



OUTWARD BOUND CALIFORNIA

Packing List – What to pack for course

Joshua Tree Backpacking & Rock Climbing

Overview

Wilderness travel means you will carry a lot less than you do in the regular world. Most wilderness travelers will bring about the same amount of gear on a three-day trip as they would on a three-week expedition.

Weather

As a desert ecosystem, Joshua Tree is mostly dry with variable temperatures. Elevations range between 2,000 to 5,000 feet and Joshua Tree does receive occasional rain and snow. During the spring months average daytime highs are 65-90 degrees Fahrenheit in the sun with nighttime temperatures in the 40s and 50s. In the winter months, temperatures can drop below freezing. Temperature changes of 40 degrees within 24 hours are common - with wind, snow/rain in one day. Be prepared for cold temps!

Sizing & Layering

Packing several light layers rather than fewer heavier layers allows more flexibility if the weather changes. Inner layers fit closely, mid layers loosely and outer layers just a little bit baggy. The clothing on this list is designed to keep you warm when it is cold or wet and is flexible enough to pack away items when it's hot.

Packing and Storage

Once you arrive, your instructors will help select the best combination of items based on weather and route. Any items your instructors ask you not to bring can be stored securely at base; this is done for efficiency, to minimize pack weight, and to ensure that you have the appropriate gear. Since you may not use every item on this list, we suggest **leaving the tags** on items purchased for this course so that you have the option of returning it. When purchasing gear, please check the retailer's return policies.

What to Wear While Travelling

We recommend you wear course clothing and boots while traveling and bring all essentials (prescription meds, insurance card, and cash) in a carry-on. This will minimize the inconvenience in the unlikely event your luggage is delayed in transport. Being dressed for course will also further the efficiency on your first day, especially since bathrooms and private changing areas may not be available.

What Outward Bound Provides

Outward Bound California will provide all other equipment, including: sleeping bags, sleeping pads, tarp for sleeping, backpacks, cooking gear, food and emergency supplies. Emergency supplies include all common OTC medications like anti-inflammatories (Tylenol, Advil), stomach medications and antihistamines. Group gear will be divided and carried by all members.

Food/Water Caches

Travel in the desert takes careful planning to ensure an ample water supply. Logistics staff place water and food caches around the park to enable extended backcountry travel in this unique wilderness. The maximum time a group would travel between caches is 2 to 2 ½ days.

Personal Gear

If you prefer to bring your own gear, here are the minimum standards for what may be acceptable. If equipment doesn't meet the standards, it will be stored in a locked and secure location at base camp.



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- Sleeping pads – Can be ¾ to full size in length. They can be closed-cell foam (Ridge-Rest or Z-Rest) or inflatable (Therma-Rest®). If you bring an inflatable pad you must bring a patch kit as well. Note that inflatable pads usually weigh considerably more than closed-cell foam pads.
- Backpacks – Need to have a minimum capacity of 80 Liters (4,900 cubic inches) and should be able to carry 45-60 lbs. comfortably. Internal frame design is recommended. Side pockets are useful to access equipment while on the trail, such as water bottles.
- Sleeping bags – Need to be made from synthetic materials (down fill is not appropriate for our purposes) and have a 0 degree warmth rating for November - February courses and a 15-20 degree rating for March - April courses.

Items Not Allowed

- Electronics – cell phones, iPods, etc. These may be brought on the plane or bus but will need to be stored at base before going into the field.
- Deodorant, makeup, shampoo, conditioner, soap, perfume or cologne, etc.
- Illegal drugs, marijuana (including CBD products), alcohol, and tobacco products or vape pens of any kind are prohibited.
- Any prescription drugs not cleared by the Student Services department during the screening process.
- Weapons of any kind, including pocket knives and multi-tools.

Please Bring All Items In This Section:

You are welcome to bring extras of the items marked with a plus (+) sign, but **do not bring extras except where this is noted.**

Please refer to the **Equipment Cheatsheet and Boot Guide on the website and linked in your Welcome Email** for further information on how to find appropriate and affordable options. If you have significant concerns about any of the items on the list, please contact your Course Advisor.

