

David W Shaw Photography Workshops

# Wilderness Gear Checklist







## A Note on Equipment

**Weight Restrictions:** Space is tight on the bush planes we'll be using to access the arctic wilderness, and weight limits are strictly enforced for safety. For basecamp trips, please keep your personal gear under 50lbs per person (this includes your camera equipment and carry-on bags). For backpacking trips, you will be required to carry some food and group gear in addition to your own equipment, so starting with about 30lbs or less, will assure your pack stays manageable.

**Weather Considerations:** It can snow any month of the year in the arctic, and it can also get quite hot (temperatures in the high 70s and 80s are not uncommon). You need to be prepared for anything. Be prepared to dress in layers.

**Stick to the List:** If you pack what is on the list, you'll have what you need. Please don't stray far from the packing list, and read the notes for each item carefully. There is no room in the arctic wilderness for poor quality, or poorly maintained gear, so make sure everything you bring is ready for some tough use. As always, call if you have questions.

## Camp Gear and Clothing

- Tent. 3-4 season, high quality tent that can withstand high winds moderate snow loads. The rain fly should be well-maintained seam sealed. Tent pegs should be suitable for holding in gravel soils. I favor the yellow, plastic pegs known as "power pegs".
- Sleeping Bag and Stuff Sack. Your sleeping bag should keep you warm to temps of 15-20F. Note that does not mean the bag's rating system. Each person sleeps differently, and some require a much warmer bag than the rating might indicate. When in doubt, bring a warmer bag.
- Sleeping Pad. An inflatable pad with insulation is the best, warmest choice. Thermarests are favorites of backcountry travelers for their warmth and comfort. Make sure your's is durable and equipped with a patch kit.
- Hiking Boots. Sturdy, waterproof, over-the-ankle boots.
- Rain pants. Side zips will help you get them on and off over boots. Breathable (gore-tex or similar), or non-breathable rubberized are both acceptable.
- Rain Jacket. Good rain gear is essential. High quality, good condition, breathable, or non-breathable rubberized jacket. Check that the zippers and seams are in good condition. If your waterproof/breathable jacket is not new, treating before the trip with a product like NikWax TR.Direct, spray will renew the water resistant coating. (I do this regularly with my heavily used rain gear.)
- Day Pack (for Basecamp Trips) - something you are comfortable carrying for a long day hike. This can be your camera bag.
- Backpacking pack (for Backpacks). Think large-volume. In addition to your own equipment, you'll also need to fit in some of the group food and gear, so make sure there is plenty of extra space. Good waist belt, sternum strap, and a comfortable shoulder harness are indispensable.
- Waterproof rain cover for your pack(s).
- Stuff sacks for organizing gear and clothes.

- Socks. 3-4 pair of heavy wool or synthetic blend hiking socks. I always keep one pair of very warm socks for wearing only my tent (they never go outside), plus 2-3 pairs for general use.
- Light-weight Long Underwear. Synthetic or wool, tops and bottoms.
- Heavy-weight Long Underwear Bottoms. For layering under rain pants.
- Hiking Pants. 1-2 pair (1 for backpacking). Synthetic, fast-drying material.
- Insulated pants. Fleece or wool.
- Puffy jacket. Warm down or synthetic filled jacket. Perfect for cold mornings or evenings.
- Fleece or wool sweater/jacket.
- Additional warm layer - Extra long john top, down vest, or light sweater.
- Shorts and T-shirt - It gets warm sometimes!
- Sun shirt - lightweight, long sleeves, button down or pullover. Synthetic and quick drying.
- Brimmed hat.
- Warm hat. Winter ski hat or similar. Bring something nice and cozy and windproof!
- Neck gaiter. Buff, or fleece.
- Warm gloves. Windproof fleece or waterproof ski gloves.
- Water bottle or hydration pouch (Camelback).
- Personal toiletries. Pare this down to the minimum.
- Flashlight or headlamp. Necessary after August 1.
- Mosquito head net.

- Mosquito repellent. Pack in a separate ziplock bag.
- Emergency kit. Selection of band-aids, pain killers, moleskin, sewing kit, etc. (We will have a full first aid kit in the group gear, but having a few of your own items is useful.)
- Personal Medications. Consider bringing an extra set and give them to your guide in case yours get lost or mis-placed.
- Glasses or Contacts. An extra set.
- Sun screen and lip balm.
- Pocket knife.
- Trekking Poles. Optional, but very important on backpacking trips, and useful on other trip.
- Reading material.
- Pack towel or wash cloth. Optional. Basecamp only.
- Lighter.
- Fishing gear (optional). Rod, reel, flies, license.

## Photography Equipment

Keep your photography equipment to the minimum you need. My typical setup includes the list below, and nothing more. Bear in mind you'll be carrying all this on backpacking trips over rough terrain and up mountains. On basecamp trips, you may be able to bring more gear, but plane weight limits will apply.

- 1 Camera body.
- Wide angle zoom. 16-35 or similar.
- Mid-range zoom. 24-70, or 24-105. Optional.

- Compact telephoto.
- Polarizer for wide angle.
- Several spare batteries.
- Compact tripod. Basecamp trips only.
- Camera pack. With raincover.

As always, if you have questions about this gear list or specific items you'd like to discuss, feel free to email me [dave@david-w-shaw.com](mailto:dave@david-w-shaw.com), or call 907-590-7023.