious sponge bath or shave. You can air dry. You will want a good sunscreen.

### Miscellaneous Equipment

When selecting items such as eating utensils, headlamps, etc, pick the lightest piece of equipment that will do the job you need it to do.

For backpacking trips, a bowl, spoon, fork, and mug is all that you need. Plastic Lexon or similar products are light and work very well in the backcountry. Make sure your cup is insulated.



**On your backpacking trip Canadian Rockies Hiking will be supplying the tents, stoves and cook wear. Here is some information on these items:**

### Tents

We use light, well ventilated three-person **Big Angus Copper Spur UL3** Tents for double occupancy , **and Big Angus Seedhouse SL1 or SL2** for single tenters. These tents are light and freestanding and have a fly that covers the entire tent. Bonus features include a vestibule where you can put your footwear or other small items.



## Stoves

For multi-day trips, Canadian Rockies Hikes uses a MSR Whisperlite Shaker Jet white gas stoves; they are a standard industry workhorse that is easily serviced in the field and works well for cooking in groups. We'll also carry one or two sets of pots, depending on group size.



## MEALS

Our dehydrated dinners are lightweight and delicious. We accommodate most diets, including gluten free and vegetarian.  
<http://backcountryfood.ca/index.php>



If you have any questions at all regarding what equipment or clothing to bring on your backpacking or hiking adventure, please do not hesitate to contact us at [gear@yamnuska.com](mailto:gear@yamnuska.com) or by phone toll free in North America at 1(866)678-4164.

See you soon!