



American  
Alpine Institute

*The Spirit of Alpinism*

[www.alpineinstitute.com](http://www.alpineinstitute.com)

info@alpineinstitute.com

Equipment Shop: 360-671-1570

Administrative Office: 360-671-1505

1515 12th st

Bellingham, WA 98225

## **PROFESSIONALISM FOR THE OUTDOOR EDUCATOR**

Bellingham, WA

### **EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST**

Your course will take place in Bellingham, Washington. This area enjoys a typical maritime climate of mild temperatures throughout the year with frequent precipitation in the winter and generally pleasant summers. The preferred climbing season extends from about late April, through the summer, to the end of September. Summer highs can be up in the 80's but more commonly are in the 60's to 70's. Nighttime lows are usually around 50°F. Rain is not uncommon, particularly before mid-June. Rain is less common here than in other climbing areas on the coast, because the mountain is in a rain shadow. A typical day in the summer might begin cool and pleasant, warm to the lower 70's by afternoon, and drop to a night-time low between 40-50°F.

For this course you will be expected to provide your own lodging, with one exception. On the third evening of the program, the team will be in the backcountry. For the frontcountry portion of the class, many students will opt to camp at Larrabee State park about 20 minutes away from our office and where your course will be taking place.

At AAI we take equipment and its selection seriously. Our Equipment Services department is expertly staffed by climbers, skiers and guides. Additionally, we only carry products in our store that have been thoroughly field tested and approved by our guides. This intensive process ensures that all equipment that you purchase from AAI is best suited to your course and future mountain adventures. Please contact us to select equipment for your course.

The primary goal of any backpacker should always be to carry as little as possible. What is left out of a backpack is often just as important as what is placed inside. Conditions in the mountains vary dramatically from season-to-season, and sometimes even throughout the same day. This can make the process of preparing equipment for a trip difficult. On the one hand, a hiker wants to be light. But on the other hand, a hiker wants to have everything he or she needs if there is a storm.

This list was designed for the “worst case scenario,” a trip with significant inclement weather. In serious conditions it’s not uncommon for a backpacker to need every piece of clothing and equipment on this list. However, if a program does not encounter significant weather, there may be items here that are not used. As you prepare for your trip, it’s important to plan for the worst and hope for the best.

Please be sure to check the forecast several days prior to your course to ensure that you are properly prepared.

[NOAA Bellingham, WA Weekly Forecast](#)

**Call or E-mail the Equipment Shop for Advice on Gear**

Please feel free to contact the equipment shop for advice as you prepare for your program. We are happy to provide you with equipment advice whether or not you choose to purchase or rent equipment at AAI. We take your comfort and safety seriously.

Call: (360) 671-1570 Email: [shop@AlpineInstitute.com](mailto:shop@AlpineInstitute.com)

Equipment Shop Website: [Shop.AlpineInstitute.com](http://Shop.AlpineInstitute.com)

Frontcountry Classroom Essentials	Packing Checklist
<p><b>Frontcountry Classroom Essentials:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Smart Phone</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Gaia Smartphone App</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Guide Pace smartphone App</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Altimeter Smartphone App or watch</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Compass</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Map Tool with UTM Grid Reader</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Notebook and Pen/Pencil: Right as rain paper might be a good thing to consider if notes need to be taken outside.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Laptop (<u>Optional</u>, but many students find that this helps significantly in their scholastic exercises.)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Comfortable clothing for being outside in and around town</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Own</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Buy</li> </ul>

