

**HARVARD FIRST-YEAR OUTDOOR PROGRAM  
TRAINING TRIP EQUIPMENT LIST**

**WHAT IS ALL OF THIS STUFF?**

As a general principle, remember that weather conditions during FOP are often severe, especially during the spring. It has **snowed** on many training trips, so you **must be prepared**. In order for your experience to be fun and protected from rain, wind, or cold, **you must bring all required gear and clothing**. You will use these items to layer efficiently. Insulating layers (such as fleece or wool) trap your body heat close against your skin, while an outer layer (raingear) will keep you from getting wet or wind from carrying away your heat.

**HIKING BOOTS**

Your feet are your wheels. If they aren't comfortable and well protected, you won't be either. You need boots that are comfortable and lovable, but also very tough! **Your boots must cover your ankles** in order to provide adequate ankle support. Hiking shoes such as the low or mid-top shoes made by Nike, Adidas, etc. are unacceptable. Some good boots are made by One Sport, Vasque, Merrell, Scarpa, and Asolo.

Many of us still swear by the traditional heavy leather hiking boots which give the best ankle support and general foot-protection from rough terrain and the elements. Some people prefer lightweight hiking boots, made of a combination of nylon and leather. They break in much more easily than leather boots and can (sometimes) be cheaper. While adequate for the backpacking we do, they definitely provide less ankle support than sturdy leather boots and tend to be less waterproof.

Make sure that you try on your boots with beefy socks, and that you still have adequate toe room. **Whatever boots you choose, you must break them in!** Otherwise, your feet will hurt. A lot. Laziness in breaking in boots can potentially ruin your FOP experience.

Make sure to also **waterproof them well**, even if they have Gore-Tex. Nikwax, Biwell and Sno-Seal are examples of good waterproofing treatments.

**FABRICS**

Wool and synthetic fabrics which have a variety of names, such as fleece, polar-fleece, Synchronilla, Capilene, or Bergalene will help to keep you warm even when they are wet, so they are critical. Check the tag on these fabrics; some fleece-like items can be cotton blends. When cotton gets wet, it loses its ability to trap heat, and thus becomes useless as an insulating layer. Cotton is only acceptable in your t-shirt(s), though many prefer synthetic ("wicking") t-shirts. Fabrics like fleece, rayon, acrylic, polyester, polypropylene, and wool retain their insulating ability when wet. There is **no need to buy expensive fleece sweaters/jackets**. Cheaper and acceptable fleece or wool options can be found at stores such as Target, Old Navy, clearance racks at outdoors stores, or second-hand/thrift stores. Just be sure that whatever you bring is **100% synthetic**.

Socks are just like any other insulating layer. They must be made out of 100% wool or synthetics. Cotton blends will leave you cold and unhappy. If you don't know exactly what your socks are made of, please buy wool socks.

**RAINGEAR**

It needs to keep water out, so it must be **waterproof**, not water-resistant. Adequate rain gear ranges from less expensive coated nylon (as long as the coating is fresh) jackets and pants to such fabrics as Gore-Tex, H2No, and Hellytech. These jackets **must have hoods** to keep your head dry.

Unacceptable raingear includes any type of warm-up jackets, wind-breakers or plain nylon or supplex jackets, as well as ponchos designed to fit over backpacks. Any jackets or pants that have a non-polyester lining are also unacceptable.

**Raingear is the most important piece of clothing you'll have.** It doesn't need to be expensive, but it needs to be waterproof or you will be unsafe in the field. A good test is to wear your raingear in the shower. If you have any questions about raingear you are buying or if you are borrowing from someone and don't know exactly what they are giving you, talk to us and ask.

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### BUT WHERE DO I GET IT ALL?

FOP does not have to be unduly expensive. Flashy, name-brand gear is nice, but it is costly and not necessary. Mt. Everest was climbed before Synchronilla and Gore-Tex were invented, so they are not necessary for FOP! Cheap alternatives include: borrowing from your buddies, using wool instead of fleece, and shopping at thrift stores.