Items Provided By Outward Bound (no need to purchase)

Quantity	Item	Description/Comments	Purchase Price Range	Check List
1	Sleeping Bag	See above the Personal Gear section for requirements if you wish to bring your own.		✓
1	Sleeping Pad			✓
1	Backpack			✓
Group Gear	Tarps for sleeping, Cooking Gear, Food, Emergency Supplies including all OTC medications like anti-inflammatories (Tylenol, Advil), stomach medications and antihistamines. Group gear will be divided and carried by all members.			✓
TOPS				
Quantity	Item	Description/Comments	Purchase Price Range	Check List



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2-3	Short-Sleeved Synthetic T-Shirt	Worn daily, sweat wicking, for hiking and warmth. Often more layers are worn on top. For more sun protection, a long-sleeved sun-shirt can be worn instead. No cotton or cotton blends.	\$15 - \$40 each	
1	Base Layer: Long-Sleeved long underwear top	Midweight polypropylene or wool long underwear top. Worn next to your skin for warmth. No cotton or cotton blends.	\$20 - \$60	
1	Mid-Layer: Lightweight Fleece Top	Polyester or wool fabric. Commonly referred to as micro-fleece or 100-weight fleece. Lighter and less bulky than a traditional fleece jacket. Typically comes with a ½ to ¾ length zipper.	\$30 - \$150	
1	Long Sleeved Sun Shirt	Loose, lightweight, and light-colored for sun protection. Our instructors often wear old oxford or men's button-down dress shirts from thrift stores since these get very dirty with daily use. Cotton is OK.	\$2 - \$60	
1-2	Sports Bra	Should have the proper support for athletic activity.	\$12 - \$30	

BOTTOMS

Quantity	Item	Description	Price Range	Check List
1	Base Layer: Synthetic Long Underwear	Midweight polypropylene or wool long underwear bottoms. They are worn next to your skin for warmth. No cotton or cotton blends.	\$15 - \$50	
1	Quick-Dry Shorts	Lightweight nylon fabric dries quickly. Not needed if bringing 'convertible' pants. No cotton or cotton blends.	\$20 - \$50	
1	Quick-Dry Pants	Should be loose fitting to aid in movement. "Convertible" pants with zip-off legs work well as both shorts and pants. No cotton or cotton blends.	\$30 - \$75	
1	Fleece Pants	These are made out of polyester fleece. They should be loose enough to fit over a pair of long underwear or shorts.	\$40 - \$100	
3-7	Underwear	Cotton is okay for underwear, especially if you are prone to urinary tract infections.	Bring from home	

OUTER LAYERS (TO FIT OVER ALL LAYERS LISTED ABOVE)

Quantity	Item	Description	Price Range	Check List
1	Mid-weight Synthetic Insulated "Puffy" Jacket	Water-resistant, dries quickly, and retains some heat when damp. This jacket should fit under your rain jacket and over your fleece. Recommend 60+g/m fill weight. No down fabric.	\$70 - \$150	



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1	Fleece Jacket	Mid-weight 200-weight fleece jacket, should be layerable beneath your puffy.	\$70-\$150	
1	Rain Jackets & Rain Pants	All rainwear must be 100% waterproof, not water resistant! Rain jackets should have a hood. Helly Hansen brand and "breathable" fabrics like Gore-Tex are highly recommended.	\$200+ for pair	

HEAD & HANDS

Quantity	Item	Description	Price Range	Check List
1	Warm Hat	Fleece, polyester, and wool are all appropriate. Should cover ears or have ear flaps. No cotton.	\$12 - \$40	
1	Sun Hat	Should have a brim to cover your face, for added protection use one with a brim all the way around. Should be made out of softer materials so it can get folded up easily if needed. Baseball caps are fine.	\$30 - \$80	
1	Midweight Gloves	Usually made from fleece, wool, or synthetic materials.	\$10 - \$30	

FEET

Quantity	Item	Description	Price Range	Check List
1-2	Synthetic Liner Socks (Highly recommended)	Lightweight, flat-knit provides a close fit for a protective second skin that prevents blisters. Should be worn under heavier socks to prevent blisters. Need to be at least crew-height. No cotton.	\$5 - \$9	
2-3	Mid-Weight Wool Hiking Socks	These socks are worn on top of the liner socks. Need to come up to the middle of your shin.	\$10 - \$25/pair	
1 pr	Hiking Boots	<i>See the online Boot Guide for more information.</i>	\$120+	
1 pr	Camp Shoes or Running Shoes	Camp shoes need to be closed-toe, secure, lightweight and quick drying. These are typically worn around camp to give your feet a break after wearing hiking boots all day. It's cool at night in Joshua Tree, so running shoes may be preferred.	Bring from home	
1 pr	Rock Climbing Shoes (Optional)	Outward Bound can lend rock climbing shoes although sizing is limited. The classic rock climbing shoe is a close fitting shoe built with suede leather, or a suede and fabric combination upper, that is sewn or bonded to a smooth, "sticky" rubber sole. Should fit snugly but not be uncomfortably tight. It is helpful to get advice from the store associate when finding the right size.	\$60-140	

