



VNPA Bushwalking and Activities Group

Beginners Overnight Trip – Gear Notes (updated by Robert Argent)

Equipment for Overnight Hiking (NOTE – the BWAG Walks Program has an Equipment List)

Choice of equipment can be overwhelming for people new to hiking, although the basics come down to safety, shelter, warmth, food and comfort. Opinions vary ENORMOUSLY on what is 'essential', but always aim to pack and travel lightly BUT safely.

The following list is one that I use for all my hiking planning, reorganised to make it easier (hopefully!) for beginners to follow. The following pages provide further discussion of alternatives and issues related to equipment, as well as 101 tips (well, 42, actually) to increase your hiking pleasure.

Items that I consider to be *OPTIONAL* are given in *italics*

<u>Basics</u> Pack (at least 65 L) Pack liner (large, heavy water bag) Tent Sleeping bag Sleeping mat (eg foam; thermarest) Billie/s (or an old, light saucepan or pot)) Stove Rubbish bags Water bottle/ bladder (3L) Map Compass Survival bag Toilet paper Pocket knife Knife, Fork & Spoon (from the kitchen drawer). Cup Bowl/ Plate <u>Personal (separate bag)</u> Face Cloth Lip balm Toothbrush Toothpaste Towel Spade/ trowel	<u>Clothes</u> Boots or solid shoes (MUST BE comfortable) Socks Shorts Underwear Shirt/s Thermals Trousers (warm for winter) Jumper/ bush shirt/ fleece Raincoat/ Goretex jacket Hat (warm for winter; shady for summer) <u>Bag of Stuff:</u> MONEY CREDIT CARD Laces (spare) Cigarette Lighter (good for leeches!) Matches Time piece/ watch Head torch/ torch	<u>Personal First Aid</u> Antiseptic Paracetamol (or other pain relief tablets) Elastoplast or similar for blisters Insect repellent Needles Personal medications Roller bandage (10cm, elastic) with fasteners Salt (for leeches – yuk!) Safety pins Scissors Sun block Thread Throat lozenges Tissues/ Handkerchief Triangular bandage with fasteners Wound dressing (medium)
<u>Optional Basics</u> <i>Sleeping bag liner</i> <i>Pot scourer</i> <i>Light Entertainment: (Frisbee/ cards/ book/ songbook/ hacky sack)</i> <i>Camera</i> <i>Candle</i> <u>Optional Personal</u> <i>Comb</i> <i>Deodorant</i> <i>Pillow case</i> <i>Razor</i> <i>Shampoo</i> <i>Soap</i>	<u>Optional Clothes (depends on weather, comfort)</u> <i>Ankle bandage</i> <i>Balaclava</i> <i>Bathers</i> <i>Beanie</i> <i>Bread bags (boot liners)</i> <i>Campsite Shoes/ Thongs</i> <i>Gaiters</i> <i>Mitts/ gloves</i> <i>Over mitts</i> <i>Waterproof Overtrousers</i> <i>Scarf</i> <i>Sunglasses/ snow goggles (essential in sun or snow)</i> <i>T-towel</i>	<u>Optional Aid</u> <i>Cotton wool buds</i> <i>Lip balm</i> <i>Tiger balm/ Deep heat</i> <u>Extras</u> <i>Axe</i> <i>Cord/ String</i> <i>Elastic</i> <i>Lantern</i> <i>Machete</i> <i>Paper</i> <i>Pegs</i> <i>Pen</i> <i>Pocket stone</i> <i>Seat</i> <i>Spare batteries</i> <i>Wire</i>

Food for Hiking

Some basic principles related to food and hiking:

- FOOD can be one of the great pleasures of bushwalking (apart from nature, good company...)
 - It gives energy, adds morale, and
 - is often a popular topic of discussion
- Food must be planned – too little leaves you hungry; too much (weight) leaves you tired.
- On a weekend trip it is possible to pre-cook and freeze dinner; this only requires re-heating
- Consider the actual food value – a bushwalk is **not** a time to be on a diet
- It is **ESSENTIAL** to maintain fluid intake, especially in hot weather. Water bladders (Platypus/ Camel Back) are an excellent method for maintaining fluids.
- Snacks on the track keep up energy levels, and give a good excuse to stop for a break.
- Pack lunch near the top at the start of the day – this keeps it handy and un-crushed.
- Beware of crushed and cracked containers squashed in your pack – use tough plastic bags or solid plastic containers.
- Carry out what you carry in - ALL scraps, peels, cores, papers, plastics
- Don't leave food out at night - possums and (native) rats love to share
- Nutrition – is really only critical if you are out for a long time (yes, you can survive on dried pasta)
- Try to keep food light weight and compact, about 900g per day
- Aim to use 'one billy' meals – ie all the ingredients cook together in one pot
- Carry only what you need plus a **little** extra (eg an extra pack of 2 minute noodles or muesli bars)
- Choose meals that are easy to prepare

