















# Winter Camping Gear List








The list below provides some tips for what to look for when buying, renting, or borrowing equipment and clothing for a winter camping trip. This pertains mostly to equipment and clothing items. This is not an exhaustive list and does not include things like food, hygiene, or other personal items that one may choose to bring on the trip.

## Personal Gear

ITEM	NEEDED?	What to Consider	
<b>Sunglasses or Snow Goggles</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visible Light Transmission of 20% or less (less is better)</li> <li>Side shields</li> <li>Goggles good for wind and blowing snow or if eyeglasses are required for vision</li> </ul>	
<b>Lip Balm/ Sunscreen</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher SPF's are better</li> <li>Waterproof</li> <li>Combination sunscreen/lip balm saves room in pack</li> </ul>	
<b>Headlamp</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Battery operated is better than rechargeable in winter</li> <li>Petzl and Black Diamond seem to work better than other brands – the reliability is worth the extra cost</li> </ul>	
<b>Gloves (multiple pairs)</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mittens help if you naturally get cold fingers, but you lose dexterity</li> <li>You need multiple pairs – lightweight, medium, and heavy. Extra points if you can layer your glove system.</li> <li>Gloves <u>should not fit tightly</u> as it decreases circulation to your fingers increasing the risk for frostbite</li> <li>Chilly Grip H2O brand insulated and waterproof gloves work great when working in snow. This is in addition to the glove system above.</li> </ul>	
<b>Beanie/ Hat</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spend the money for a really good beanie that insulates well</li> <li>Consider if your beanie needs to be worn under a helmet or another hat</li> <li>A hat with a brim/bill helps shield your eyes from the sun</li> </ul>	
<b>Wool/ synthetic Base Layer</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Base layers should fit close to skin and wick away moisture</li> <li>No cotton</li> <li>Should be made of wool or polyester blends</li> <li>Full or half zip can allow you to vent heat if sweating</li> </ul>	
<b>Softshell/fleece jacket Mid-layer</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full zip tends to be easier to remove or vent heat than pullover</li> <li>Hooded varieties work better to keep wind and snow off your back</li> </ul>	
<b>Shell/Rain Pants Outer Layer</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Should be waterproof (resistant) and breathable to allow perspiration to escape</li> <li>Pants with vents are a plus but harder to find</li> <li>Look for corded pull tabs on zippers; easier to use with gloves</li> <li>Full zip variety allows you to put on/off without removing footwear</li> </ul>	


<b>Shell/Rain Jacket Outer Layer</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Should be waterproof (resistant) and breathable to allow perspiration to escape</li> <li>Armpit vents are a plus</li> <li>Look for corded pull tabs on zippers; easier to use with gloves</li> <li>Hooded variety works best; look for helmet compatible if considering climbing or intermediate snowshoeing later</li> </ul>	
<b>Down or Synthetic "Puffy" Jacket Insulating Layer</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Down compresses better; sometimes water-resistant down is available</li> <li>Synthetic insulates even when wet</li> <li>Hooded variety works best to keep out drafts</li> <li>Fill weight (insulation volume) is more important than fill power (loft) when considering warmth</li> <li>Should not fit snugly as it decreases loft</li> </ul>	
<b>Socks</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look for thicker socks made of wool or synthetic fibers. No cotton</li> <li>Boots should not feel tight when wearing</li> <li>Doubling up socks increases volume; can cause boots to feel tight and decrease circulation to feet and toes</li> </ul>	
<b>Waterproof, Insulated Boots</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Boots should be waterproof and insulated</li> <li>A ¾ to full shank is recommended to provide support for wearing snowshoes</li> <li>If planning to progress to mountaineering courses or activities, consider an insulated mountaineering boot that is crampon compatible</li> <li>Boot sizing may be larger than street shoe size</li> </ul>	
<b>Gaiters</b>	Recommended	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gaiters are not required but highly recommended to keep snow out of your boots and pants legs</li> <li>Outdoor Research makes highly dependable gaiters and are widely used in the outdoor community</li> <li>Try them on with the boots you plan to use if possible to get the right size</li> <li>Some shell pants have gaiters built in so they may not always be needed</li> </ul>	
<b>Lightweight hoodie for sun protection</b>	Optional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A lightweight hoodie with SPF provides protection from the sun on clearer, warmer days when heavier layers are not necessary</li> <li>Optional in winter; strongly recommended to required in summer</li> </ul>	
<b>Buff/Bandana/Balaclava</b>	Optional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For extra protection from the elements, a neck gaiter, bandana, or balaclava may be used</li> <li>Should be made from synthetic fibers; not cotton</li> </ul>	
<b>Down or Synthetic "Puffy" Pants</b>	Optional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While not required, puffy pants can be very comfortable when sitting around camp in the evening or when an extra layer is needed at night</li> <li>Full zip style is easier to add or remove without removing footwear and the zips can provide ventilation if you become too warm</li> </ul>	
<b>Nalgene Bottle x 2 (wide mouth)</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A minimum of two liters of water is required for most activities so bring two one-liter bottles</li> <li>Should be the clear/color hard plastic as they hold up better to hot water; the white, soft plastic version becomes pliable when hot water is added</li> <li>Ensure they are BPA free</li> </ul>	