PERSONAL ITEMS

Quantity	Item	Description	Price Range	Check List
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1 pr	Sunglasses w/Keeper Strap	Bring an eyewear retainer with them, such as Croakies or Chums. Essential to protect your eyes in a sunny environment!	\$25+	
1	Headlamp + Batteries	A "hands free" LED headlamp. No flashlights. Bring one set of batteries per week of your course.	\$15 - \$35	
3+	Fabric Face Masks	An acceptable mask must be able to cover the wearer's nose and chin and fit snugly against the side of the face. The mask should be secured with ties or ear loops and include multiple layers of fabric. Not accepted: Masks with exhalation valves or vents, bandanas, or buffs	\$15 - \$35	
2	Cotton Bandanas	Great as a washcloth and for hygiene. Not to be used as face coverings.	\$1 - \$5	
2	1-Liter Water Bottles	Wide-mouthed and durable. Nalgene, Sigg, and Klean Kanteen are good brand names. Powerade type bottles are OK, but please bring a few spare lids. Must be 1 Liter or 32oz in size.	\$1 - \$15 each	
1	Reusable Mug (Optional)	Nice to have for warm drinks.	\$3 - \$15	
1	Inflatable Sleeping Pad (Optional)	When used with the OB provided foam pad, an inflatable pad can provide extra warmth on cold, snowy, and/or wet courses. Lighter is better and we recommend a pad that is 1 pound or lighter, 1.5 pounds max. Getting a "short" length can help minimize weight.	\$80 - \$200	

TOILETRIES

Quantity	Item	Description	Price Range	Check List
1	Toiletry Kit	Toothbrush, travel-size toothpaste, floss, and comb/small brush. Deodorant and makeup are unnecessary. Look in the travel section of the store for appropriate sizes. Okay to bring baby wipes (1-2 per day).		
1	Small Bottle of Sunscreen	Waterproof, SPF 30 or greater. One 3-6oz bottle per week of your course. Avoid large bulk bottles and sprays.		
1	Hand Sanitizer	One bottle of 1-3oz, for personal use. Gel or liquid is fine.		
1	Lip Balm	15+ SPF or greater		
2-3	1-Gallon Ziplock Bag	These are used to waterproof your smaller personal items, such as a camera, journal, and headlamp. Freezer bags are best.		
	Prescription Eyewear	If you rely on vision correction please bring a second set of glasses or contacts in case the original pair becomes lost or damaged. If you use contacts, bring extras and a small bottle of solution. Please note that contacts can be difficult to keep clean in the backcountry.		
1	Small Bottle of Bug Repellent (Optional)	Small size, in an unbreakable bottle—no spray cans. Products with DEET (35-100%) are most effective. 1 small bottle for each week of course. OBCA will provide bug repellents to students, as needed. Please reference the Vector-borne document for more information. Bugs are less of an issue in the winter.		



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	Prescription Medications	THESE MUST BE DECLARED DURING THE APPLICATION PROCESS OR YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO BRING THEM ON YOUR COURSE. Keep your medications in their original prescription bottles so that they can be easily identified. This includes inhalers, Epi-Pens, and as-needed medications.		
1 Week Supply	Menstrual Supplies	Bring at least a week's worth of supplies as changes in diet & fitness level can unexpectedly induce menstruation.		

MISCELLANEOUS (FOR TRAVEL TO & FROM COURSE)

Quantity	Item	Description	Price Range	Check List
\$40 - \$50	Cash, plus a debit or credit card	The first day is often long. Have cash to buy snacks along the way, or bring food with you. Participants will also be asked to pay for any borrowed gear that gets lost or damaged. You will have the opportunity to purchase a selection of Outward Bound logo'd gear at the end of your course.		
1 Set	Clean Clothes	This set of clothes is to travel home in.	Bring from home	
1	Towel	Please bring a towel for a backcountry style bucket or dromedary showers at the end of course.	Bring from home	

Optional Items: These are not required, but many students enjoy having them.

Quantity	Item	Description	Price Range	Check List
1	Small Journal or Sketchbook and Pen (Optional)	Outward Bound provides small journals but if you're a big writer then you may wish to bring an additional lightweight, paperback journal or sketchbook and your favorite pen.		
1	Camera (Optional)	Digital cameras will require some extra attention to keep out moisture, dirt and sand. You will not be able to charge your camera battery during course. There is a shared course camera. After course, images are uploaded to Facebook and participants will be notified via email.		
1	Watch with Alarm (Optional)	Should be inexpensive, durable, & waterproof. Some instructors may request that you leave your watch behind.	\$10 - \$50	
	Paper, postage stamps, envelopes (Optional)	You will have an opportunity to write letters. Instructors will not have extra envelopes or stamps so make sure to bring plenty.		