<h2 style="text-align: center;">Backcountry Equipment/Gear Clothing</h2>	<h3 style="text-align: center;">Packing Checklist</h3>
<p><b>Sun Hat</b> Nice for days outside for keeping the sun off of your face. Baseball caps work but some of the synthetic hats from companies like Ciele or Skida are also quite popular.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Sun Glasses</b> Preferably with UVA/UVB protection</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Headlamp</b> Bring extra batteries, or if it has a rechargeable battery, make sure and bring a charger. 200-350 Lumens is an ideal range. ★ <i>Example : Petzl Swift RL, Petzl Actik Core</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Liner Glove</b> Thin, lightweight, wool or synthetic gloves. Size to fit snug but not too tight. Phone compatible fingertips and some sort of palm texture are nice features to have. Generally these are worn alone in temperatures above 25°F(-4°C) and when precipitation is not present. UPF rated liner gloves are ideal for sun protection. Bring 1-2 pairs. ★ <i>Examples: Outdoor Research Vigor Sensor, The North Face Etip Grip</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Hard Shell Glove (Optional)</b> Waterproof and insulated gloves. If the glove lacks insulation then size it to fit a liner glove inside. Mainly used in wet conditions, cold temperatures, or when not mobile. ★ <i>Examples: Black Diamond Renegade, Outdoor Research Highcamp.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Sports Bra</b> Wool or synthetic, comfort is key. Avoid bras with adjusters and clasps that could get compressed by your pack straps. Racerbacks are popular options for keeping straps in place. ★ <i>Examples: Girlfriend Collective Topanga, Vuori Elevation.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Sun Hoody</b> A lightweight, wool or synthetic sun hoody is ideal. Look for one with UPF 30+ sun protection. UPF Clothing protects better from the sun than sunscreen. ★ <i>Examples: Patagonia Capilene Cool Daily Hoody, Outdoor Research Echo, Rab Pulse</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Active Insulation Layer</b> Lightweight “gridded fleece” or lightweight synthetic insulated jacket. Hood preferred. ★ <i>Active insulation jacket weight at 40g/m2 and heavier Insulation jacket at 60g/m2 or 80g/m2</i> ★ <i>Example: Patagonia R1, Patagonia Nano Air, Arc'teryx Proton LT</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy

<p><b>Soft Shell Jacket or Windproof Jacket (Optional)</b>  A soft shell jacket is considered an ‘action layer’. Its materials are designed to stretch and breathe while also maintaining wind and water resistance. This allows the user to leave this jacket on for a wide range of temperatures and conditions throughout the day, without the hassle of constantly changing layers.</p> <p>Wind proof jackets are lightweight and packable, but lack the breathability and stretchy nature of the soft shell. Windproof jackets are ideal for blocking wind and light precipitation during low output activities.</p> <p>★ <i>Example SoftShell: Black Diamond Alpine Start Hoody, Rab Borealis, Mountain Equipment Squall, Patagonia Houdini Air.</i>  ★ <i>Example Windproof Jacket: Patagonia Houdini, Arc’teryx Squamish Hoody,</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Insulation Jacket</b>  AKA the “puffy.” Down or Synthetic. This piece is worn in cold conditions or when not moving. Hood preferred. If choosing Down, water-resistant Down treatment is preferred to help prevent matting and loss of insulating ability if the jacket gets wet.</p> <p>★ <i>Example: Arc’teryx Nuclei FL, Patagonia DAS light, Patagonia Down Sweater, Arc’Teryx Cerium LT.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Hard Shell Jacket (Waterproof Rain Jacket)</b>  Non-insulated jacket with a waterproof and breathable membrane. 3-layer construction is recommended. It must have a hood, ideally a helmet compatible hood. When sizing make sure it can fit over other layers. Ski jackets are discouraged because they are usually not waterproof and have heavy insulation.</p> <p>★ <i>Materials: Gore-Tex, eVent, Drilite, H2NO, Pertex Shield</i>  ★ <i>Example: Patagonia Torrentshell, Arc’Teryx Alpha AR, Mountain Equipment Lhotse.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy <input type="checkbox"/> Rent*
<p><b>Undergarments</b>  Wool or synthetic. Long, compression style undergarments can help reduce inner thigh chafing.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Base Layer Pant (aka “Long Johns”)</b>  Wool or synthetic. Bring one for early or late-season conditions, optional for mid-season conditions (depending on the weather).</p> <p>★ <i>Example : Patagonia Capilene midweight or thermal weight (Thermal is warmer)</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Soft Shell or Synthetic Hiking Pant</b>  Thin, weather-resistant, breathable, and stretchy. You will wear these a majority of the trip.</p> <p>★ <i>Materials: Exolite, Fortius, Schoeller</i>  ★ <i>Example: Patagonia Altvia, Mountain Equipment Ibex, Arc’teryx Gamma FL</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Hard Shell Pant (Waterproof Rain Pants)</b>  Non-insulated, waterproof and breathable membrane. Full side zips are recommended. When sizing make sure it is able to fit over a base layer and soft shell pants. Insulated ski pants are strongly discouraged due to lack of waterproofness and heavy insulation.</p> <p>★ <i>Materials: Gore-Tex, eVent, Drilite, H2NO, Pertex Shield.</i>  ★ <i>Example : Patagonia Torrentshell, Arc’Teryx Beta Pant</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy <input type="checkbox"/> Rent*

