

BACKCOUNTRY TRAVEL TIPS

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National Forests
High Uintas Wilderness



CHOOSING FOOD

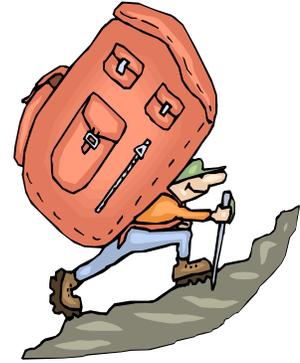
- 1) Think light and packable. If you can't crush, shake, or drop it, don't take it along. Try your local supermarket. There's no need to buy expensive backpacking specialty foods. Avoid fresh or canned foods because of their weight and tendency to draw animals into camp. Also, get rid of bulky excess packaging before leaving home.
- 2) Choose foods that are high in complex carbohydrates, such as whole grains and dried fruits. These provide sustained energy for the long haul. But, don't forget the junk food. Sweets are great for quick energy on the run. Keep some hard candy in your pocket.
- 3) Choose foods that are easy to prepare. Unless you're a backcountry gourmet, bad weather, mosquitoes, or darkness may make you wish that you had. Consider one-pot meals that take less than 15 minutes to prepare. Less prep means less hassle and more time to play.



PACKING UP

- 4) Place heavier items high in your pack and close to your back for improved balance and comfort. Adjust the load for your individual center of gravity. This is higher for men than women.

5) Adjust your pack properly so that the load rests on your hips, not on your shoulders. You'll be able to travel farther with less fatigue and less risk of back injury. The miles will go by much faster!



6) Pack light! Splurge for better quality, lightweight equipment and bring only what you need. Ounces feel like pounds after a few miles and you'll soon wish you had left the "extras" at home.

7) Pack a pair of river sandals or old tennis shoes. They are great for fording streams and getting out of hot, sweaty boots when lounging around camp. They are also much lighter on the land.

8) Pack first aid and repair kits. Be prepared to handle minor injuries and equipment damage. Seasoned hikers combine these kits with their survival kit, since many of the items are the same.

9) Pack for the worst possible weather. Always pack a coat/jacket, rain gear, and a change of clothes. Avoid cotton - it pulls heat from you're your body when it's wet. Pack a pair of synthetic thermal underwear for warmth and comfort under the worst conditions. Pack a wool or synthetic cap - most of your body heat is lost through your head and neck. Mountain weather is hazardous and unpredictable. It can kill you!



10) Pack only enough water to get you to a reliable water source. Any more is dead weight and any less can be dangerous. Pack a water filter or iodine for treatment and re-water as often as necessary.

11) Use garbage bags or waterproof stuff sacks to keep everything in your pack dry. There's nothing worse than a cold, wet sleeping bag at the end of a cold, wet day... except perhaps soggy clothes.

ON THE TRAIL

- 12) Wear two pair of socks. A thick wool sock worn over a synthetic liner will reduce friction (blisters) and fatigue and provide drier, happier feet. This may also reduce impact injuries.



- 13) Apply moleskin on areas prone to blisters before you hit the trail and on hotspots along the way, before blisters form.

- 14) Use a quality aftermarket boot insert to absorb impact and reduce foot fatigue and the risk of injuries. Discard the factory boot insert - they are usually inadequate and offer little support.

- 15) Drink often! Don't allow yourself to become dehydrated. Once you are, it's too late! It can take hours to re-hydrate. Dehydration can result in altitude sickness, headaches, fatigue, and serious injury.



- 16) Munch often. Several small snacks along the trail will help you sustain your energy. Mix sweets with healthy snacks.

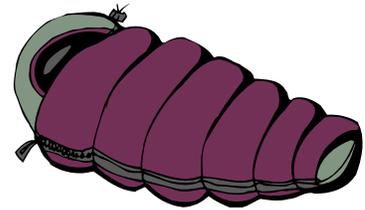
- 17) Stay dry! Add or shed layers as necessary to avoid getting wet (even from sweat). Hypothermia is the greatest threat to backcountry travelers. Even in mild temperatures, it can kill you!

- 18) Don't overextend yourself. Take frequent breaks, one at least every hour, and don't exceed the limits of your abilities. Extreme fatigue impairs judgement and can result in injury or death!

- 19) Stretch before and after your hike and following breaks to remain limber and help prevent injuries and soreness.

SLEEPING WARM

- 20) Use a mummy bag. They are more efficient in preserving body heat than rectangular bags and are much lighter too. Choose a bag with the right temperature rating. Women may want a warmer bag since they usually sleep colder than men. Remember, nighttime temperatures in the high country can dip below freezing, even in mid-summer.
- 21) Insulate yourself from the ground using a closed-cell foam or inflatable sleeping pad. A sleeping body in contact with the ground loses large amounts of heat through conduction. If you use a $\frac{3}{4}$ length pad, place clothing under your feet to keep them off the ground.
- 22) Keep your sleeping bag dry. Wet bags, especially down bags, lose insulating value.
- 23) Fluff your sleeping bag as soon as you unpack it. This restores loft and warmth.
- 24) Empty your bladder before going to bed. This conserves body heat while you sleep and helps avoid getting up in the night.
- 25) Eat a dinner rich in complex carbohydrates, and also eat something sweet before going to bed. This will help warm your bag and fuel your body's internal furnace through the night.
- 26) Wear a warm hat to bed and sleep in loose, dry clothing or a pair of thermal underwear. Most of your body heat is lost through your head and neck, and tight clothes restrict circulation.
- 27) Drink plenty of water before bed and keep water handy during the night. A hydrated body heats itself more efficiently. You'll sleep better and feel better in the morning. Don't use Tip #24 as an excuse to ignore this one.



VISITORS, PLEASE REMEMBER... Always practice **LEAVE NO TRACE** outdoor ethics and respect all **RESTRICTIONS**. Thank you and enjoy your visit to the **High Uintas Wilderness!**