



X Adventure Activities Ltd

Kit and Equipment List

All levels of Expeditions

Having the right equipment is essential for expedition safety as well as comfort and enjoyment.

The following is intended as advice on suitable equipment for doing a Duke of Edinburgh's Award expedition with X Adventure Activities. This list has been compiled to help you decide what kit you need to bring. Use this list when preparing and packing, ensuring you pack all essentials and don't carry any needless weight; you need to make your rucksack as light as you can.

Walking Boots

- Boots are one of the most important pieces of kit. Unsuitable or poorly fitting boots can ruin your expedition so it is important that proper, comfortable boots are used.
- You **MUST** have walking boots that go above the ankle in order to provide enough support for walking on rough terrain. Approach shoes or trainers are not suitable.
- The sole on walking boots should be reasonably rigid and cleated (Vibram soles are among the best). This is shown by a yellow hexagonal mark on the sole.
- The boots should be waterproof and have a stiff leather or fabric upper. Leather boots can be further waterproofed using a wax such as Sno-seal or Nickwax.
- New boots may cause blisters and so it is advisable to wear new boots on several smaller walks before tackling the expedition, this could even be completed on walks to and from School or College.

Rucksack and Liner

- Between 50 and 65 litres. Remember you will need space for group kit (tent, stoves, first aid kit and group shelter) plus your own personal kit.
- Ensure that it fits properly. Shop staff will be able to give you assistance with this. When trying it on put something heavy in it to simulate how it will fit when you have all your kit inside it. Make sure the rucksack back length fits you. The shoulder straps should be wide and well padded and it is essential that there is a padded hip belt to take weight off the shoulders.
- You will need a rucksack liner no matter how waterproof you believe your rucksack to be! If your sleeping bag gets wet you will not be able to continue your expedition. This liner could simply be a black bin liner but take a couple of spares in case they rip. Dry bags; either one large or several small can be used as these can separate and organise your kit within the bag. A rucksack high visibility rain cover are also great at keeping your kit dry.

Sleeping bag

- A 2/3 season bag should be warm enough, if you feel the cold a 3 season would be better.
- Consider down and synthetic. A down bag will be warmer but is no use if it gets wet (and is also more expensive). A synthetic bag will provide warmth even when wet, but will be heavier to carry.
- Use a stuff sack to reduce the volume of the bag when packing, you can also get waterproof stuff sacks to completely ensure your sleeping bag remains dry. ☐☐☐



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- Using a liner will add some extra warmth to your sleeping bag. You have the option of silk (light and warm but expensive), fleece (warm but bulky) and cotton (cheapest). It is useful to have a liner if you are borrowing a sleeping bag.

Sleeping Mat

- Lightweight and inexpensive, these add insulation and make sleeping much more comfortable.
- There is a choice between a foam sleeping mat and an inflatable one. An inflatable one is slightly heavier and is more expensive but it gives you a better nights sleep. A foam mat is cheap and a reliable option.

Waterproof Jacket

- Waterproof jacket (with hood) are **essential**. They keep out the rain but are also useful in windy conditions. Please ensure that your waterproof are fully waterproof and not just shower proof.
- There are many suitable waterproof materials available – Goretex or eVent are good as it is waterproof and breathable which allows sweat to evaporate from your body. There are suitable waterproofs available made from other breathable materials. Just be aware there are some fabrics which are waterproof and not breathable – these are suitable when it is raining but can generate a lot of condensation on the inside so are not usually comfortable to wear.
- Make sure that the jacket fits well.

Water proof trousers

- These must be waterproof in much the same way as the jacket.
- Make sure they fit well; it is useful to have a zip at the bottom; this allows you to put them on over your boots.

Personal Clothing

There is an element of personal preference in expedition clothing; but there are some key principles to dressing in the outdoors.

Inner layer

An inner layer is the one that is worn next to the skin and there are a variety of garments that could be worn. Modern thermal tops (base layers) are ideal to wear. They are very light and are made from material that wicks sweat away from your skin keeping you more comfortable and reducing the chance of chilling. On warm wet days these are comfortable when worn on their own under a waterproof jacket. Cotton t-shirts should be avoided as they hold sweat next to the skin and this can cause severe chilling and discomfort.



