

Trail Checklist (for 7 trail days in the Colorado Rockies)

Follow this list!

If you want to add/subtract/change anything, talk to your adult crew advisor first!

NOTE—No glass or spray cans. They are expensive and heavy, and glass breaks. Use lightweight plastic containers. Count every ounce NOW because you will regret every extra ounce along the trail. Note also that glass containers are illegal in most back-country areas.

OPT—optional items



Pack:

- pack & frame (padded shoulder straps; padded, wraparound hipbelt; sleeping bag straps—**NO** shock cord or rope)
- small waterproof bags for ALL gear in pack (nylon, cloth, plastic, etc; make your own!)—use waterproof stuff sacks, or freezer bags work for many items
- rope (25 feet, 1/4 to 3/8 inch diameter)
- OPT** hiking/trekking poles (recommended for adults; best is 3 section poles with spring “antishock” system)

Footgear:

- 4 light socks
- 2 heavy socks (wool best)
- hiking boots (waterproofed, comfortable, and big enough)
- sneakers (**not** moccasins or sandals)
- foot powder
- moleskin (gel/patches like “2nd Skin” are also useful)
- 12 bandaids (1-inch strip type)

Basic Clothing:

- 2 T-shirts/polo shirts
- 3 underpants
- 2 short pants (or 1 short & 1 long pants)

Protective Outerwear:

- long-sleeved shirt (wool best)
- sweatshirt or windbreaker or light jacket
- down vest or warm sweater
- hat with sun visor to protect nose/ears/neck
- OPT** sunglasses
- OPT** wool hat (especially for sleeping)

Foul Weather:

- rain jacket or poncho
- waterproof pack cover or 3 large plastic trash bags
- OPT** rain pants
- OPT** gaiters

Sleeping:

- sleeping bag (overnight lows can hit freezing)
- waterproof stuff sack for sleeping bag (use a plastic trash bag inside a nylon stuff sack)
- sleeping pad

Survival/Repair/Miscellaneous:

- compass (liquid filled)
- whistle
- needle & thread (wind around piece of cardboard)
- duct tape (wrap a couple of feet around your H₂O bottle)
- 4 safety pins
- extra shoelaces
- extra clevis pins/split rings for your pack (use as zipper pulls)
- OPT** camera (disposables work great)

Personal Care:

- 2 bandannas or handkerchiefs (they really are useful)
- Carmex/Chapstick
- toilet paper (in waterproof bag; at least 1/2 roll)
- “pooper scooper” plastic hiker’s trowel *
- “Camp Suds” or soap (hotel size or tube of liquid soap)
- toothbrush (share toothpaste with your partner)
- insect repellent (stick or liquid, no sprays, no glass)
- sunscreen
- OPT** pack towel or small hand towel
- OPT** personal medication (inform the Scoutmaster)

Cooking/Eating:

- water bottle (1 liter/quart wide mouth; no canteens)
- pocket knife
- cup (plastic or metal; not “Sierra” cup)
- spoon (fork not needed; use pocket knife instead of silverware knife)

Things to Share with Your Partner:

- 2-person tent and accessories
- LED headlamp with new batteries (AAA or AA) (flashlight not as convenient; LED best)
- toothpaste
- OPT** dental floss
- OPT** metal mirror (**not** glass)
- water purification system with **new** cartridge [“First Need” strongly recommended—for a week-long trek, *you must have a new cartridge that has never been used!*]
- iodine water purification tablets (1 bottle as backup to water filter)
- collapsible water container (10-liter/2.5 gallon)
- food & snacks [2 lbs of snacks/Scout is plenty (1 lb/adult)] (in waterproof bags)
- pot & lid (2 liter/quart minimum; lid doubles as plate)
- one-burner backpacking stove [JetBoil recommended; may eliminate need for a pot, depending on your menu]
- 2 fuel bottles (650 mL/22 oz) or equivalent amount (total of about 1.3 liters/44 oz)
- wooden matches in waterproof container
- 2 scouring pads
- 4 “handwipe” paper cloths or chamois
- 2 plastic trash bags
- OPT** wet/dry towelettes (“baby wipes”, etc)
- OPT** dishwashing detergent (biodegradable best)
- OPT** 1–2 carabiners (strongly recommended, to make hanging packs easier)

