

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 (\$39, 12 oz., www.adventuremedicalkits.com)
2. **Illumination:** Headlamp/Flashlight. Get one that uses LED bulbs. Walmart carries several inexpensive ones.
3. **Sun protection:** Sunblock, sun hat, sunglasses. Bring at least a 30 SPF sunscreen. A bandana can help keep sun off your neck.
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 multi-tool. Most camping supply stores carry several options.
7. **Water:** Bring a sturdy container and backup purification tablets or filter. *Good bet:* Nalgene bottles and Sawyer mini filter. (www.sawyer.com, \$19.95, 2 oz)
8. **Insulation & Rain Gear:** Depending on the season, bring a fleece or heavier coat, as well as a waterproof/breathable shell.
9. **Navigation:** Pack at least a map and compass. Good trail topo maps are available from nationalgeographic.com
10. **Emergency Shelter:** Pack an emergency reflective blanket or consider an emergency bivy like SOL Emergency Bivy (, \$16.95, 3.8 oz, <https://www.surviveoutdoorslonger.com>)