<b>Personal Cook Set/ Hot Cup &amp; Fork/Spoon</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wide mouth bottles are easier and more versatile to use</li> <li>• Cook sets, generally, are up to personal preference</li> <li>• If eating freeze dried meals, a metal, long-handled spork works better than the shorter plastic variety</li> <li>• GSI Outdoors makes an excellent 2-cup mug that is lightweight, insulated, easy to clean, and has easy to read measurement markings on the inner cup</li> <li>• A 2-cup bowl with a lid is highly recommended for eating at group meals or if cooking from a pot. The Snapware brand or collapsible variety both work well</li> <li>• Test collapsible bowls to ensure they properly seal before storing in your pack where food may spill</li> </ul>	
<b>Snowshoes or Skis (Floatation)</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cleats along the frame sides and underneath for braking</li> <li>• Heel lifts to reduce calf strain going up steep terrain</li> <li>• Bindings are easy to use and adjustable for different size footwear</li> <li>• Snow/water will not freeze in critical parts of the binding impairing adjustments</li> <li>• Snowshoes/bindings are easily repairable in the field or by the manufacturer</li> <li>• Tails are available for varying snow conditions and pack weight</li> </ul>	
<b>Hiking Poles with Snow Baskets</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look for poles sized for your height; some poles come in different ranges of length. When holding your poles, your forearm should be parallel to the ground/elbow bent at 90°</li> <li>• Must have the big snow baskets; poles are useless on snow without them</li> <li>• For extending poles, the flip-lock mechanisms do not freeze up as easily as the twist-lock mechanisms.</li> </ul>	
<b>Sleeping Bag (max. 15° F rating)</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bag has a draft tube along the zipper and neck</li> <li>• Mummy style is preferred</li> <li>• Should fit reasonably loose so insulation doesn't compress as much</li> <li>• Hood chinch to draw the bag closer</li> <li>• Fill weight (insulation volume) is more important than fill power (loft) when considering warmth</li> <li>• Compressibility (down vs synthetics) in the pack</li> <li>• Tie down loops to keep sleep pads in place is nice to have</li> <li>• Look at Comfort rating vs. lower limit temperature</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Understanding Sleeping Bag Ratings</a></p>	
<b>Sleep Pad x 2 (1 must be a closed-cell foam pad)</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closed-cell is more durable and can be used in camp anytime we're sitting on snow and under our feet</li> <li>• Inflatable takes less room in your bag, but often has a higher R-value (unless it gets punctured, then it is useless)</li> <li>• R-value – minimum value of 4 total (combined both pads)</li> <li>• Packability is important – self-inflating pads are heavy and bulky</li> <li>• Bring your repair kit for inflatables in case a small leak develops</li> </ul>	

