



CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

DAY WALKS:

Clothing:

- A base layer, such as a thermal top (close fitting, moisture wicking fabric)
- A second layer - shirt (loose fitting, easy-dry fabric - long-sleeved if sun protection is required)
- A third layer – a polar fleece or wool top (a zip front is convenient!)
- An outer layer – a waterproof / windproof / breathable jacket (ideally *Gortex* or similar)
- Shorts, trousers, zip-offs (easy-dry fabric, preferably not cotton, definitely not denim!)
- Socks & underwear
- Appropriate footwear – boots or walking shoes
- Sun hat (broad brimmed!)
- Prescription glasses / sunglasses (wearing glasses helps avoid eye injury - a neck cord is useful!)
- Handkerchief (not tissues!)

In cold or inclement weather:

- Beanie or balaclava
- Full length top & bottom thermal underwear
- Scarf or neck muff
- Gloves
- Waterproof rain pants (ideally *Gortex* or similar)

For off-track walks:

- Gaiters
- Gardening or riggers gloves

Optional:

- Swimming costume and towel (if there are swimming opportunities)
- A change of clothes (leave in the car - can be useful if you get wet or dirty, and/or are going to a coffee shop, pub or restaurant, and/or it is a long journey home)

Notes:

- Multiple layers of thin clothing are far more effective than a few thick layers. Body temperature can be easily controlled by adding or removing layers, and by opening zips and buttons to vent your garments.
- The weather in the Blue Mountains can change suddenly. It is essential to be prepared for all possible weather conditions – heat and/or cold, wind, rain or snow.
- Bushwalking can be tough on clothing, especially on off-track walks.
- People who choose not to carry appropriate protective gear run the risk of placing themselves at risk, and jeopardizing the safety of the group.
- Consult your walk leader if in doubt.

Food & Drinks:

- Drinking water (usually 1-2 litres, more in hot conditions – make sure that your water is easy to get to during the walk – drink early, and drink often!)
- Morning tea (snack & drinks) – (salty and sweet!)
- Lunch (food & drinks)
- Extra snacks
- Mug
- Rubbish bag
- Optional – a hot drink in a thermos

Equipment:

- Backpack (not too small – 20-45 litres - a 35-45 litre pack for greater flexibility of use!)
- Waterproof pack cover and/or internal waterproof bag
- Walking poles (optional - depending upon the terrain, and the state of your joints!)
- Money and personal identification (e.g. drivers licence)

Medical & First Aid:

- Sunscreen, lip balm, insect repellent
- Small personal first aid kit (See the SBC document – *First Aid*)

Toileting:

- Toilet paper and small trowel (or other means to dig a hole)
- Snap lock bags (double bag waste when in canyons)
- Gel hand sanitiser

Safety Equipment:

- Small torch (head torch recommended! – check that it is working!)
- Map (in clear weatherproof cover, or a clear plastic bag)
- Compass
- PLB &/or mobile phone (optional)
- Whistle (many packs now have this built-in)
- Notebook and pen
- Pocket knife

For off-track walking:

- Map (in clear plastic weatherproof cover - essential)
- Gaiters (to protect shins)
- Fire starters (eg. waterproof matches & fuel block)
- Signalling mirror
- Emergency body-size plastic bag (emergency sleeping bag)
- 2-3 metres of rope or climbing tape

Optional:

- Watch
- Altimeter
- Barometer
- GPS
- Camera
- Seating pad (such as a mouse pad!)

Notes:

- Minimise the weight of the pack without leaving behind essential items.
- Carry enough to be comfortable if the activity is delayed and to survive overnight. There may be an accident or unexpected delays.
- Carry out everything you take in, including wrappings and waste food.
- Gear requirements vary according to the duration, the area, the season and the size of the party. If you are inexperienced, it is a good idea to check with the leader before deciding what to take.