“Adult” Options:

- see other side (Scouts—don’t look)

*—With your equipment you will have a trowel, and when you squat outside, you shall scrape a hole with it and then turn and cover your excrement.—The Bible (Deuteronomy 23:13)

“Not all those who wander are lost.”—J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings/The Fellowship of the Ring* (the book, not the movie)

“Adult” Options

“When you’re safe at home you wish you were having an adventure; when you’re having an adventure you wish you were safe at home.”—Thornton Wilder (1897–1975; American writer)

Here are some options adults may want to consider. Because of cost, or the fact that adults seem to need more comfort and assistance than most Scouts, these options apply primarily to adults, though Scouts are welcome to use them too.

Strongly Recommended—

- hiking/trekking poles**—Our adults who have used trekking poles swear by them. These are similar to ski poles, but designed for hiking. They reduce load on your knees, assist in going uphill, downhill, and on the level, and they reduce the work of hiking (so you don’t get as tired). They also give you better balance in stream crossings and other “tippy” places (except boulder fields, where you will *not* want to use them). They cost about \$60 to \$120, and come with two or three adjustable telescoping sections (three sections let the poles collapse into a shorter length for packing or travel). A desirable feature is a spring “antishock” system. Make sure you use the little ski basket that screws onto the bottom of each pole (it keeps the pole from sinking too deep into mud and soft dirt).
- Thermarest-brand sleeping pad**—A Scout can use a closed-cell foam pad (like “Ensolite”), which is cheap and effective. An adult is usually willing to pay more for the added comfort of a thicker, self-inflating pad. Buy a full-length model (you will not like anything shorter). An inch thick is enough, and the “standard” models are more comfortable than the thinner “lightweight” versions. You won’t need the extra-thick versions which mostly add weight.
- freeze-dried suppers**—Instead of buying all your food at the grocery store (the cheapest option), you can buy freeze-dried meal packages for some or all of your suppers. A significant advantage of this is the reduced cooking time and fuel usage (typically about 5 minutes to boil water, as opposed to 20 to 30 minutes to cook a grocery store meal), and reduced clean-up (just your spoon and cup instead of a cook pot that will require scrubbing). After a hard day’s hike, you’ll probably wish you’d paid the extra cost.

Mountain House-brand meals are consistently pretty tasty, and you prepare them in their own packet, so nothing gets dirty except your spoon (note that not all brands are prepared in their own packet). For most people, a “4-person” meal will serve two to three adults or Scouts; a “2-person” meal will serve one person, but may not be enough for two people.

Worth Considering—

- notepad/journal + pencil/pen**—A lot of adults (and no Scouts) enjoy keeping a log or journal of the trip.
- mesh hat (anti-mosquito)**—This is a light mesh “hat” designed to be worn over a regular hat that protects your head & neck from mosquitoes and flies. Mosquitoes are not usually an issue in this area.

Not Recommended—

~~mesh jacket (anti-mosquito)~~—NOT RECOMMENDED—The mosquitoes won’t be *that* bad.

~~mesh trousers (anti-mosquito)~~—NOT RECOMMENDED—The mosquitoes won’t be *that* bad.

~~sandals~~—NOT RECOMMENDED—Yeah, they’re nice in camp and for stream crossings, but they are not usable for hiking. **You absolutely must have two pairs of footwear suitable for hiking (hiking boots + sneakers typically),** so sandals add extra weight with limited extra value.

Adult Toys—

- GPS**—They’re fun, but they can’t take the place of a topographic map. You could drop your GPS, or the batteries could die.

Adult Advisor Needs—

- Permission & medical forms for each person in your crew
- BSA tour permit & US Forest Service permit
- 2 complete topographic map sets (in case one gets lost/blown away/etc)—the Scout crew leader should carry one set, and another Scout can carry the second set.