<b>Paper Map of travel area and a Compass or GPS enabled device</b>	Required	<p>The Winter Camping and Basic Snowshoe course have no requirement to complete Basic Navigation, however this is an invaluable skill to have before heading out beyond the well-traveled snow park areas. It is much easier to get lost in the winter environment when the days are shorter, and everything is covered in snow.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Caltopo</a> is an application that lets you print your own maps and has various map layers available</li> <li>• <a href="#">GaiaGPS</a> is GPS tool that lets you import a GPX track to your phone or record your track as you travel. It has it's own base maps within the application</li> <li>• You can use Caltopo to create a map and a planned route. The route can be exported as a GPX file then imported into GaiaGPS for use on your trip</li> <li>• Both free and paid subscriptions are available for each application</li> <li>• Bring a paper map and compass if you know how to use them – no batteries required</li> </ul>	
<b>Map downloaded to phone</b>	Optional		
<b>Lighters (2 minimum)</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring more than one kind of fire-starter</li> <li>• If using butane lighters, bring more than one and keep them warm and dry</li> <li>• Waterproof matches are okay as are Bic style and USB rechargeable lighters</li> <li>• Don't rely on canister stove piezo lighter as they do not work well in cold conditions</li> </ul>	
<b>Repair Kit</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the gear you are bringing and what you need to repair it</li> <li>• Keep the kit compact to save space in your pack</li> <li>• Multi-use items are preferred</li> <li>• Kit item suggestions: Knife, duct tape, zip ties or ski straps, cord, safety pins, tenacious tape, urethane repair adhesive, crazy glue</li> </ul>	
<b>Personal First Aid Kit</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal kit for 2-3 days</li> <li>• Add foot and hand warmers for winter</li> <li>• Include any medication YOU require</li> <li>• In the event first aid is needed, we use your kit first</li> </ul>	
<b>Pack 55 – 75L</b>  Winter trips and overnight trips require more pack volume than day trips	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water resistant fabric treatment to keep water out is nice</li> <li>• Line with a trash bag to ensure gear stays dry</li> <li>• Top lid and hip pockets add convenient storage but add weight</li> <li>• Side and front straps for carrying snowshoes or skis is a plus</li> <li>• Ice Ax carry loops if considering intermediate snowshoe or mountaineering trips in the future</li> <li>• Side pockets work well for carrying tent rods or wands</li> <li>• Packs that compress down when not fully loaded are good for snowshoe trips</li> </ul>	
<b>Pee Bottle</b>	Optional	<p>Waking up at 2am to pee when you are warm in your sleeping bag is no fun. Getting out of your tent, putting on your layers and boots, and then slipping and sliding on the refrozen snow in the blowing wind is worse. Having a pee bottle makes those overnight bio calls a breeze.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wide-mouth 1-liter Nalgene bottles work very well; consider a larger 2-liter bottle for longer nights</li> <li>• Mark or designate a dedicated bottle – don't confuse this with your water bottles</li> <li>• Collapsible wide-mouth 1-liter Nalgene bags work well but take practice to use. More convenient to store when not in use; more susceptible to punctures/leaking</li> </ul>	


















Lightweight tarp	Optional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflective on one-side</li> <li>• Grommets for tying as a shelter top</li> <li>• Lighter weight than home “blue-tarp” but heavier than emergency blanket</li> <li>• 4' x 6' minimum</li> <li>• Multi-functional item</li> <li>• Used for snow removal building caves</li> <li>• Under pads in tent to help keep things dry</li> </ul>	
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## GROUP GEAR

The concept of **GROUP GEAR** is gear that can be shared among the group to reduce the overall weight, impact, or cost of a trip. This can be accomplished by sharing a tent, splitting the gear between individuals in the group, and sharing existing resources if someone already owns an item. Something to consider when looking at group gear: in the backcountry, two is one and one is none. That means if you have one of a critical item and it fails, your trip is over. Another consideration is the number of people in your entire group. If resources are shared within a tent group, are there other tent groups with you that have the same equipment should yours fail. **If you are camping alone, all group gear automatically becomes personal gear.**

