



Mount Whitney, California Gear List

To order gear or ask questions about gear please call Mountain Gear at 800-829-2009 and ask for Expedition Services. Your initial order must be placed by phone to receive your **FREE Summit For Someone gear**. Expedition Services is available Monday - Friday 8 am- 5 pm Pacific Time.

General Info:

- In the spirit of alpine style climbing, we recommend that you think light and simple when packing, and avoid doubling up on similar layers.
- Always test your layers before a trip. Outer layers should fit easily over inside layers without binding.
- No Cotton. Cotton drains body heat when wet and is unsuitable for climbing; wear synthetic layers like Capilene by Patagonia or wool.
- Minimize the risk of blisters by wearing a thin, synthetic liner sock under your regular hiking socks. NO COTTON! Test your sock combination before the trip.
- Bring an easily compressible down or synthetic sleeping bag.
- Stuff sacks are great for sorting your gear. Use different colors and sizes to differentiate the contents.
- Break in boots before arriving in Big Pine!!
- Where appropriate we will make specific gear recommendations.

CLOTHING:

LONG UNDERWEAR TOP AND BOTTOM: Wool and **synthetics like Capilene** are good fabrics. **Do not** bring cotton. It should fit fairly snug against your skin without feeling constricting. There should not be a lot of wrinkles. It is designed to wick perspiration moisture away from your body and too loose of a fit will inhibit its ability to do that. We bring two weights and sometimes mix and match depending upon the weather. Garments made from Merino wool work very well. It is high quality wool that does not itch or absorb body odor quickly. It wicks well, is easy to wash, and stinks much less than other synthetic fabrics when worn for days at a time.

SWEATER: Most mountaineering sweaters are made from a synthetic fabric referred to as “soft shell.” Schoeller **brand** fabric is a commonly used material. Zip styles offer more versatility. If you bring a wool sweater, make sure it is thick and tightly woven. Size your sweater to fit over the previous two layers.

SYNTHETIC CLIMBING PANTS: Synthetic Climbing Pants have become the standard pants for mountaineering. **WATERPROOF/BREATHABLE JACKET:** This is referred to as your “hard shell” or “storm” gear. This should be roomy enough to fit over all previous upper body layers without constricting your freedom of movement. It should be wind and waterproof. There are many good waterproof/breathable fabrics; Gore-tex is a familiar fabric used by many manufacturers.

WATERPROOF/BREATHABLE PANTS: Size them to fit over all previous leg layers. Be sure to bring suspenders if they are not already sewn into the garment. Side zippers are preferable because they are usually put on and taken off *during* a climb. The same companies who make jackets make matching pants.

GAITERS: Models that attach by Velcro as opposed to a zipper work best. Velcro is easier to work less

prone to breaking. Make sure the gaiter fits with your boots. An ankle high gaiter is sufficient for summer/fall trips.

WARM CAP: Hats made of Polartec (or similar fleece) or wool are readily available. Hats that cover the ears as well are nice.

PILE OR RAGG WOOL GLOVES: A lighter glove for warmer conditions when hand protection is still needed. Polartec gloves are available as well as wool. Do **not** bring a “glove liner” for this piece of clothing.

HEAVY WOOL SOCKS: Bring two pairs for multi day trips. Your socks should not be loose enough to create wrinkles which lead to blisters, but not so tight that they constrict blood circulation. **No cotton socks!**

LINER SOCKS: Some people use these to reduce friction between their feet and thick socks cutting down on blisters. Synthetic and wool materials are available **No cotton socks**. This is an optional item. Test your sock combination on your training climbs.

BASEBALL CAP: To shade your head during warm approach hikes.

T-SHIRT: Loose fitting and comfortable. Any material is fine. Many people prefer a thin weight wool short sleeve t-shirt or a button down shirt. For hiking on warm days.

SHORTS: Loose fitting and comfortable. Any material is fine. For hiking on warm days.

DOWN JACKET: Your down jacket is your last warm layer. It should fit over all previous layers including your shell gear. It is used to prevent chilling during rest breaks, staying warm while on the summit, and for evenings at camps. Heavier types are preferred over lighter “down sweaters”. The jacket should have a hood. Synthetic filled jackets are warm enough although they are usually heavier and bulkier than their down counterparts.

GEAR:

* **PACK:** This should be 4000+ cubic inches in capacity. Internal frame packs are the choice of most mountaineers because they provide freedom of movement for arms, fit close against the back, and move with you. For traveling they are much easier to pack and stand a much less chance of getting broken. Follow the manufacturer’s guidelines for fitting the pack to your body. Keep in mind it is your torso length that is critical, not your overall height. Torso length is the distance between the iliac crest and C7 vertebrae (the big one at the bottom of your neck). The pack hip belt needs to fit **below** the waist belt on your climbing harness.

MOUNTAINEERING BOOTS: It is extremely important to get a proper fit. They should have plenty of toe room and not constrict blood circulation. Fit them with the same socks you plan on climbing in. When you kick your toes on the ground, they should not hit the front of the boot. A *small* amount of heel lift is acceptable when walking. A double sock system helps prevent blisters caused by rubbing. Your boots **must** have a stiff shank and be designed specifically for use with crampons. **Do not** bring a lighter pair thinking you can get by. All brands fit differently.

