

American Alpine Institute

PATAGONIA CLIMB & EXPLORE EQUIPMENT LIST

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The weather in Patagonia is known throughout the climbing world to be capricious and violent. Frequently the weather is windy, sometimes extremely windy. Rain is common, usually only in brief showers near the mountains, but occasionally in more prolonged storms, and a few times in the course of the Astral summer snow falls down to elevations as low as Base Camp. On fine days, which are not unusual, the weather is pleasantly warm and dry, and you'll be most comfortable hiking in shorts and a T-shirt. Temperatures on the climbs rarely drop below the freezing point, so in general you must prepare more for wet and windy conditions rather than for extreme cold.

The equipment you bring must function well in a wide variety of conditions. Your clothing should be warm and lightweight, dry quickly, and allow good freedom of movement. The layering principle, based on several thin layers of insulation (rather than one thick one), covered with an outer weather-proof shell, meets these needs well.

Please take the time to choose your clothing and equipment carefully. It's an important part of making your trip a comfortable and successful one. If you have any questions please call the Institute office or equipment shop.

CLOTHING

Climbing Boots - Heavy duty leather mountaineering boots with 1/2 to full shanks are recommended. They should be compatible with step-in crampons and/or be constructed with full Norwegian welts. Soft plastic boots will work but leather is preferable because of the extensive hiking portions of the trip.

Gaiters - Knee high. Useful on the trekking sections to keep stickers out of your socks. Required for the Torres del Paine program.

Supergaiters - (optional) As an alternative to regular gaiters for climbing, supergaiters can help to keep your boots drier and warmer. Make sure they fit your boots well.

Socks - Wool or synthetic (no cotton). Bring at least two complete changes. Climbers frequently wear a thin liner sock, and one or two pair of thick socks depending on boot fit.

Comfortable Walking Shoes - For hiking approaches and around camp. Lightweight leather-nylon combination approach shoes are recommended.

Long Underwear Bottoms and Tops - This will be your base layer and should be lightweight polyester, polypropylene or similar synthetic.

2nd Layer (Top) - Expedition weight long underwear top, 100 weight powerstretch, very light weight fleece, Schoeller, or a lightweight windshirt (i.e. Marmot DriClima) are good examples of this multi-use layer.

2nd Layer (Bottom) - Schoeller, Pile or fleece preferred. Seek out quick-drying and wind/water resistant material. Black Diamond Alpine Pants and Arc'teryx Gamma LT Pants are good examples of these types of materials.

Warm Jacket - *Optional for those bringing an insulated Jacket as described below* Pile, fleece or Windstopper.

Insulated Jacket - *Optional for those bringing a warm jacket as described above* Lightweight down or synthetic. Some good examples of insulating materials are Primaloft, Polarguard 3D or any down jacket/parka.

Rain Pants or Bibs - Gore-Tex or other waterproof breathable material recommended. Full side zips recommended for easy on and off over boots and crampons.

Rain Parka with Hood - Gore-Tex or other waterproof breathable material recommended.

Liner Gloves - Lightweight polypropylene or similar synthetic. Worn alone or as a liner in your mittens.

Modular gloves and/or mittens - which include a matched pair of insulating gloves or mitts and waterproof shells, offer excellent protection. Good models are made by Outdoor Research, Black Diamond, Wild Country and others. (If you bring a pair of these you'll still need to bring the liner gloves.)

Warm Hat - Synthetic is less itchy than wool.

Lightweight Balaclava - A balaclava is a hat that can be pulled all the way down over the head to the shoulders. It completely covers the head except for an opening for the face. It provides excellent wind protection for the chin, ears and neck. Silk or thin polypropylene (or similar synthetic) is recommended.

Sun Hat - A baseball cap serves well.

Travel and Town Clothes - We occasionally like to go out to good restaurants and you may want something other than your woolies or jeans.

- Light cotton or other pants (either slacks or a skirt are fine for women.)
- Light cotton or other shirt.
- Footwear other than sneakers or hiking boots.

CLIMBING GEAR

Ice Axe - 60 to 70 cm length with standard pick and wrist loop. If your axe doesn't have a wrist loop, pre-sewn ones are available commercially or you can bring about 6 feet of 1 inch webbing and we'll tie it during the program.