ITEM	NEEDED?	COMMENTS	
<b>Liquid Gas Stove</b> 1 per tent	Recommended	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liquid outperforms canister stoves in very low temperatures when melting snow for water</li> <li>• A little bulky to pack; look for a pot that your stove can fit into as a space saving method or a stove that folds down small</li> <li>• Practice using your stove before your trip</li> <li>• Understand how to do maintenance if needed</li> <li>• Consider what kind of fuel your stove uses (kerosene, white gas, etc.). White gas is most common in the U.S.</li> <li>• MSR brand stoves have proven dependable in the past; easy to repair as the manufacturer is local to Seattle</li> <li>• Primus is another brand that has been used in the past and operation is similar MSR stoves</li> </ul>	 
<b>Liquid fuel</b>	Recommended	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look for quality fuel</li> <li>• Ensure your fuel is stored properly to avoid water in your fuel by way of condensation or other contaminants which will cause your stove to run inefficiently</li> <li>• Recommend at least 8 oz per day per person for liquid fuel</li> <li>• Canisters: 4 ounces will boil about 10 quarts of water. Double your fuel requirement in cold weather.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Stoves 101: How Much Fuel Should I Carry?</a></p>	 
<b>Canister Stove</b> 1 per tent	Optional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look for stoves that multi-functional; does it support using a skillet or pot separate from the canister</li> <li>• Ensure the pot supports your needs; most come with a 1-liter pot, but larger options may be available for group or 2-person use</li> <li>• Stoves with regulators built to handle colder weather tend to work better in winter</li> </ul>	 
<b>Pot for melting snow for water</b> (1 per tent)	Recommended	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is a designated pot used for melting snow; this is to prevent cross-contamination with other camp gear</li> <li>• Large enough to hold your stove saves space in your pack</li> <li>• Small and lightweight are easier to carry but cost more</li> <li>• Many options available so find what works for you</li> </ul>	
<b>Personal Water Filter</b> (1 per tent)	Recommended	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pump style is preferred</li> <li>• Gravity and squeeze will freeze</li> <li>• Check to see if the filter is freeze-proof or is functional after freezing – a very few are.</li> <li>• Store in sleeping bag at night to avoid freezing</li> <li>• Empty all water out of the filter after use</li> </ul>	

<b>Shovel 1 per tent</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Larger shovels move more snow but are heavier and harder to carry on your pack</li> <li>• Look for something with a retractable handle – avalanche rescue shovels are good</li> <li>• Metal shovels are recommended; plastic, cheap shovels tend to break on first use</li> <li>• Shovels with D-handles are easier to use with mittens</li> <li>• Shovels with hoe-head feature move a lot of snow quickly in avalanche rescue situations but are larger to carry</li> </ul>	
<b>Snow Saw 1 per tent</b>	Recommended	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look for something 35 cm or longer in length</li> <li>• Used to dig snow pits or cut blocks for structures</li> <li>• Find one that has a good handle for use with gloves</li> <li>• Larger camp saws are over-kill for most situations but do work</li> <li>• Black Diamond and BCA snow science saws are good examples of what works well</li> </ul>	
<b>Critter/Bear Canister or bucket 1 per tent</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land managers usually dictate the specifications for food storage</li> <li>• In winter, MRNP requires a hard-sided container with a tight-fitting lid</li> <li>• Bucket sizes between 3 and 5 gallons usually work well for two to three people</li> </ul>	
<b>2 Person 4-season or weather-resistant 3-season Tent</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four season tents hold up better to wind and snow loading but are more expensive</li> <li>• Three season tents can be used in good weather, below tree line</li> <li>• Look for tents that allow the inner wall to be completely closed; open netting walls will let snow blow into your tent</li> <li>• Look for tents where the rain cover comes all the way to the ground or close enough to block out blowing snow</li> <li>• Vents in the inner shell or rain fly allow for condensation control</li> <li>• Single-wall tents are lighter but sometimes do not have a vestibule option</li> </ul>	
<b>Snow Stakes or Anchors (number required for your tent)</b>	Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Snow stakes or snow anchors are what secures your tent to the snow</li> <li>• 6-8 inches long and concave work well; stock summer tent stakes tend to not stay in the snow</li> </ul>	

# BEG, BORROW, RENT, & BUY GEAR?

Gear for the outdoors can be expensive. Below are some tips for saving money.

