



One of the pleasures of journeying by boat through the backcountry is being able to include minor luxuries that one might normally leave at home. Although, weight is a consideration and bulky items should be minimized to save space. Careful and systematic packing is a boon for getting to and from the water efficiently. Spending the extra time to logically organize items together before a trip will save you the stress of trying to locate lost items. Experienced paddlers typically pack gear according to how and when it is used. Pack a separate "car bag" to hold everything you might need for the ride to the water to avoid digging through your main gear bags for things. Include a change of clothes and even baby wipes to feel refreshed rolling home. An accessible "day gear" bag should have everything you will need while on the water like clothing layers, rain gear, and other personal gear and food. Emergency, safety, and repair gear should also be close at hand. Camp gear and food can be sorted into different dry bags or a large portage pack and secured. Take care not to pack and store food and stove fuel together to prevent contamination. Finally, this packing list provides a comprehensive gear selection for most canoeing adventures. Many factors like climate, water temperature, and trip duration will dictate what specific gear may ultimately be taken along, so adapt this list to your particular needs.

ESSENTIALS

- Canoe
- Paddle/spare paddle
- Personal flotation device (PFD)
- Safety whistle
- Knife
- Fire starter (matches in waterproof case, waterproof lighter, etc.)
- Float plan (left with friend)
- Map/charts in waterproof case
- Compass/GPS
- Canoe float bags

- Helmet
- Tarp

SAFETY & EMERGENCY GEAR

- First-aid kit
- Signal mirror
- Flares
- Light sticks
- Cell phone in waterproof case
- Weather and two-way radios
- Personal locator beacon
- Smoke signal
- VHF radio in waterproof case
- Headlamp
- Saw

CANOE GEAR

- Bailer with lanyard (or bilge pump)
- Sponge
- Yoke pads
- Canoe cart
- Floating bow/stern lines (painters)
- Bungee cords or net, cordage
- Throw bag with floating line
- Canoe seat and/or knee pads
- Rescue kit (rope, webbing, cordage, carabineers and pulleys for z-drag)
- Spare PFD
- Spray covers
- Thigh straps

GEAR STORAGE AND TRANSPORT

- Dry bags
- Backpack or portage pack
- Heavy-duty garbage bags (lining for inside of pack and other gear)
- Ziploc bags (protection for non-electronic items)
- Film canisters (small item storage)
- Thwart and/or seat bags
- Cooler
- Stuff sacks and compression sacks
- Day pack
- Mesh duffel bag (for wet items)



PERSONAL GEAR

- Sunglasses (preferably polarized)
- Floating eyewear retainer strap
- Sunscreen
- Lip balm
- Bandana
- Pack towels
- Water bottle/hydration pack
- Energy bars or gels
- Watch
- Permits/licenses
- Float plan



COLD WATER GEAR (WATER <60°F)

- Wetsuit/drysuit
- Neoprene booties
- Neoprene paddling gloves
- Warm skull cap or balaclava



CLOTHING

- Warm knit hat
- Wide-brimmed hat (nylon or straw)
- Hat retainer cord
- Rain jacket and pants
- Rain hat
- Sturdy sandals or paddling shoes
- Synthetic UV-resistant shirt(s)
- Synthetic underwear (tops and bottoms)
- Fleece vest/coat and pants
- Merino wool or synthetic blend socks
- Liner socks
- Swimsuit
- Gloves/mittens
- Synthetic convertible pants
- Waterproof hiking boots



REPAIR ITEMS

- Awl and thread
- Baling wire/3mm cord
- Spare canoe hardware
- SeamGrip and/or Aquaseal
- Epoxy putty/resin
- Fiberglass repair items
- Grommet kit/pop rivet tool
- Stove repair kit
- Spare zippers and nylon buckles
- Duct tape
- Waterproofing treatments



CAMP GEAR

- Tent with dry bag stuff sack
- Tarp, guy line, stakes
- Sleeping bag
- Sleeping pad
- Non-stick cook kit
- Insulated mug
- Folding dishes and flatware
- Biodegradable soap and scrubber
- Food storage canisters
- Water bladder/bottles
- Collapsible basin/bucket
- Stove and fuel
- Garbage bags
- Hammock
- Small lantern
- Kevlar fire blanket
- Instant hand sanitizer
- Channel lock pliers
- Toiletry kit
- Trowel/shovel
- Insect repellent/bear spray
- Multi-tool
- Water collection bucket
- Water filter/purification tablets
- Toilet paper



OPTIONAL

- Frisbee, hacky sack, book
- Fishing rod/bait/tackle
- Music instrument/cards/games
- Audio player (tape, CD, MP3, etc.)
- Camera/extra film or storage cards
- Binoculars/field guides
- Weatherproof journal with pen
- Chair/stool
- Dutch oven/charcoal/starter
- Kite