OVERNIGHT WALKS:

Include all items from the day walks checklist, as well as:

- Larger backpack (40-70 litres)
- Sleeping bag (plus liner if you have one – keeps the bag clean, and you warmer!)
- Sleeping mat (thermarest, exped, or closed cell foam)
- Tent (or fly and ground-sheet)
- Plate, spoon, cup
- Stove (if in a no-fire area) and fuel
- Water bladder– to save multiple trips to the water source
- Food - lunch, snacks and breakfasts + something hot to drink (tea / coffee / soup / hot chocolate) + an emergency meal
- Minimal toiletries – toothbrush, paste.
- Spare set of thermals – (kept dry)
- Warm hat and gloves
- Crocs/sandals – for when you take your boots off

Group Gear:

Note - sharing with another person saves weight

- Tent
- Evening meal - cooking
- Cooking utensils / billy
- PLB

Notes:

- Don't take too much – you only have to carry it back again
- A range of useful camping food can be found in any supermarket – for example, couscous and pasta mixes, tuna pouches, dried vegetables, dehydrated potato, rolled oats, nuts, dried fruit, beef jerky, powdered milk, instant pudding, custard mix.
- Frozen fresh food keeps well for the first day (such as frozen pasta sauce, etc)
- Borrow a food dehydrator if you'd like to try making your own lightweight meals.
- Some leaders promote a 'happy hour' – bring a small amount of food and/or drinks to share around the campfire (cheese / biscuits / marshmallows / dip / chocolate, etc)
- The best source of information is the walk leaders and other experienced walkers – many good ideas are shared around the campfire.
- For your safety and trip enjoyment on overnight walks, limit the weight of your pack to a maximum of 25% of your body weight. A reasonable guideline is <13kg without food and water. If you carry more, you start increasing the risk of sprained and twisted ankles, and knee, leg and back problems. You will also slow down the group. Weigh your pack and keep it light.

- The leader is probably carrying extra safety items for the group (such as extra water, group first aid kit, climbing tape, communications device, water filter, etc). Do not rely on using this gear when you should have your own, and consider offering to help to share the load.

ABSEILING / CANYONING:

Confirm requirements with your activity leader, which may include:

- Appropriate footwear, such as “volleys”
- Appropriate clothing (snug fitting)
- Backpack
- Food & drinks (see day walk list)
- Medical & first aid equipment (see day walk list)
- Toileting requirements (see day walk list)
- Safety equipment (see day walk list)
- Helmet with chin strap (a cycling helmet is not suitable!)
- Harness
- Leather gloves
- Carabiners (3)
- Descender
- “Cow tail”
- Prussik loops (3)
- Wetsuit
- Waterproof pack liner (dry bag/s)
- Thermals
- Wetsuit
- Change of clothes (in the car)
- Lilo (depending upon location of activity)

Notes:

- Dispose of human waste away from canyons.
- Leave crayfish and other wildlife alone.
- Carry out any rubbish.

If you are inexperienced, do not buy specialised gear without getting advice from someone with experience. Some leaders can lend you gear for your first activity.

CYCLING:

Confirm requirements with your activity leader, which may include:

- Bike with appropriate tyres
- Appropriate clothing
- Cycling helmet
- Food & drinks
- Medical & first aid equipment (see day walk list)
- Toileting requirements (see day walk list)
- Safety equipment (see day walk list)
- Puncture repair kit, spare parts & tools
- Change of clothes (in the car)

USEFUL INFORMATION

Some Recommended Suppliers:

Summit Gear (Katoomba) - <http://www.summitgear.com.au>

Mountain Design (Katoomba) - <http://www.mountaindesigns.com/>

Paddy Pallin (Katoomba) - <http://www.paddypallin.com.au/>

Macpac (Katoomba) - <http://www.macpac.com.au/>

Kathmandu - <http://www.kathmandu.com.au/>

Helinox (lightweight "TL" trekking poles) - <http://www.helinox.com.au/pages/home.asp>

Anaconda (Penrith) - <http://www.anaconda.com.au/>

Mountain Equipment - <http://www.mountainequipment.com/>

Trek and Travel - <https://www.trekandtravel.com.au/home.asp>

Other Useful Links:

Ultralight Gear (a UK company) - <http://www.ultralightoutdoorgear.co.uk/home.html>

Bushwalking Gear - <http://www.bushwalking.org.au/equip.html>

Bushwalking gear and info - www.bushwalking.org.au/FAQ/FAQ_Index.htm

Ultra-light gear - www.bushwalking.org.au/FAQ/FAQ_Ultralightweight.htm

Guide to using trekking poles -

<http://www.helinox.com.au/pages/australian-bushwalkers-guide-to-trekking-poles.asp>

Lacing shoes & boots - <http://www.fieggen.com/shoelace/lacingmethods.htm>

Some Useful Books:

Paddy Pallin's Bushwalking & Camping, Ian Brown,

The Backpacker's Handbook, Hugh McManners