- **Use Your Gear** - The first piece of advice we normally provide is to try to use what you already have. Feel free to ask instruction staff if you have any questions about your existing gear.
- **Borrow Gear** – Ask friends and family if they have gear you can borrow for the trip. Borrowing and renting are great ways to “try before you buy”
- **Rent Gear** - If you are not sure that you'll be doing this activity in the future, consider renting gear. Often, gear that is used only once or twice is cheaper to rent than buy. Be sure to ask about their cancellation policy should trip plans change and insurance in case gear is damaged or lost. Also, remember to allow time to pick up and return your rental gear, especially if you must make a special trip to the rental location. Below are locations that rent gear.



## Whittaker Mountaineering

<https://whittakermountaineering.com/collections/rainier-summit-rental-list>

30027 State Route 706 E  
Ashford, WA 98304



## Miyar Adventures

<https://www.miyaradventures.com/gear-rentals/>

1120 NW Ballard Way  
Seattle, WA 98107



## REI Coop

<https://www.rei.com/stores/rentals>

Various Locations



## Wilderness Outdoor Store

<https://www.wildernessoutdoorstore.com/pages/snowshoe-rentals>

310 Winslow Way E  
Bainbridge Island, WA 98110



## Ascent Outdoors

<https://ascentoutdoors.com/collections/all-rentals>

5209 Ballard Ave NW,  
Seattle, WA 98107

- **Buy Gear – but at a discount!** There are many websites these days where people sell used gear at a discount. We do not recommend buying safety items like ropes, helmets, carabiners, etc. used. Mountaineers members run two Facebook groups where members sell slightly used and new gear. Members of The Mountaineers are also eligible for other discounts just for being members.

### Mountaineers Gear, Trade, Swap & Sell

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/954417587979635>

Facebook Group

### Mountaineers Marketplace

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/377304859047281>

Facebook Group

### The Mountaineers Member Discounts

<https://www.mountaineers.org/membership/benefits/instructions-for-redeeming-member-benefits>



- **Buy Gear – but on SALE!** Outdoor retailers often run sales with discounts as deep as 25% near the end of each season. Also look for deals during November and December during Black Friday and other holiday sale periods.
- **Buy Gear – but at FULL PRICE!** Don't. Unless you need it on short notice or it's an item that rarely goes on sale, do a little planning and save some money.

## Outdoor Retailers that offer Mountaineers Member Discounts

- Backcountry.com 15% Discount <sup>[1]</sup>
- Miyar Adventures 15-20% Discount
- Mountain Hardwear 15% Discount
- ExpertVoice Up to 70% Discount
- Wilderness Outdoor Store 10% Discount



- Outdoor Research 10% Discount

<sup>[1]</sup> 15% off MSRP for most items (cameras, electronics, and some hardgoods may not be eligible for a discount). Larger orders over \$500 can be assessed for bigger discount opportunities. You will need to contact the Backcountry.com team directly to get the discount. To submit a request, sign into your backcountry account and add the items to your cart. Once you are done shopping, email [partnerships@backcountry.com](mailto:partnerships@backcountry.com) (using the same email you have set up for your backcountry.com account so that they can find your cart). They will find your cart, apply a discount to the order, and follow up with you about pricing. Once you confirm the order and pricing, you will pay and release the order for shipment.

## Other Outdoor Retailers

- REI Coop – various locations
- Ascent Outdoors – Seattle, WA
- Dicks Sporting Goods – various locations
- Arc’Teryx Outlet – Marysville, WA
- Alpine Ascents – Seattle, WA
- Feathered Friends – Seattle, WA
- Amazon – <https://amazon.com>
- EverestGear – <https://www.everestgear.com>
- Moosejaw – <https://www.moosejaw.com>
- Mountain Steals – <https://www.mountainsteals.com>
- Sierra Trading Post – <https://www.sierra.com>
- Steep & Cheap – <https://www.steepandcheap.com>