My basic food list is (NOTE – I have a very sweet tooth, but otherwise pretty boring taste) :
(Optional items marked in *italics*)

Morning	Walking	Lunch	Evening
Cereal Condensed milk Tea	Scroggin: (Sultanas, Raisins, Peanuts, Jelly Beans, M & M's, Choc Peanuts & Raisin's, Bird seed) Chocolate Muesli bars	Bread/ dry biscuits Cheese Vegemite Fruit- dried and fresh Chocolate	Rice/ Noodles (2 minute noodles are quick and tasteless) Dried/fresh vegetables Tuna (sachet) Chocolate ☺ Emergency food
<i>Oatmeal Sugar Milo Eggs & bacon</i>	<i>Eggs: Easter</i>	<i>Bakery products on first day Salami/ Wurst Butter Refresh/ Raro Tuna- sachet Capsicum Cream cheese</i>	<i>Cup-a-soup Dried potato Sauce Cooking oil Spices Vegies Instant Pudding Biscuits Booze Port</i>

42 Tips to Increase Your Hiking Pleasure

1. It is easier to stay warm than get warm; It is easier to stay dry than get dry
2. Always have a Plan B
3. Look after your feet - good boots; good socks; cut your nails; bandage hot spots BEFORE they blister
4. Start out easy while you learn what you like
5. Do walks that you like, but be prepared to have a go at something new
6. Try to walk at a pace that suits you
7. Check the weather forecast before you go
8. Learn to read a map
9. Buy a compass, carry it, and learn how to use it
10. Buy good gear and look after it
11. Learn First Aid for blisters, bites, stings, burns, strains, cramp, hypothermia and heat stroke
12. Carry a basic First Aid kit and know how to use it
13. Learn to estimate basic travel times over different terrain
14. Practice estimating track times while walking
15. Drink more (water) than you think you need
16. If you can carry it in, then carry it out
17. Pick up rubbish along the track- it makes the place look better, and feels good too
18. Tell someone where you are going and when you will be back
19. If you feel overly uncomfortable (e.g. feet, clothes, pack), then stop and fix it
20. Avoid sunburn - in sunny weather (hot or cold) wear a hat and long sleeved and collared top, and use sunblock
21. Use a 'layering' approach with clothes - more flexibility with less weight

Extra ideas for overnight and longer trips

22. Bushwalking is a bad time to diet - eat well for energy and warmth
23. Take light spare food (e.g. noodles)
24. Create a system for packing - layers, vertical, whatever - so you can unpack and pack easily
25. Become 'at one' with your gear - know what it is, where it is and how to get it easily
26. Always know where your trowel is (*with grovelling apologies to Douglas Adams*)
27. Use a large, brightly coloured pack liner - this can be used for shelter and for signalling
28. Pack light - don't carry any liquid other than water (e.g. no liquid in cans, tubes, packets)
29. Test out dried meal options before you go out - leave the dull ones; take the tasty ones
30. Learn how to service your stove; and do so!
31. Practice putting your tent up in the dark with your eyes closed
32. Learn to wash and clean with less (or no) soaps or detergents
33. Keep yourself clean(ish)
34. Keep your cooking and eating utensils clean - you really don't want gastro
35. Carry gear that has more than one use (eg a leather work glove keeps hands warm and can lift a hot billy; a pack liner doubles as an emergency bag)
36. Use the cut-off end of a foam cell mat as a seat (and doubles as a splint)
37. Seal squeeze tubes (e.g. toothpaste, sunblock) in plastic bags, and carry them where they won't be crushed
38. Carry a couple of extra plastic bags - they are good for separating wet, dirty or smelly things
39. With good gaiters and boots you can walk through calf-deep water and keep your feet dry
40. While adding weight, a camera does allow you to increase your hiking pleasure after the trip
41. Work out what keeps you warm (clothes, sleeping bag, inner sheet, sharing a tent) and make sure you have it
42. Design and cook one-billy meals (Google: "freezer bag" "meals" "boiling")

CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT OPTIONS

The style/brand/nature of many items depends very much on personal preference.

For most people weight should be kept to a minimum.

Leaders should consider carrying extra equipment in case of emergencies.

