

GENERAL COMMENTS ON REQUIREMENTS FOR GEAR:

The decision of what to take will depend on your experience and common sense. The more trips you go on, the better idea you'll have concerning what to take. If in doubt, ask your trip leader about specific requirements for the trip.

Don't over pack!! Generally speaking, women are not able to carry as much weight as men – this is why many women's packs are slightly smaller than men's packs (most women's packs have a capacity around 50-60L, while many men's packs are 70-90L). It can be very tempting to over-pack with larger packs. Be realistic about what you can carry and what you need to take. If you are having difficulties carrying it or don't think you can carry your pack for a whole day, look at what you really need to take and what you can do without. Don't expect other people to help you out if you find it too heavy – they have their own packs to worry about. For overnight trips, more than 20kgs is usually far too much weight – re-think and re-pack! (As a general rule, you should not carry more than one-third of your body weight, max!) To help you out, see if you can share gear with someone else (eg. you take the stove if someone else will take the pots, etc).

Whether or not you should include a particular item on a trip may depend on several factors such as:

- **Predicted weather and known climate** - If an area is known for bad weather or rain/showers are predicted, you may decide to take more wet weather protection. Trips in winter will always need warm clothing, while trips in summer concentrate more on sun protection, etc. Trips in Tasmania need different gear requirements than trip in the Kimberleys.
- **Alternatives** - Depending on the type of trip, there may be several options to choose from (eg. types of footwear, warm clothing, etc). Examples: On a bushwalking day trip, sandals/sneakers are probably suitable, but on an extended bushwalk, you may decide to take heavier leather boots for added protection & water protection. In summer, shorts are usually preferable to long pants or track suit pants, and similarly t-shirts are preferred to long-sleeved shirts. In summer you are probably more likely to simply take a groundsheet and fly, rather than a full tent.
- **Weight** - If you are opting to go light-weight, you may decide not to take a tent on an overnight trip, but instead take a ground sheet and a fly. You may even decide not to take a spare set of clothes. On ski trips, you generally try to take light-weight but warm clothing (so a down jacket might be your best bet, although regular fleece jackets are more than adequate for most trips). Weight can be a considerable factor in deciding what gear to take, but never compromise your safety.
- **Type of trip** - For example, day trips generally need less gear than an overnight trip. Ski trips always need more gear than most other types of activities. A car-camping trip means you can take anything, provided it fits in the boot!!
- **Anticipated terrain**- a trip on maintained/graded tracks usually means less gear when compared to a trip which takes you off-track. In areas where the scrub is known to be ruthless, gaiters to protect your legs (and gardening gloves to protect your hands) are essential. On snow trips or in areas where there has been a lot of recent rain, a section of foam mat can be useful when you take a break or set up camp. However, in the case of a lot of trips, this gear is not required. Unless you are aware yourself of the area you are going into, talk to the leader about the type of terrain and what additional gear might be useful.

Gear that you ALWAYS need to carry, no matter what type of trip:

- Food
- Water (at least 1L for a day trip, 2L for an overnight trip, more water is required during hot weather)
- First aid kit
- Emergency blanket (which should be part of your first aid kit)
- Hat
- Sunscreen
- Pocket knife
- Pen/pencil and paper

It is highly desirable that you should also carry the following on most trips:

- Map
- Compass
- Warm clothing (at least a light jacket or thermal top)
- Rain jacket (either a lightweight spray shell or a heavier rain jacket)