<p><b>Socks</b> Wool or synthetic socks that are at least mid calf height. ★ <i>Example : Darn Tough Coolmax Lightweight</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Hiking Shoe (Lightweight Boots or Trail Running Shoes)</b> Lightweight boots can be appropriate for early season programs (mid-June or earlier) when the weather forecast is cold and/or wet. By mid-season many opt for trail running shoes as they are lighter and dry out faster than traditional hiking boots. Be aware that trail running shoes do not offer as much support when traveling with heavy packs. ★ <i>Example Trail Runner: Altra Lone Peak, La Sportiva Kaptiva, Salomon Sense Ride 4</i> ★ <i>Example Lightweight Boot: La Sportiva Trango Tech, Scarpa Zodiac</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy <input type="checkbox"/> Rent*
<p><b>Trekking Poles</b> One is required, two are highly recommended. Poles help with balance while hiking with a heavy bag and increase security during stream crossings. They also decrease the pressure on your knees during steep descents. For early season programs, your poles should have snow baskets. ★ <i>Example : Black Diamond Expedition 3</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy <input type="checkbox"/> Rent*
<p><b>Internal Frame Pack</b> 50-65L is a recommended size range. Mountaineering specific packs, instead of backpacking packs, are a good way to shave weight. ★ <i>Example : Osprey Mutant 52, Black Diamond Mission 55, Osprey Atmos 65</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy <input type="checkbox"/> Rent*
<h2 style="margin: 0;">Camping</h2>	
<p><b>Tent</b> 3 season tents can be used if the rain fly goes all the way to the ground on all sides. A “bathtub” floor for the inner tent is also recommended. This means that the inner tent isn’t all mesh but has water resistant floor material that scoops up from the floor for 4-12” before changing to mesh, like a bathtub. If there are any questions please consult our Equipment Shop to see if your tent is okay to use.</p> <p>If your tent does not have wind lines, an additional 6-10 ft of 3mm accessory cord is often needed for rigging your rainfly in a mountain environment.</p> <p><u>-Early-season:</u> Double wall 4 season tent recommended. (April to Mid-June) <u>-Mid-season:</u> 4 season or 3 season tent. (Mid-June to August) <u>-Late-season:</u> 4 season tent recommended. (Late August to September)</p> <p>★ <i>NOTE: 4 season tents are available to rent at AAI the first morning of the course. There is also the possibility to pair up with other students on your course and share a tent.</i> ★ <i>Example 4-Season : Hilleberg Unna, Black Diamond Eldorado</i> ★ <i>Example 3-Season : Big Agnes Copper Spur, REI Half Dome</i></p>	<div style="text-align: center;"><b>Packing Checklist</b></div> <input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy <input type="checkbox"/> Rent*