Some of this clothing you may already own. For example, if you own “athletic” or “workout” clothing, much of that is acceptable (i.e., contains no cotton). For fleece clothing, Walmart and Target often have cheaper options than outdoors-specific stores that will suffice for FOP. (Hint: for fleece pants, check out pajama bottoms. If they are insulating and have no cotton, they’ll work fine.)

### Mail order and retail stores:

Recreational Equipment Inc (REI) – rei.com

Moosejaw.com

Eastern Mountain Sports (EMS) – ems.com

CampSaver.com

Backcountry.com

SierraTradingPost.com

GearX.com

Campmor.com

Walmart.com

Target.com

### FOP Gear Rental

In recent years, parents, leaders, and friends have donated funds and gear to FOP. Through their generosity, we are able to provide loaner gear to FOP participants and trainees. We charge FOPpers a small rental fee to cover cleaning, repair, and replacement; trainees can rent for free. Below is the gear we have to offer, on an as-needed basis.

Below is a list of available gear:

Sleeping Bag  
Backpack  
Rain Jacket  
Rain Pants  
Sleeping Pad

Boots  
Fleece Jackets  
Long Underwear Tops  
Long Underwear Bottoms

As a FOP trainee and leader, you can borrow any gear we have for free. However, bear in mind that gear we rent to you is gear we cannot rent to FOPpers. If you are thinking about purchasing your own pack/boots/sleeping bag/etc, please do so – and contact FOP about help getting discounts on equipment.

On the next page, you will find a list of the clothing and equipment you will need for your trip. In each section, we have listed the **REQUIRED** gear first. We also list optional items. If you already own these, feel free to bring them. However, it is not necessary to go out and buy these items. If you are placed on a switch trip or a Service Trip (we’ll notify you in late July), bring all of the items required on the list **PLUS** the required items for those specific trips, listed in a separate section at the end.

If you have **ANY** questions, no matter how complicated or simple, do not hesitate to call, email, or send us questions in cookie-form. Our website ([www.harvardfop.com](http://www.harvardfop.com)) is also a wonderful resource, complete with pictures, detailed explanations of gear, and how to shop effectively and find bargains.

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### FOOTWEAR

#### Required:

- 3-4 pairs of sturdy wool socks
- 1 pair of sturdy leather or part leather hiking boots—waterproofed (see boot section above)
- 1 pair of light, comfortable shoes for camp (tennis or running shoes are great; **river shoes, TEVAS, and other sandals are absolutely NOT allowed**; Crocs without holes are OK)

#### Optional:

- 2 pair of thin polypropylene or silk liner socks

### UPPER BODY

#### Required:

You must have a **minimum** of 4 long-sleeve layers that can all be worn at the same time!

- 1-2 non-cotton t-shirts (synthetic sports jerseys, capilene, or other synthetic shirts work for this)
- 1-2 mid-weight polypropylene long underwear tops (**NO COTTON BLENDS!**)
- 2-3 wool or fleece sweaters or shirts
- 1 heavy wool, fleece, or synthetic jacket
- 1 WATERPROOF raincoat (see section above). Must be large enough to fit over all of your other layers. **Ponchos are not acceptable!**
- 1 thick wool or fleece hat that must cover your ears (i.e. not a baseball hat)
- 1 pair of fleece or wool mittens or gloves (thick ski gloves are okay but not ideal)

#### Optional:

- 1 pair of thin polypropylene or silk liner gloves
- 1 neck gaiter (wool or fleece neck warmer; scarves are OK too)
- 1 wool or fleece vest (this is in addition to the above required items)
- 1-2 non-cotton sports bras
- 1 pair of waterproof mitten shells

### LOWER BODY

#### Required:

- 1 pair of mid-weight polypropylene long underwear bottoms (**NO COTTON!!!**)
- 1 pair of comfortable, quick-drying shorts, preferably with pockets
- 1 pair of fleece or wool long pants
- 1 pair of rain pants -- full side zips are a nice feature but not necessary (see section on raingear above)
- A couple pairs of non-cotton underwear

