



Experience Learning

beyond the classroom

Dear Mountain Stewards and Parents,

We are looking forward to your child's upcoming trip with *Experience Learning*! As we prepare for this outdoor living and learning experience keep in mind that the key to a fantastic experience is coming prepared for the variety of weather conditions we often experience here in the Appalachians. Being warm and dry while hiking, climbing, or preparing dinner back at camp is a wonderful feeling!

Although the weather on Spruce Knob is often sunny and warm, some days have their share of windy, cold, or rainy conditions. Therefore, being prepared for all sorts of weather is crucial. The list of recommended clothing is designed to function as a layering system. A single layer may be enough during the day but often adding a few layers is required in the evenings or on cooler days. You can check www.weather.com for Circleville, WV to get a good idea of the forecasted weather. We are typically about 5 degrees cooler up on the mountain.

Packing the right clothing is pretty straightforward. Choose clothing based on the idea that synthetics and wools will keep one warm even when wet, while cotton tends to hold moisture and dirt. When wet, cotton jeans, sweatshirts, pants and socks are difficult to dry and rapidly draw body heat away rather than provide insulation. While we realize cotton clothing is comfortable, wool, fleece, pile, and other synthetic and Under Armor-like shirts, pants and pullovers are more functional for our multi-day camping and outdoor activities. Anywhere you read wool in the following list, a synthetic alternative is acceptable.

We highly encourage you to utilize things you already own rather than purchasing new equipment. If you find yourself in need, thrift stores are fantastic resources for inexpensive clothing. Larger chain stores also feature many inexpensive synthetic clothing options.

Students will need to carry their equipment to their campsite in back packs, therefore consider the best of what you have that is light weight and multi-purpose with regards to clothing and equipment such as flashlights, shoes, jackets, etc.

We will provide sleeping bags, sleeping pads, tents, food, and other necessary items. If you have any questions about the packing list, please ask for clarification. Others in your community may have attended our courses in the past and are excellent resources. Cellular telephones do not work in our area, and all electronics will be left in storage during the wilderness trip.

Remember, encouraging each other to take on the challenge of new experiences with an open mind and a positive attitude is the best way to prepare for this exciting adventure.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns as they arise.

We look forward to seeing you soon,

Metuck Brooks

Mountain Stewards Packing List

Check the weather before arrival and use your best judgment regarding some of the cold weather items on the list. Keep in mind mountain nights are often cooler than you'd expect.

Gear:

- Small backpack (1). To carry rain gear, extra layers, journal, and lunch during day trips.
- 32-oz water bottles (2). Reused Gatorade or water bottles works well. Please fill with water.
- Cup, bowl, spoon and fork (1 ea.). Plates and knives are not necessary.
- Heavy-duty garbage bags. (3). These keep belongings dry and separate dirty/ wet clothing,
- Flashlight/headlamp (1).
- Extra batteries (1).
- Journal or sketch pad (1).
- Pen and/or pencil. (1).

Clothes:

- Synthetic long underwear tops and bottoms (1 set). *Light weight recommended.*
- Short sleeved T-shirts (4). *Synthetic rec.*
- Synthetic long sleeve shirt or light wool sweater (1).
- Shorts (1).
- Heavy wool sweater or synthetic jacket. (1).
- Light socks (3 pair).
- Warm wool or synthetic socks (2 pair).
- Warm hat (1).
- Sun visor/baseball hat (1)
- Rain suit (1 set). **Jacket**

and pants.

- (1). Hiking Boots
Leather boots are fine if broken in and comfortable. Rubberized boots are usually not comfortable for hiking.
- Sneakers (1). For wearing around camp. **Please no sandals or open-toed shoes.**

Toiletries for the Field:

- Toothpaste and toothbrush, sunscreen, SPF rated Lip balm. *Travel sized versions rec. Hand-washing soap provided.*
- Medications. *Medications will be administered by individual, not ExL staff.*

Optional Gear:

- Camera
- Binoculars

Toiletries for Showers:

At the end of the camping portion of the trip, we will provide access to our shower house for students to shower. These items **cannot** be brought into the woods and should be packed separately for storage at our facility until students return from the field.

- Shower gear: soap, shampoo, towel.
- Clean clothes (1 set).
- Body sprays, soaps, cologne, etc. (Optional).

Bring For Caving:

Students will get very muddy and wet, so a synthetic under layer is very important, as is wearing clothes that can get very dirty.

- Long underwear (1 set).
- Old pants (1), *Wool/synthetic.*
- Long sleeve shirt (1).
- Fleece sweater (1).
- Headlamp/flashlight (1).

DO NOT BRING INTO THE FIELD:

- × Snacks/Food
- × Cellular Phones
- × Electronics
- × Money or other valuables