TREKKING POLES: These are great energy savers and provide extra stability on uneven ground. Poles that adjust in length are best. They let you adjust for ascending or descending plus fit well in your luggage for traveling. Black Diamond and Leki make excellent trekking poles. **Make sure your pole baskets are attached to the poles. They will not work on snow without them.**

HEADLAMP: LED headlamps make the most of battery life and most mountaineering headlamps use AA batteries. Headlamps powered by AAA batteries are sometimes inadequate for mountaineering. Lithium batteries are preferable for cold conditions. Bring two new sets of batteries. **Keep the battery unplugged while carrying it in your pack and traveling.**

DARK GLASSES: Your dark glasses should filter out 100% of UV, and have side shields. A leash is recommended as well as a hard case to protect them from being crushed.

WATER BOTTLES: Bring 2 bottles that are 1 liter in capacity. Camelbacks, Platypuses, or other bladder type containers with a hose attached to it are popular among some climbers. Keep in mind they are fragile. One hole renders them useless. If you bring a bladder we strongly suggest bringing one water bottle as well. **Mark your bottles so you can tell which ones are yours!**

POCKET KNIFE: Swiss Army Knives and Leatherman Tools are the most popular among mountaineers. Handy features to have are a large and small blade, can opener, screw driver, and scissors. A serrated blade works best for cutting cord and webbing.

SUNSCREEN: Bring one 2-4 ounce bottle of SPF 15 or higher.

LIP BALM: Bring one tube of SPF 15 or higher.

DIGITAL CAMERAS: Battery life is an issue at high altitude and cold conditions so prepare accordingly. Models that have an actual view finder instead of solely a display screen are preferred. It saves battery life and the display screens can be difficult to see in bright conditions. Bring a memory card big enough for the trip. Do **not** plan to bring a laptop computer to download your pictures during the trip.

PERSONAL LUNCH FOOD: Items that are easy to eat are best. Pre-make your sandwiches; wrap things in Ziploc bags to keep your food from getting wet. Cookies, cheese, crackers, salami, hummus, chips, sardines, smoked oysters, fruit, hard candy, power gels, and power blocks are a few suggestions. Consider bringing drink mix or tea bags for your water.

SLEEPING BAG: This needs to be good quality and rated to at least twenty degrees. Down or synthetic insulation is fine. Down is still lighter but care must be taken to protect it from moisture. Consider buying a compression stuff sack.

SLEEPING PAD: These serve two purposes: (1) insulate your body from the cold ground, and (2) provide sleeping comfort. Closed cell foam does the first well, but the second only marginally well. Self-inflating models do both functions very well but are a bit more fragile. If you bring a self-inflating model, buy a stuff sack to help protect it while traveling and a repair kit to patch any potential holes. There are different lengths and thicknesses – 1-2-inch thickness is good.

EATING UTENSILS: Bring a 22-ounce insulated mug for hot drinks, a plastic bowl, and spoon. Durable

foldable plastic bowls are readily available in mountaineering stores.

CLIMBING HARNESS: Harnesses with adjustable leg loops are highly recommended for mountaineering. This simplifies putting it on, allows you to go to the bathroom while remaining clipped in to the rope, and gives a better fit with varied layers of clothing. To achieve a correct fit, keep the following points in mind. The waist belt should sit in the soft spot above your hipbones and below your rib cage. Wear your climbing harness over your thin base layer of clothing **only**. Never fit it over sweaters or jackets. Also, it is imperative that the waist belt have at least three inches left over after it has been threaded and doubled back through the buckle. The waist belt of your harness should be **above** the hip belt of your pack.

CARABINERS: Bring two large locking pear-shaped locking carabiners and two non locking carabiners of any shape. These will be used to clip you into the climbing rope and anchor points. For the locking carabiners, a screw gate lock mechanism is preferable over the spring loaded design. The spring is prone to icing or getting clogged with dirt preventing it from working correctly.

MOUNTAINEERING HELMET: Use a helmet made for climbing and mountaineering only! Helmets for bicycling or other sports are not approved and not adequate. It should have an attachment for a headlamp and fit on your head with and without a warm cap.

CRAMPONS: Hinged or semi-rigid as opposed to rigid. They should have 12 points. There is a difference between crampons made for glacier/snow travel and those designed for vertical ice climbing.

ICE AXE: 60-70 cm is a good length. Models that have a smooth head along the top with no humps in it are best. A hump can cause fatigue in your hand when held for hours at a time. Attach a leash to it with 11/16" or 1" tubular webbing. If you are unsure how to rig it, bring about 7 feet of webbing and we'll set it up for you during the trip.

SNOWSHOES: Any of the many brands of good quality snowshoes on the market will work as long and the binding system fits your boot. Snowshoes come in different lengths. Yours should be at least 22 inches long.

AVALANCHE TRANSCEIVER: These should work on the international frequency of 457 khz. Digital models are preferred. SMI currently uses the Tracker made by Backcountry Access, and the Barryvox by Marmot. Make sure you have new batteries for it. Most modern transceivers have features that let you test how much battery life is left. 75% battery life is minimum.