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Middle layer

The middle layer should be put on when you are starting to get cold and should be removed when you are feeling hot. Two or more middle layers are useful so that an extra layer can be applied if you get cold. Suitable middle layers would be thin fleece jumpers or thin woollen jumpers. Again – avoid cotton. Sweatshirts are often made of cotton as are rugby / hockey shirts. These are heavy when wet, take a long time to dry and, when wet, take heat away from your body.

To wear (dependent on conditions and time of year)

- Thermal base layer
- Thin Layer (fleece / jumper)
- Thick layer (fleece / jumper)
- Walking trousers. Jeans (cords or other cotton products) are NOT suitable for walking. When wet they are extremely heavy and take heat away from your body instead of insulating it. They also take a long time to dry out.
- Hill walking socks. It is advisable to have a pair of socks for each day of the expedition plus one spare pair. There are different opinions on how many pairs of socks should be worn when walking. Some people prefer to wear one thin pair and one thick pair together (this can reduce the amount of friction on the back of the ankle – others wear only one thick pair. Socks can be wool, although new socks available now are a mixture of man-made fibres and can be more comfortable and cooler than wool.

Spare clothing should also be carried. You may choose to carry less clothing for Bronze, but more for Silver and Gold. You should always aim to have warm, dry clothing to wear in camp.

- Spare warm layer
- Spare pair of socks
- Change / spare underwear
- Spare pair of trousers (not jeans)
- Spare base layer
- Pair of shorts (depending on weather and terrain)

Other essential clothing

- Hat – wool or fleece (not baseball cap). A sun hat also may be required in hot, sunny weather.
- Gloves or mitts – wool or fleece or ski gloves. Mitts are warmer than gloves.

Both of these are essential even in summer. In bad weather, lots of heat can be lost from your head causing severe chilling of the body. A hat is also useful in your sleeping bag; summer nights can still be cold and wearing a hat can help you feel warmer at night.



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Other Essential equipment

- **Small personal first aid kit.** Your group will be issued with a group first aid kit, but you should carry a supply of blister plasters (compeed is the best). Plus any other medications you regularly take.
- **Torch plus spare batteries** (no pencil torches). The torch is useful for getting around the campsite or tent in the dark but more importantly it may be needed for finding your way or navigating in the dark. A head torch is ideal for this as it leaves you hands free.
- **Whistle.** Needs to be loud enough to attract attention in case of emergency, some rucksacks will have a whistle on the chest strap.
- **Water bottle.** A strong plastic water bottle usually totalling around 2 litres of capacity. Platypus or camelback water carriers are ideal but be aware if you damage the hose or mouth piece on route it makes it unusable, so bring another water bottle as a back up.
- **Paper and pencil.** Essential for making changes to route plans, taking notes for your expedition aim and writing down important information in case of an emergency.
- **Matches / lighter.** Make sure these are kept dry in their own separate waterproof bag.
- **Personal toiletries.** A toothbrush, toothpaste and some wet wipes should be plenty for one night away on the Bronze. For the Silver and Gold you may want to bring a small towel (a micro fibre towel is ideal) and some soap. Toilet paper (keep it dry) and ear plugs (not essential, it just depends on whether someone snores!)
- **Money.** A small amount of money in case of an emergency
- **Sun cream and midge repellent.** There is no need for everyone in your walking group to carry sun cream, as long as there is one large tube between you. The higher the factor the better as you may be in the sun all day. Midge Repellent is a must on Gold but very useful on other expeditions. Avon 'skin so soft' is also a good option for midge repellent.
- **Eating Utensils.** Knife, fork or spoon or a 'spork' is a good option. A plate or bowl (only bring one). A mug (plastic) to drink from.
- **Stove / pots and pans.** X Adventure activities will be supplying each walking group with a stove, pots and pans and fuel. These must also form part of the carrying supplies for the walking group and you must therefore leave space in the rucksack for these items.
- **Survival shelter.** Each group will be asked to carry a group shelter supplied from X Adventure.
- **Compass.** Each group will be supplied with maps and compass. If however you wanted to purchase a compass, the Silva compass is very reliable; a Ranger 3 or Field 7 would be ideal.
- **Gaiters.** These can help to keep the feet warmer and drier in wet soggy conditions underfoot
- **Watch.** This is an important tool to support navigation and keep to route card timings.
- **One luxury item.** You may well have some time to yourselves in the evening so you might like something to help keep you occupied. For example: a book, a pack of cards or a small ball, camera. It is not recommended to bring expensive items; they could get wet or damaged.

If you have any questions regarding the content of the list or would like some advice please email us on the detail below.