

What to Pack for a Day Hike

Bringing the proper equipment on your hike will greatly add to your enjoyment and safety while on the trail—as well as to the enjoyment and safety of the rest of the group. The items listed below are essential if you are going into the woods for more than a couple of hours. Before you leave make sure you are comfortable with all your equipment and know how and where it fits in your pack. Do not plan to carry anything in your hands or have a jacket tied around your waist. (These can cause you to trip.) Everything should fit in your daypack. Carry even your wallet and keys in your daypack at all times.

Essentials for a summer hike:

Two quarts of water in plastic water bottles or a camelback

Lunch and snacks

Rain jacket (even if the forecast isn't calling for rain)

Long-sleeved shirt

Hiking socks (not sport socks)

Sturdy hiking boots

Sunglass

Hat

Sunscreen

Tissues

Personal first aid items

Small flashlight or headlamp

Garbage bag (nothing should be left in the woods—not even an apple core.)

You may also want:

Bandanna

Insect repellent

Add the following essentials for non-summer hikes:

Warm fleece sweater or jacket (Cotton will not keep you warm if it gets wet.)

Wool or fleece hat and gloves

You may also want:

Rain pants

How to dress: Dress in layers. Your first layer should be a short-sleeved t-shirt (synthetic, not cotton) even if it seems cool in the morning. You will warm up. Your second layer should be a long-sleeve shirt (also synthetic). If you need extra layers, you will have your warm hiking sweater and rain jacket. Shorts give you mobility and keep you cooler; pants give you more protection from insects and brush.