Crampons - Flexible or Semi rigid. Step-in bindings are convenient, but be sure they work very well with your boots. The Sabertooth by Black Diamond and the 2F by Grivel are excellent.

Climbing Harness - Should fit over bulky clothing. Adjustable leg loops help in this regard.

Carabiners - Bring four, two of which should be locking.

Prusiks - Prusiks are specially tied loops of 6mm cord used for crevasse rescue. If you don't have a set of prusiks from a previous AAI course then bring three lengths of flexible 6mm perlon, 5ft, 6ft, and 13ft. (Precut lengths are available for sale through AAI.)

MISCELLANEOUS

Passport

Passport/Money Pouch - A waist pouch is less convenient but more secure than a neck pouch.

Duffel Bag - Two large and sturdy bags are handy. Expedition style is best. When packing luggage for airline travel, always put everything inside a lockable bag or duffel. Don't check your pack as a piece of baggage as it isn't possible to secure all of the outside pockets and entrances. Put your pack inside one duffel and any other items inside the other bag when checking in at the airport. During the program one bag will be tied on the back of the horse as you move from camp to camp and the other duffel can be left at the hotel to store gear you are not using.

Small Padlock - To fit through the zip sliders of the duffel to secure its contents.

Large Pack - Large internal frame pack, 5000 cubic inches or larger. External frame packs are not recommended. The large pack is required to transport loads around the most remote part of the Paine circuit, as horses are unable to complete this section. This pack may or may not be required for the Fitzroy–Cerro Torre program. We are considering doing a circuit around Fitzroy Park which will depend on the size and background of the group; if so, each climber will need a large pack. Please call the Institute office to confirm.

Summit Pack - 2000 to 2500 cubic inches. Useful for day hikes, around town, and on most all of the Fitzroy trip where we intend for horses to carry loads between camps.

Sleeping Bag - Down or synthetic, rated to about 20F.

Sleeping Pad - 3/4 or full length closed cell foam or Thermarest, full length recommended. Thermarest users should bring a repair kit.

Glacier Glasses - With side shields.

Utensils - Large cup (pint size best), spoon, fork and a bowl. An insulated plastic cup keeps drinks hot and is recommended.

Favorite Snack Foods - Please don't bring more than about a pound or two.

Lighters - Bring two.

Water Bottles - Bring two 1 quart wide-mouthed (or one bottle and a hydration sack).

Water Purification/Filtration - Bring iodine based tablets such as Potable Aqua or use a filter pump. Bring iodine as a back up for your pump.

Headlamp - Bring an extra bulb and a set of extra batteries.

Pocket Knife - Swiss Army style or a multitool like the Leatherman Tool.

Repair Kit - Needle and thread, a small amount of adhesive tape or duct tape, Thermarest repair kit, 10 to 20 feet of light cord, crampon adjustment tools.

Personal Medical Kit -

- personal medications
- 20 tablets of Tylenol or aspirin
- 10 to 20 assorted Band-aids
- one 1 1/2 inch roll of cloth athletic adhesive tape
- minimum 1/2 square foot moleskin
- 4 safety pins
- Ace bandage
- medicated cough drops such as Hall's
- Pepto-Bismol for upset stomach
- Loperamide (Immodium)- For diarrhea.

Choose one of the two antibiotics below depending on personal allergies. Be sure to discuss the use and precautions for each drug with your doctor.

- Trimethoprim-Sulfamethoxazole (Bactrim or Septra)
- Ciprofloxacin (Cipro)

Sunscreen - With a protection factor of at least 16. For the fair an SPF of 35 or 40 is better.

Lip Protection - With a protection factor of at least 16. For the fair an SPF of 35 is better.

Insect Repellent

Large Plastic Garbage Bags - Bring 2 or 3 to help keep your gear dry.

Personal Toiletries - Bring half a roll of toilet paper. We provide TP in the mountains. Also bring a towel, soap and washcloth. There is no need for shampoo in the mountains.

Camera - With lots of film and an extra battery. Patagonia is a very photogenic place.

Reading or Writing Material

Optional Entertainment - Cards, dominoes, Walkman, etc.

Foam ear plugs (optional)