

Day Hiker's Checklist

Before you hit the trail this year, take the time to make sure you've included the following items for a safer, more enjoyable trip.

The following list is designed to help equip hikers who are just starting out. You will probably develop your own mental checklist as you gain experience.



Clothing and Other Gear...

- Supportive footwear designed for the length of your hike and expected terrain
- Spare socks (optional, but nice to change into at lunchtime)
- Jacket or pullover
- Rain/wind shells (jacket and pants)
- Wool hat
- Bandanna (optional)
- Map and/or guidebook
- Compass
- Full canteen(s) or water bottle(s)
- Knife
- Flashlight or headlamp with new batteries
- Waterproof matches
- Insect repellent
- First aid kit
- Sun protection (sunglasses, sunscreen)
- Toilet tissue
- Notebook with pencil
- Whistle
- Well-designed day pack
- Moleskin
- Money
- Handful of zip-seal plastic bags
- Camera and film (optional)
- Binoculars (optional)

Day Hiking Tips

- Carrying your clothing and food in different colored stuff sacks keeps your pack organized and helps you find gear easily.
- Always carry plenty of water. Two quarts per person per day is a good rule of thumb. Warmer conditions and/or rugged terrain may require carrying more. Drink often to stay well hydrated.
- Fill your canteens before you leave. Backcountry water sources are often unpredictable.
- Carry more food than you think you will need. It is better to bring extra snacks home with you than to go hungry.
- Practice minimum impact camping. Carry out whatever you pack in so others can enjoy the surroundings. If you can, help pick up what previous visitors may have left behind.
- When you choose a hike, consider the ability levels of all members of your party.
- Hike only as fast as the slowest member of your group.
- Acquaint yourself with the area and specific trail(s) you plan to hike so you can set a reasonable timetable. Many guidebooks include estimated timetables for trips.
- Start off slow to avoid excess fatigue part way through your hike.
- Make sure your vehicle is in good running order and your gas tank is topped off.
- Leave your itinerary with someone you trust.

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