GEAR HI RE OPTIONS

Bogong Equipment, 374 Lt Bourke St, Melbourne 3000, Tel: 03 9600 0599 www.bogong.com.au

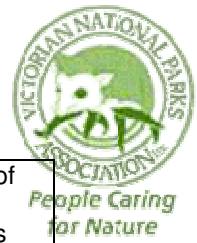
Ajay's EMC 115 Canterbury Rd, Heathmont, VIC, 3135, Tel: (03) 9720 4647

The Wilderness Shop, 969 Whitehorse Rd, Box Hill, 3128, Ph 98983742 www.wildernessshop.com.au

Monash and Melbourne University Mountain/Bushwalking clubs offer rental to members.

Your local camping store may arrange hire for serious potential purchasers.

Item	Description
Pack	Must be comfortable and well fitting and large enough to carry all you equipment inside . Either canvas or Cordura is suitable. Sometimes a very lightweight collapsible daypack is carried for day trips during longer trips.
Pack Liner	Even though there is claim that packs are waterproof it is advisable to line the pack inside, using a plastic liner that is much larger than the pack. Specialist pack liners are best (and double as emergency shelters). Large plastic garbage bags are ok. Heavy duty ones tear less easily. I
Pack cover	Can be used. Needs to be large enough to cover the whole pack and must attach well, particularly if scrub bashing.
Tent	Most suitable tents are made from synthetic fibre, are double skinned, floored, have internal poles, open with zippers and are well ventilated. Two or three person tents share the load (and are often more fun) in which case two vestibules are preferable. Season grading should be considered on selection. Don't forget the poles or pegs. Watch the total weight. Personal preference will determine many features.
Groundsheet	Can be used. Plastic, usually put under the tent, helps protect the floor and saves mats from getting wet. Make sure it does not protrude beyond the tent floor, or it may collect water.
Sleeping bag	Good quality, down filled, well hooded, carried in waterproof stuff sack or plastic bag. Good ones are expensive. Synthetic ones tend to be too bulky, even if compressed.
Sleeping sheet	Lightweight (e.g. silk) inner sheet helps with warmth and helps keep the sleeping bag cleaner.
Sleeping mat	Good for both insulation and comfort. Self-inflating "Thermarest" style mats are superior to closed cell foam mats but are expensive. 2ml foam can also be used to line the floor of a tent when camping on snow..
Clothing	Spare clothing can be carried in separate plastic bags inside the pack (if you don't trust your pack liner to keep gear dry).
Footwear	Medium weight walking boots are usually preferable, depending on conditions. They should be well broken-in, fit well and cleaned regularly. Runners or jogging shoes are sometimes worn in some terrain but are not usually recommended. Sometimes a spare pair of lightweight runners or thongs are carried for wearing around the camp.
Socks	Usually one light pair and one heavy wool or wool mixture. Carry a spare set for dry feet at night and two bread bags for wet boot night-time insulation. Put on dry socks, bread bags and then wet boots and feet will stay warm until bedtime. This is not a suitable daytime practice as feet sweat.
Gaiters	Synthetic or canvas. These protect the legs from scrub and snakes and help keep stones out of boots and seeds out of socks. Essential for keeping snow out of boots. Those fastening with studs or Velcro are easier to use than zips. Front fastening is much easier.
Underwear	Must be comfortable. Many prefer cotton but those with some nylon dry more quickly. Carry 2 spares on longer trips.
Shorts	Must be roomy and comfortable and long enough to protect the upper leg. At least one pocket is very handy.