<p><b>Sleeping Bag</b>  Synthetic or Down. If you bring a synthetic bag bring one on the lower end of the temperature range since synthetic bags tend not to be as warm as down. If you sleep cold it is recommended that you bring a warmer bag than required for the seasonal conditions. If choosing Down, water-resistant Down treatment is preferred to help prevent matting and loss of insulating ability if the sleeping bag gets wet.  -<u>Early-season</u>: 0°F to 20°F (-18°C to -6°C)  -<u>Mid-season</u>: 20°F to 30°F (-6°C to -1°C)  -<u>Late-season</u>: 15°F to 20°F (-10°C to -6°C)  ★ <i>Example : Mountain Equipment Fireflash (5), Western Mountaineering Alpinlite (20), Rab Mythic Ultra 180 (32)</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy <input type="checkbox"/> Rent*
<p><b>Compression Stuff Sack</b>  For your sleeping bag. If it is a down bag, a waterproof compression sack is recommended.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Sleeping Pad</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <u>Early-season</u>: Bring two; one inflatable and one closed cell foam. The foam pad helps insulate from the snow and serves as a backup to the inflatable pad.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <u>Mid or late-season</u>: One inflatable or closed cell foam pad.</li> </ul> <p>★ <i>Example : ThermaRest XTherm</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy <input type="checkbox"/> Rent*
<p><b>Stove and Fuel</b>  Liquid fuel or canister stove. Fuel is available at AAI the morning of the course.  ★ <i>NOTE: Many people choose to share stoves, fuel and tents to decrease weight. However, some people prefer to camp in their own tents and use their own stoves. This can be determined on the morning of the first day of your program.</i>  ★ <i>Example : Soto Windmaster, MSR Windburner</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy <input type="checkbox"/> Rent*
<p><b>Pots</b>  Bring one pot.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <u>Early-season</u>: Bring a bigger pot for melting snow; 1.5L to 2L</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <u>Mid or late-season</u>: 0.5L to 1L</li> </ul> <p>★ <i>NOTE: If you have a complete stove system like the Jetboil or MSR Reactor, and plan on eating out of your integrated pot, then you do not need to bring another pot.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Utensils</b>  Don't forget the official "most forgotten item ever;" the spoon, or spork. Long-handled spoons make stirring hot liquids safer, and metal ones tend to not break as easily in cold temperatures.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Bowl</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <u>Early-season</u>: Bring a plastic bowl or mug, preferably with insulation.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <u>Mid or late-season</u>: Bring a plastic bowl, insulation is not necessary.</li> </ul> <p>★ <i>NOTE: If you have a Jetboil or MSR Reactor type stove and plan on eating out of your integrated pot, then you don't need to bring a bowl. The same applies if you plan on only using commercially packaged dehydrated or freeze dried meals.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy

<p><b>Lighters</b> Bring two. You will have the opportunity to buy them the morning of the course.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Hydration</b> 3L capacity is recommended, though some people need more.</p> <p>A common approach is to bring a 2-3 liter bladder and a 1 liter hard sided bottle. The bottle is an important backup to the bladder if it gets punctured. A hard-sided bottle may also double as a mug for hot water, though not every bottle is designed to hold boiling water.</p> <p>★ <i>Example : Nalgene 32 oz bottle, Hydrapak Seeker 2-3L, MSR Dromedary 4-8L</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Water Purification</b> Water purification of some form is required. The popular tabs that our guides use, Aquatabs, are available at the shop the morning of the course. Pills that take an hour or less to purify are recommended. Steripens are an acceptable alternative to purification tablets. It is strongly encouraged to use the brand Aquatabs, as they work the fastest and have the least amount of flavor once administered.</p> <p>★ <i>NOTE: Pumps can be damaged by silt in the glacial water and can easily freeze at night and crack. However, many of our guides are finding success using some of the integrated pump/bladders like the BeFree and Quickdraw.</i></p> <p>★ <i>Example : Aquatabs, SteriPen, Katadyn BeFree, Platypus Quickdraw</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Food</b> You are responsible for your own food for the duration of the course. Please consult our <a href="#">meal planning page</a>.</p> <p>You should arrive on the first morning of your course with two-days of backcountry food.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<h2 style="margin: 0;">Other Essentials</h2>	
<p><b>Toothbrush and Toothpaste</b> Travel size recommended.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Hand Sanitizer and/or Wet Wipes</b> Required. Used after going to the bathroom and before eating. Wet wipes can be used for the “mountain shower.”</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Toilet Paper</b> The provided solid waste bags have a small amount of toilet paper with them, but most people do not find this to be adequate. Estimate how much you’ll need for a program of this length and place that in a plastic zip lock bag. An extra zip lock bag can be helpful for pack-out of used paper. If you plan to use wet wipes, be wary of scented or exfoliating types as these can be an irritant for some people.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy

<p><b>Pee Cloth (optional)</b>  A reusable, antimicrobial pee cloth. Used in place of toilet paper or wet wipes for cleanup.  ★ <i>Example : Kula Cloth</i></p>	
<p><b>Urination Devices (optional)</b>  Pee funnels such as the GoGirl or Freshette. Rigid pee funnels hold their shape better. Used in conjunction with a pee bottle, or while on a rope team. These can help mitigate the need to squat.  ★ <i>Example : Freshette</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Menstrual Cup (optional)</b>  There are many things to consider about backcountry menstruation, click on the link below for more information. <a href="#">Click here for more info</a>  ★ <i>Example : Diva cup, Saalt, Lunette</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Sunscreen</b>  At least SPF 30+, zinc based is preferred. Small travel size tubes are recommended so you can put them in a close by pocket for easy access.  ★ <i>Example : ZBlok 45, 2oz containers are a nice size.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Lip Balm</b>  Make sure it is SPF rated.  ★ <i>Example : Blistex Gold Five Star Protection SPF 30</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Personal First Aid Kit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Band aids</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Blister treatment</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prescription drugs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ibuprofen etc.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> If you wear contacts make sure and have spares if you can't see without them.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Repair Kit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Inflatable sleeping pad patch kit</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Duct tape (Can be wrapped around trekking poles or water bottle. Gorilla Tape tends to be the best brand for the mountains.)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Zip ties</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 ft of 3mm accessory cord</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Trash bags that are big enough to line the inside of your pack with.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Other Optional Items</b></p> <p><i>The items below are not required, although many are nice "luxury" items that can make your expedition more enjoyable. Remember that a few ounces here and there add up to extra pounds on your back and knees during your expedition.</i></p>	<b>Packing Checklist</b>



<p><b>Pee Bottle</b> Used at night or when the weather is poor so you don't have to get out of your tent. 32oz or larger is strongly recommended. Many guides use a bladder instead of a bottle for increased capacity. ★ <i>Example : Hydrapak Seeker 2L, Collapsible 48oz Nalgene</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Entertainment</b> Books, games, cards, music player, kindle, ect. For evenings or rainy days in the tent.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Portable Charging Device</b> Phone charger, battery pack, or solar panel. You are responsible for your alarm clock each morning, if you are going to use your phone be sure you have enough power to accommodate for this. ★ <i>NOTE: Solar panels should only be used to charge battery packs. Battery packs should be used to charge devices. Inappropriate use of a solar panel could lead to the depletion of a device's power.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Ear Plugs</b> For defense against snoring and high winds.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Insect Repellent</b> Biting insects such as mosquitoes and blackflies can be prevalent during different times of the season depending upon conditions and location. This is a nice item to have just in case. Sometimes even a headnet is a nice item to have.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Camera</b> Phone cameras or small point-and-shoot cameras are preferred. SLR cameras are not recommended due to their size and bulk.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Comfortable Clothing and Footwear</b> Breathable footwear -- like flip-flops -- as well as some comfortable cotton clothing can be nice to change into after you get back to the van.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Car Charger</b> Consider bringing an extra battery pack as well, having a lot of people using car charger cables is difficult.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy