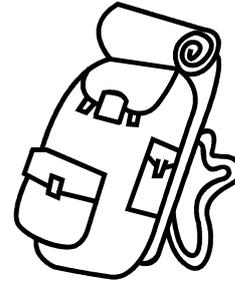


North London Outdoor Group



Fact sheet 3: Clothing & Equipment (What to wear and pack)

This guide covers the whole range of North London Outdoor Group activities from summer weekends by the coast to winter hill walking in the Lake District. Sections 2 & 3 only apply to hill walking.

1. WHAT TO TAKE (LOWLAND AND COAST WEEKENDS)

You can try one of our weekend trips without buying a lot of equipment. The Group has various items that you can borrow and members may have surplus equipment which they can lend you. Please ask the weekend organiser about borrowing equipment for your first weekend. If you plan to buy anything like boots, waterproofs or a rucksack, please see Fact Sheet 4, "Equipment Buying Guide".

Food. Most (but not all) youth hostels can provide meals but the weekend organiser does not usually book meals at the hostel unless you ask for them.

You need food for breakfast on Saturday and Sunday unless you plan to buy a hostel breakfast. You also need food for lunches while we are walking on Saturday and Sunday. This isn't necessary if we are stopping at a pub which is known to serve food and you don't mind buying a pub lunch. Note that we only stop for a pub lunch if the walk leader has decided before the walk that there is sufficient time to do so.

On Saturday night, we often eat out, buy a meal in the hostel or cook a communal meal (please check with the weekend organiser). If not, or if you prefer to self-cater, you need to bring food for dinner on Saturday.

Youth hostels in England and Wales have a self-catering kitchen. These have fridges, gas rings with grills and usually an oven and microwave. Pots, pans, plates, cutlery and tea towels are also provided.

If we stay at more than one youth hostel on a weekend, your food will be in your rucksack or in a parked vehicle during the day, so you will need to take food that keeps without a fridge or bring a coolbox.

You will also need:

- Towel, soap, wash kit, etc., night clothes, change of clothes.
- Torch. To find your way around the dormitory or to/from the pub on unlit roads.
- Cash / cheque book / debit card.
- Light shoes or trainers to wear around the youth hostel.
- Waterproof jacket.
- Walking boots with 1 or 2 pairs of thick socks and plastic carrier bag. Other strong footwear may be suitable when we are not walking in hills or mountains. A plastic bag is recommended to put muddy boots in before getting in to a car.
- Rucksack. A small rucksack to carry waterproofs, packed lunch, drink, etc. .
- Ordnance Survey Map. This is useful if you can bring one. Most libraries lend 1:50,000 (Landranger) O.S. maps, and the group has a selection of 1:25,000 and 1:50,000 maps which are available to borrow.
- Sun hat, sun tan cream and sun glasses (March to September).
- Swimming costume can be useful in summer.

2. WHAT TO TAKE, HILL WALKING WEEKENDS (SPRING, SUMMER, AUTUMN).

This section applies to hilly areas such as the Lake District, Northumberland, Yorkshire Dales, North York Moors, North Peak District, North, South or Mid Wales or Dartmoor. Items listed are in addition to the list in section 1 above.

2(a) On the hills - what to wear.

- Walking boots with 1 or 2 pairs of thick socks and spare laces. These should already be broken in. Wellington boots or trainers are not suitable for walking on mountain paths.
- Windproof jacket or anorak, with hood if possible.

In winter, a windproof outer layer is particularly important. It should have a hood and elasticated cuffs and elastic or cord ties at the waist unless you wear a rucksack with a waist strap. Fibre pile or fleece jackets on their own aren't usually windproof and few have hoods.

- Woollen hat. (Unless your jacket has a warm hood).
- Warm trousers. (Not jeans or cords as these have little warmth, especially if tight or wet.)
- Rucksack. For summer only, a small 25 litre rucksack should be enough but for any season including winter, about 35 litres is recommended. It should be comfortable to carry and should have a strong rucksack liner sack inside to keep everything dry.

2(b) On the hills - what to carry in your rucksack.

- Waterproof jacket. Mountain weather can change unexpectedly. Getting wet isn't just uncomfortable as rain and wind together can cause your body to lose heat faster than it can produce it. This can cause hypothermia (exposure).
- Waterproof overtrousers. These should be carried unless you wear thick walking trousers which are warm when wet (not jeans or cords!)
- Spare woollen jumper or fleece in a plastic bag. It normally gets colder as you go higher, or the weather may change.
- Warm gloves.
- Packed lunch.
- Drink bottle or thermos flask. You need to carry a drink any time of year. In hot weather, you'll need to drink plenty before the walk and carry 1 to 1.5 litres. Mountain streams may not be safe to drink, especially in summer.
- Sun hat, sun tan cream, sun glasses (March to September)
- (Camera). Your camera needs to be well protected against getting wet in your rucksack.
- (Map, compass, map case). You won't need these if you walk with someone who has them and can navigate even in mist but it's useful to bring a map.

2(c) On the hills - things to carry for safety.

You may never need these items but they would be vital if you couldn't get off the hill due to injury, darkness or extreme weather conditions.

- Spare energy rich food. Glucose tablets, dried fruit or Kendal Mint Cake etc. For extra energy if a walk turns out to be longer than expected.
- Torch with spare batteries and spare bulb.
- Small first aid kit. Containing 'Elastoplast' etc, bandage, safety pins, pain killers and antiseptic.
- Coins for telephone. Please note there may not be a signal for mobile phones!
- Survival bag. A thick plastic bag 8 feet by 4 feet for emergency protection from wind and cold. Not a foil "space blanket" as these are no use in windy conditions. Two people can get into one survival bag but not a whole party!
- Whistle. To give the International Mountain Distress Signal (see Fact Sheet 4).

3. HILL WALKING WEEKENDS IN WINTER.

Between October and March, you need to be prepared for cold, wet and windy weather. This section is mainly for occasional winter trips in mountain areas and should be read in addition to sections 1 & 2 above.

3(a) Winter hill walking - extra things to wear.

- Woollen pullovers or a fibre pile jacket (worn underneath a windproof outer layer).
- Woollen balaclava hat. To cover head, ears and neck.
- Gloves are essential, preferably thick mittens or ski mitts. Unless these are waterproof it is advisable to wear waterproof over-mitts on top of gloves in snow.
- Thick warm walking trousers .
- Gaiters. These fit round the tops of your boots and keep snow out. They are also useful at other times of the year on muddy or boggy ground.

3(b) Winter hill walking - extra things to carry.

For winter hill walking, you'll need a rucksack with at least 35 litre capacity to allow space for extra clothing. A strong plastic rucksack liner sack is important.

- Waterproof overtrousers. These are essential in winter.
- Spare clothing. An extra woollen pullover in a plastic bag to keep it dry.
- Spare set of dry socks (if walking in snow)
- Torch with spare batteries or wind up torch. This is vital on short winter days.
- Survival bag. Essential in winter with shorter days and risk of severe weather.
- (Ice Axe). If you have one and know how to use it, it is worth bringing it for winter hill walking.

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