Trousers	Cotton for summer, wool or wool mixture for winter, loose fitting with plenty of room and non-restrictive. Protect against scrub and sunburn. NEVER wear jeans – they rub in hot weather, and are very cold when wet. Tracksuit pants are often warm enough at night, particularly if wearing shorts during the day.
Shirt	Preferably long sleeved with collar to protect the neck. Cotton in summer, wool in winter. For longer trips a spare can be carried, often of a different weight/warmth.
Thermal top/pants	Can be worn in cold weather as well as or in place of shirt or under shorts. Carry spares for night time use. Emergency clothing for day walks.
Wool jumpers	2 lightweight long sleeved ones for "layering". Tightly knit are warmer.
Fibre pile jacket	These are light, dry quickly if wet, easily stuffed into cracks in the pack. Wind stopping fleece is preferable. Needs to be protected from fire sparks.
Vest/Duvet	Lightweight wool, helps with "layering". Down vest or duvet for winter or ski touring
Waterproof jacket	Dry Japara or Goretex are best. Must be fully waterproof, long enough to cover shorts and sit on, have a hood roomy enough to cover when wearing a beanie and be able to be closed in around the face. It should be able to be sealed at the wrists and tie at the waist. Pockets are also essential. Maintain properly for maximum waterproof-ness. Plastic coats, ponchos or spray jackets are NOT suitable.
Waterproof pants	Many different fabrics available these days. Need to be loose fitting and large enough to put on without removing boots - zips help.
Sun hat	Squashable, needs to have a large enough brim to protect the face and neck from the sun and some form of tie for windy conditions.
Beanie/Balaclava	Woollen or thermal. Must be able to pull well down over the ears. Silk balaclavas are also available as another layer for comfort or insulation ..
Gloves/mittens	Wool or thermal. Carry spares in winter or when ski touring.
Overmittens	Waterproof overmittens are essential for ski touring and may be advisable for winter walking.
Hankies	Useful for a multitude of purposes, particularly large ones.
Personal Items	
Watch	Needs to be water-resistant or should be carried in a plastic bag.
Compass and maps	Carry map in map case or suitable sealable plastic bag.
Notebook	Small one, in a plastic bag with a pen and/or pencil.
Whistle	On a cord, preferably carried on the body at all times.
Sunscreen	Encourage its use on exposed skin.
Insect repellent	Especially important if going into known infested areas.
First Aid kit	See the above list or BWAG program for suggested personal first aid.
Personal medication	Lip balm, bandaids, personal drugs, tampons, matches or lighter, etc. See the list given previously.
Matches/lighter	Carry several boxes or lighters in waterproof containers or plastic bags. Carry an extra box or lighter in your first aid kit.
Snow goggles /sunglasses	Compulsory for ski touring. Wrap-around models are preferable. Sunglasses may substitute.
Spare glasses	If worn.
Toilet paper	NOT the whole roll (unless you're out for weeks!). This MUST be carried in at least one sealable plastic bag. Also carry a sealable plastic bag for soiled sanitary pads or tampons.
Toilet gear	Tooth brush and paste (the end of the smallest tube possible or ask your dentist for samples), comb, very small hand towel OR sports chamois as face washer and/or towel, motel size soap in a plastic bag if necessary. Fit well into a clear large ziplock bag.
Camera	Optional. Watch the weight. Real enthusiasts even carry a tripod sometimes!
Binoculars	Especially for birdwatching enthusiasts.
Bum mat	A small piece of closed cell foam mat or similar serves many purposes, from lunch time sit mat to foot mat in the tent to leg splint!



Water bottle/s	Plastic or aluminium. At least two Litre capacity (three in warm weather).
Water bladder	A good alternative to water bottles
Wineskin - empty!	Empty wine cask bladders make excellent water carriers when camping away from water, and fold to nothing when empty.
Torch/ Head torch	Lightweight. Reverse batteries or tape switch when carrying. Carry spare batteries and globe. Headtorches keep hands free.
Stove and fuel	Lightweight. Many varieties using different fuels are available. Choice depends on preference, length of trip, weight, ease of use. Fuel bottle must be strong and leak proof. One stove per tent is advisable. Solid fuel tablets are inefficient as a substitute.
Spare matches or lighter	Always carry in plastic bags. Have several in different places in the pack.
Billies and billy grips	Some stoves come with specific billies. One billy per stove should be enough, but two are sometimes useful. Lids should fit well. Billy grips save many burnt fingers. Carry in cloth or plastic bag.
Bowl and mug	Lightweight plastic is preferable. Lightweight or nesting K-F-S type set. Make sure knife is sharp. Fork is not usually necessary.
Knife and spoon	
Can opener	Small lightweight one, or borrow someone elses pocket knife if carrying cans
Pot scrubber	Small piece of nylon type scrubber is good. Detergent is not necessary. Use sand or dirt.
Chux	Several Chux style cloths can be useful for many purposes, are lightweight and dry quickly.
Food bags	Plastic or cloth, depending on preference. Carry some spares.
Rubbish bag	Use a small heavier duty plastic bag to carry out rubbish.
Candle	With or without candle holder. Can be used for lighting fires. Helps warm up a cold tent. Handle with great care inside the tent.
Trowel	Lightweight, often plastic, for burying body wastes when toileting. A snow peg makes a useful alternative trowel.
Cord	Six metres of light blind cord. Useful for many emergency purposes.
Mending kit	For mending clothes and equipment: needles, thread, safety pins, canvas needle, copper wire, nylon line, spare laces, etc
Spare fly	On longer trips a spare fly sheet with lightweight guys can be useful in foul weather, or as emergency shelter on a day trip.
Books, cards, lightweight games	Can be very useful on extended trips if holed up by bad weather.

Adjustments to the clothing and equipment should be made for:

- walking under hot dry conditions
- walking in tropical conditions
- extended trips