

The 10 Hiking Essentials

The 10 essentials packing list was designed to ensure that hikers could a) respond positively to an accident or emergency, and b) remain safe if forced to spend one or more nights out. Here they are, along with some specific suggestions.

1. First-aid kit: Learn how to treat wilderness injuries at backpacker.com/firstaid. Good bet: AMK Ultralight/Watertight .9 (\$36, 10.4 oz., www.adventuremedicalkits.com)

2. Headlamp: Get one that uses LED bulbs. Walmart carries several inexpensive ones.

3. Sunblock: Bring at least a 30 SPF.

4. Trail food: Carbs and electrolytes are key. Good bet: Clif Bars.

5. Fire: Bring a lighter and firestarter. Good bets: A Bic lighter plus Vaseline-dipped cotton balls stored in a pill bottle film case.

6. Knife: Bring a good lightweight multitool. Most camping supply stores carry several options.

7. Water: Bring a sturdy container and backup purification tablets. Good bet: Nalgene bottles

8. Insulation: Depending on the season, bring a fleece or heavier coat. Pack an emergency reflective blanket also,

9. Navigation: Pack at least a map and compass. Good trail topo maps are available from nationalgeographic.com

10. Raingear: Bring a waterproof/breathable shell, plus an emergency garbage bag.