

THE BIG THREE

TENT

1-2 person 3-season, 2-3lbs

- Freestanding tents come with a pole system to stand on their own, usually has a separate rain fly
- Trekking pole tents require 1-2 hiking poles to set up, requires more stakes, usually rain fly is built in

Budget: my personal favorite [NATUREHIKE VIK 1](#)

Other: [NEMO Hornet 1](#) [Big Agnes Copper Spur 1](#) [Gossamer Gear The One](#)

SLEEP SYSTEM (bag and pad)

3-season sleeping bag/quilt, rated 30 degrees or lower

- Down will be lighter and pack down smaller, will not retain heat when wet
- Synthetic is heavier and bulkier, will retain heat when wet
- Quilts are designed to work with your sleeping pad to increase heat/comfort

Budget: [Featherstone Moondance 25](#) [Klymit KSB 15](#)

Other: [Outdoor Vitals Summit 15](#) [Enlightened Equipment Revelation APEX](#)

3-season sleeping pad has an R-value of 2.5 and higher

- Closed foam are cheaper, won't break, and more versatile
- Inflatables are more comfortable, more expensive, and could puncture

Budget: [Klymit Insulated Static V](#)

Other: [Thermarest NeoAir](#) [Thermarest ZLite](#)

BACKPACK

A 30-50 liter pack, internal frame is best, with a padded hip belt

- Fit backpacks by [torso length](#) to allow proper weight distribution on hips (not shoulders)
- Always buy a backpack to fit the gear you have! The largest, heaviest items (sleeping bag, pad, tent) SHOULD FIT INSIDE. Attaching large items like these to the outside severely throws off the center of gravity and can cause falls/injuries more easily.

Budget: [NatureHike 45L](#)

Other: [Osprey Ace 38L](#) [Osprey Aura 50](#) [Osprey Eja 48](#) [Gossamer Gear Gorilla 50](#)

CLOTHING

Layers, layers, layers! Specifically wool, fleece, and synthetics. NO COTTON, NO DENIM!

Hiking Clothes: leggings or pants, wicking shirt, underwear/bras

[Base layers](#): top and bottom

Socks: 1 pair for hiking, 1 pair dry for camp ([waterproof socks](#) over [liner socks](#) are great for winter)

Warm: fleece, puffy jacket, gloves, beanie

Wet: rain pants, rain jacket (Budget: [Frogg Toggs](#))

Footwear: sneakers or boots (worn or broken in); Camp shoes, like crocs, are good to have if shoes get wet.

Bandana or Buff

OTHER

HEADLAMP

Handheld flashlights work well too, but headlamps make moving around at night easier

Budget: [Petzl TIKKA](#)

Other: [Black Diamond Spot](#)

WATER BOTTLE AND FILTRATION

[Sawyer Squeeze filter](#) is the best and can be paired with a 1L Smart Water bottle

When camping in the fall/winter/spring, always pack an additional water bottle, specifically a [Nalgene](#), as they can be filling with boiling water in emergencies.

FOOD/COOKWARE

Most food eaten while backpacking is “add hot water only”. So, **mugs** should be packed for warm beverages and a **spoon** to eat. Bowls are preferred over plates.

A **10L+ roll-top/closed bag** for food, quart/gallon **Ziploc**, and a **carabiner**

POCKETKNIFE OR FOLDING KNIFE

TREKKING/HIKING POLES (OPTIONAL)

TOILETRIES (toothbrush, toothpaste, hand sanitizer, sunscreen, bug spray, toilet paper or baby wipes, small **Ziploc**)