#### Optional:

- Gaiters (because of the exceptionally wet/snowy conditions often encountered on training trips, gaiters will provide additional protection against wetness. If you have them, definitely bring 'em)

### EQUIPMENT

#### Required (you can borrow packs/bags/pads from FOP):

- Backpack (For internal frame packs, volume should be at least 60 liters)
- Sleeping bag (due to the notoriously wet conditions we encounter, we require synthetic-filled bags. A 20° bag is OK for the training trip, but a warmer one will be more comfortable)
- Sleeping Pad (If purchasing a pad, ensolite and Ridge Rest pads are lighter and as comfortable as much more expensive Therm-A-Rest)
- Bowl (you should be able to easily lick the bottom) and spoon or spork
- 3 one-liter sturdy plastic water bottles. If they break they'll be useless.
- Headlamp or flashlight with spare new batteries & spare bulb. If at all possible, please borrow/buy a headlamp.
- Bug repellent (DEET or Citronella, for instance)
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Sunscreen
- Watch with alarm
- Leader Handbook and pen/pencil in plastic Ziplock bag
- Small journal/notepad
- Females Only: Feminine Hygeine Kit (see next pg. for details)

#### Optional:

- Pocket knife
- Compass (FOP will supply one for when you are leader of the day, but you may want to bring one to practice using it daily)
- Camera
- Stuff sacks
- Crazy Creek or similar chair
- Trekking poles
- 1 mosquito head net (required for Switch)
- Sunglasses and/or hat with a brim
- 2-3 Bandanas (many uses)

### SWITCH

#### Required:

- 1 extra pair sneakers to get wet (must have hard, closed toe and secure heel strap)
- 1 mosquito head net
- 1 hat with brim

#### Optional:

- Bathing suit
- Pack towel

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### FEMININE HYGIENE

Dealing with your period in the woods may sound like a bummer, but it doesn't have to be. Even if you are not expecting to get your period during the trip, bring adequate supplies anyway. The change in diet, the strenuous exercise, and spending a lot of time with other women can all affect your cycle. This is even true if you are on the pill. Your leaders will not have extra supplies, nor will you have access to a store, so come equipped! Here are a few suggestions for making yourself as comfortable and prepared as possible:

### BACKCOUNTRY PERIOD KIT

You will need:

- 1 small, dark colored, opaque bag or stuff sack
- 3 small Ziplock bags
- 1 travel pack of baby wipes (for cleaning purposes)
- a generous supply of tampons (tampons are much easier to deal with than pads, but if you have to use pads, go ahead). Tampons without an applicator (like OB) are ideal because they produce the least waste & take up the least space in your pack.

### Directions:

1. Take the tampons (or pads) out of the box and put them all into one Ziplock bag to protect them from the rain.
2. Put the travel pack of baby wipes inside a second Ziplock bag to ensure they stay moist
3. Keep the third Ziplock bag empty to use as a mini-garbage for used supplies. All dirty baby wipes, used tampons, and tampon wrappers should go into the garbage Ziplock. If you are concerned about odor, you can put a used tea bag in the garbage Ziplock.
4. Put all three bags inside the opaque bag. Voila: you have a self-contained period kit! On the trail, you should keep this in an accessible part of your pack.

Another consideration for female FOPpers is whether or not to bring a “pee rag.” Since we do not use toilet paper on FOP, many female FOPpers and leaders choose to bring a bandana (or half a bandana) to use as a pee rag as opposed to “drip drying.” This choice is up to you. If you are well hydrated (as you should be), the pee rag will not have much odor at all.

### EYE CARE

Wearing contact lenses on FOP may seem daunting, but it doesn't have to be. You will not have access to running water on FOP, but FOP does carry biodegradable soap. You may also bring a small bottle of instant hand sanitizer with you on the trip. In this way you will be able to clean your hands for removing and putting your contacts in. Also, make sure to bring an extra pair of contacts and/or glasses as well as plenty of solution for cleaning your contact lenses.