



experience
LEARNING

Introductory Letter and Packing List for Mountain Stewards

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, it is also sometimes rainy, snowy, windy, and cold. We have had snow as late as May and as early as September, even the summer months can be surprisingly chilly or windy in the evenings -- arriving prepared is crucial. The list on the following page offers guidance on packing. Please check that everything on the list is packed unless marked optional. Pack extra layers if the weather is projected to be cold. Our onsite weather station will provide the most current weather forecast, and is accessed at <http://www.wunderground.com/forecast/us/wv/circleville/KWVCIRCL4>

We highly recommend clothing made from wool or synthetic materials. Clothing made from cotton, including jeans, sweatpants, sweatshirts and flannel shirts, is not recommended for this trip. When cotton clothing becomes wet, it no longer warms the body and takes a long time to dry. Wool and synthetic materials keep their loft when wet, which means they will be warm when wet or dry. Ideal outdoor wear includes materials like fleece, wool blends, nylon, or *Under Armor*-like clothes. The listed clothing is designed to function as a layered system. Layers may be worn alone during warmer periods or together in the evenings or when conditions turn colder.

We encourage you to utilize things your family already owns rather than purchasing new equipment. You may be surprised to find plenty of synthetic clothing already in your own home, and if you find yourself still in need, thrift stores are fantastic resources, while larger chain stores typically carry inexpensive synthetic clothing -- particularly fleece.

Participants will need to carry their equipment to their campsite in large expedition-size backpacks, 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 expedition-size backpacks, sleeping bags, sleeping pads, tents, food, tools, and other activity specific items. If you have any questions about the packing list, please ask for clarification. Others in your community may have attended our camps 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,

Program Manager

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 school-sized 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,
- Headlamp (preferred)/ Flashlight (1).
- Extra batteries (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).
- Pants (2)
- 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. Ponchos are**

not adequate.

- Hiking Boots (1) *Boots should be worn/broken in and comfortable. Water resistant shoes with good support/tread are great. Rubberized boots are not adequate for hiking.*
- Sneakers (1). *For wearing around camp. Sandals allowed only if they have a back strap. **Flip flops are not adequate.***

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:

- Handkerchief
- Camera (may get wet, dirty, lost - disposable works great)
- Binoculars
- Swimming suit (may have the option to swim)

Toiletries for Showers:

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

- Shower gear: soap, shampoo, towel
- Clean clothes (1 set) including socks & underwear.

Bring if caving:

Campers will get very muddy and wet, so a synthetic under layer is very important, as is wearing clothes that can get very dirty. Temperatures in the cave will reliably be around 50 degrees F.

- Old pants (1) *synthetic.*
- Long sleeve shirt (1).
- Fleece sweater (1).
- Old pair of sneakers (will get muddy/wet)
- Headlamp/flashlight (1). *The same one used during program. ExL will provide helmets, and headlamps if needed.*

DO NOT BRING INTO THE FIELD:

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

Experience Learning Inc.

Spruce Knob Mountain Center, 18 Woodlands Way, Circleville, WV 26804
Email: info@experience-learning.org Phone: (304) 567-2632, Fax: (304) 567-2666