

American Alpine Institute^{Ltd.}

EQUIPMENT LIST FOR 1 DAY ALPINE CLIMBS

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Temperatures and weather conditions in the Cascades can change from minute to minute. You'll often hear the popular weather prediction, "If you can't see the mountains it's raining, and if you can see them it's going to rain." But when the sun comes out, it's glorious, and occasionally down-right hot. Rain can fall at any time of year, and it is possible to get snow down below timberline before the beginning of July and after about mid-September. Lows at night often drop to slightly below the freezing point with daytime highs ranging anywhere from 35°F to 70°F.

The equipment you bring must function well in a wide variety of conditions. Your clothing should be warm and lightweight, dry quickly, and allow good freedom of movement. The layering principle, based on using several thin layers of insulation (rather than one thick one), covered with an outer weather-proof shell, meets these needs well. Typically, Cascade mountaineers will wear a layer of long underwear made from polypropylene or a similar synthetic, another insulating layer of pile or fleece, and a Gore-tex shell, in addition to gloves/mittens and a hat.

In the early summer season, which extends to about mid-July, and also in the last part of summer, from mid-September to the time the winter snows begin to fall in late October, the Cascade climber will also bring along an extra light sweater, perhaps a pair of expedition weight long underwear in addition to their lightweight pair, and a second warm hat.

City clothes and other odds and ends which you won't need during your course can be left in your car at the trailhead. Please take the time to prepare your equipment carefully, and if possible, become familiar with it by using it in the field, perhaps on a backpacking trip. If you have any questions don't hesitate to call the Institute office or equipment shop.

CLOTHING

Boots - Leather mountaineering boots are highly recommended. Models like La Sportiva K2, Salomon Mtn. Guide 9, and Merrell Traverse are good examples. They must be designed for medium to heavy duty mountaineering, they should be broken in, be thoroughly waterproofed, have at least a 1/2 length steel or similar shank. Your guide will evaluate the acceptability of your leather boots the morning of your course.

Gaiters - Knee high. If you buy gaiters ahead of time make sure they are large enough to fit over your climbing boots. Gaiters can be rented or purchased from AAI before your course.

Running shoes or light weight hiking shoes - For use on the approach if applicable

Socks - Wool or synthetic, (no cotton). It is recommended one wear a thin liner sock, and one or two pair of thick socks depending on boot fit.

Long Underwear Bottoms and Tops - This will be your base layer and should be lightweight polyester, polypropylene or similar synthetic.

2nd Layer (Top) - Expedition weight long underwear top, 100 weight powerstretch, very light weight fleece, Schoeller, or a lightweight windshirt (i.e. Marmot DriClime) are good examples of this multi-use layer.

2nd Layer (Bottom) - Schoeller, Pile or fleece preferred. Seek out quick-drying and wind/water resistant material. Black Diamond Alpine Pants and Arc'teryx Gamma LT Pants are good examples of these types of materials.

Warm Jacket - Pile, fleece or Windstopper.

Insulated Jacket - Lightweight down or synthetic in addition to the warm jacket described above. Some good examples of insulating materials are Primaloft, Polarguard 3D or any down jacket/parka. This is different than your outer most waterproof shell jacket. Needed only in the earlier part of the season (before July) or for the late season (after Sept 15).

Rain Pants or Bibs - Gore-Tex or other waterproof breathable material recommended. Full side zips recommended for easy on and off over boots and crampons.

Rain Parka with Hood - Gore-Tex or other waterproof breathable material recommended.

Liner Gloves - Polypropylene / polyester.

T-shirt - Synthetic like Duofold, Coolmax, or similar.

Warm Hat - Synthetic is less itchy than wool and dries faster.

CLIMBING GEAR (if pursuing technical ascents)

Mountain Axe - 55 to 70 cm (55 cm to 65 cm preferred) length with standard pick and wrist loop. If your axe doesn't have a wrist loop, pre-sewn ones are available commercially or you can bring about 6 feet of 9/16 inch tubular webbing and we'll tie it on the course.

Crampons - Flexible, be sure they fit your boots. Crampons with step-in bindings should be used only with plastic boots or leather boots with soles designed specifically to accept heel and toe bails.

Climbing Harness - Should fit over bulky clothing. Adjustable leg loops help in this regard. Consider purchasing a lighter weight harness but one with gear loops.

Climbing Helmet - Kayak, bicycle or construction helmets are not acceptable.

Belay Device - Bring one if you have one, but you don't have to buy one for the course. If you want to get one, be sure to get advice on choices from the Equipment Department. (ATC's and like devices are recommended over Figure 8's.)

Ski Poles - this is an optional but highly recommended item that is useful in two ways:

1) taking the burden off your knees when coming downhill with a big pack and

2) giving you good balance points when making tricky stream crossings.

Telescoping (adjustable) poles are ideal, but non-adjustable ski poles at a length used in alpine (downhill) skiing will work too. Our guides have found them very helpful.

Snow Shoes - Length and models vary by weight and preference. Models include MSR's Denali and Denali Ascent, Atlas Backcountry series, and Tubbs Mountain Series.

MISCELLANEOUS

Food - Bring a lunch and plenty of snack type food. Power bars, Clif bars and the like work well. Trail mixes, dried fruits and 1 or two larger items like a sandwich or bagel and fixings.

Pack - Internal frame day style pack, 2500-4000 cubic inches recommended. External frame packs are not adequate for climbing purposes.

Headlamp - Bring an extra bulb and batteries. Flashlights are not adequate.

Pocket Knife - Multipurpose tools like the Leatherman Tool are great, Swiss army knives work well also.

Compass - Appropriate USGS topographic maps can be purchased through AAI.

Repair Kit - Needle and thread, a small amount of adhesive tape, Thermarest repair kit, 20 to 40 feet of light cord, crampon adjustment tools if your crampons need them.

Personal Medical Kit - For blisters, cuts, scrapes, etc.

Insect Repellent - Optional. Not need early and late s

Glacier Glasses - With side shields make sure they are 100% UVA/UVB to protect from snow blindness.

Snow Goggles - In case of high winds and precipitation snow goggles will be essential for safe travel. Models by Smith, Oakley, Scott and others are fine.

Sunscreen - With a protection factor of at least 20 and even more for people with fair skin. You know yourself best just remember that the glare from the snow increases your chance of getting burned.

Lip Protection - With a protection factor of at least 16. For the fair an SPF of 20 is better.

Personal Toiletries - Bring half a roll of toilet paper or less.

Camera - With lots of film and an extra batteries.