



# DESERT ROCK EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

This list was designed for the “worst case scenario,” a trip with significant inclement weather. In serious conditions it’s not uncommon for a climber to need every piece of clothing and equipment on this list. However, if a program does not encounter significant weather, there may be items here that are not used. As you prepare for your trip, it’s important to plan for the worst and hope for the best.

At the start of the day, your guide will ensure that everyone is adequately prepared for the day. They will also be able to refine your day pack to make sure that you bring exactly what’s needed given the forecast. It is acceptable to bring too much clothing or equipment to your initial meeting. And it is acceptable to bring things that you have questions about. Extra equipment can always be left behind in the van.

**Red Rock, NV:** The Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area is located in the high desert about 20 miles west of Las Vegas. In the spring (March and April) and the Fall (October and November), when climbing conditions are at their best, daytime highs often climb to 80°F with nighttime lows near 40°F to 50°F. The winters are normally cool and snow often covers the ground deep in the shaded canyon floors. Rain or snow occasionally falls, but the vast majority of days are sunny and fair. The weather can be breezy, especially high on rock routes.

**Joshua Tree, CA:** Joshua Tree National Park is located in the high desert of Southern California. The winters are generally cool with highs in the 60’s and lows at night in the 30’s. Rain, or even snow, occasionally falls, but most days are sunny and pleasant. Routes in the shade are often too cold in the middle of the winter, but those in the sun seem just right. The weather can be breezy, and it is a good idea to bring a lightweight wind jacket.

**Rentals:** Equipment that is available for rent through the AAI is designated with a “Rent” check box. These items must be requested for rent and paid for prior to your trip start, this can be done either via email ([sw-coordinator@alpineinstitute.com](mailto:sw-coordinator@alpineinstitute.com)) or phone (360-671-1505).

**Call or Email the Equipment Shop for Advice on Gear:** Please feel free to contact the shop to help you get ready for your trip. Your comfort and safety depend on being well equipped. Whether you get your gear from us or just get advice, we’re here to help you prepare.

Call: (360) 671-1570 - Email: [shop@alpineinstitute.com](mailto:shop@alpineinstitute.com) - Website: <https://shop.alpineinstitute.com/>

Please be sure to check the forecast several days prior to your course to ensure that you are properly prepared.

[NOAA Red Rock Canyon Weather](#)

[NOAA Joshua Tree National Park Weather](#)

# CLOTHING

## Sun Hat

Fit under a helmet. Visors or athletic hats are comfortable, vent well, and are easy to clean and dry out.

Buy  
 Own

## Buff/Neck Gaiter (Optional)

Look for one that is UPF-rated. Lighter colors are better for warm conditions.

Buy  
 Own

## Sun Glasses

Preferably with UVA/UVB protection

Buy  
 Own

## Headlamp

Bring extra batteries or charger for rechargeable battery style. Ideal range is 200-350 lumens.

*Examples: Petzl Swift RL, Petzl Actik*

Buy  
 Own

## Sports Bra

Wool or synthetic. Comfort is key, racerbacks are a popular option.

Buy  
 Own

## Sun Hoody

Lightweight, wool or synthetic is ideal. Look for one with UPF 30+ sun protection. UPF clothing protects better from the sun than sunscreen.

*Examples: Patagonia Capilene Cool Daily Hoody, Outdoor Research Echo, Rab Pulse*

Buy  
 Own

## Active Insulation Layer

Lightweight "gridded fleece" or lightweight synthetic insulated jacket. Hood preferred. Active insulation weight - 40g/m<sup>2</sup>. Heavier insulation weight - 60-80g/m<sup>2</sup>

*Examples: Patagonia R1, Patagonia Nano Air, Arc'Teryx Proton LT*

Buy  
 Own

## Soft Shell Jacket or Windproof Jacket

A soft shell jacket is considered an "action layer." Its materials are designed to stretch and breathe while also maintaining wind and water resistance. This allows the user to leave this jacket on for a wide range of temps and conditions throughout the day without the hassle of constantly changing layers.

Windproof jackets are lightweight and packable, but lack the breathability and stretchy nature of the soft shell. Windproof jackets are ideal for blocking wind and light precipitation during low output activities.

*Example Softshells: Black Diamond Alpine Start Hoody, Rab Borealis, Patagonia Houdini Air*

*Example Windproof: Patagonia Houdini, Arc'Teryx Squamish Hoody*

Buy  
 Own

## Insulation Jacket / Puffy Jacket

Down or synthetic. Worn in cold conditions or when not moving. Hood preferred. If choosing down, water-resistant down treatment is preferred to help prevent matting and loss of insulating ability if the jacket gets wet.

*Example: Arc'Teryx Nuclei FL, Patagonia Down Sweater, Rab Alpine Series*

Buy  
 Own

## Hardshell Jacket (Waterproof Rain Jacket) (Optional)

Non-insulated jacket with a waterproof and breathable membrane. Three-layer construction is recommended. It must have a hood, ideally helmet-compatible. When sizing, make sure it can fit over other layers.

*Examples: Patagonia Torrentshell, Arc'Teryx Alpha AR, Mountain Equipment Lhotse*

Buy  
 Own

## CLOTHING CONTINUED

### Undergarments

Wool or synthetic.

- Buy  
 Own

### Soft Shell Pants

Thin, weather-resistant, breathable, and stretchy. You will wear these a majority of the time.

*Examples: Patagonia Altvia, Mountain Equipment Ibex, Arc'Teryx Gamma FL*

- Buy  
 Own

### Hard Shell Pants (Waterproof Rain Pants) (Optional)

Non-insulated, waterproof, and breathable membrane. Full side zips are recommended. When sizing make sure it is able to fit over a base layer and soft shell pants.

*Examples: Patagonia Torrentshell, Arc'Teryx Beta Pant*

- Buy  
 Own

### Socks

Wool or synthetic socks that are at least mid-calf height.

*Examples: Darn Tough Coolmax Lightweight*

- Buy  
 Own

### Approach Shoes

Made with sticky climbing rubber, used for approaches to and from the rock climbing areas as well as for climbing some of the easier routes.

*Example Approach: La Sportiva TX4, TX2, Scarpa Rapid*

- Buy  
 Own

## CLIMBING

### Harness

Make sure the harness has a belay loop and gear loops.

*Example Padded Harness: Petzl Adjama, Arc'Teryx AR-395a*

- Buy  
 Own  
 Rent

### Helmet

Must be UIAA-rated for climbing. Foam, break-away style helmets are susceptible to damage if being loaded in a checked bag.

*Examples: Petzl Meteor, Black Diamond Vision*

- Buy  
 Own  
 Rent

### Rock Shoes

Focus on comfort, so they can be worn all day. Avoid technical or aggressive rock shoes with a downturn. Avoid curled toes when sizing.

*Example: La Sportiva Tarantulace, La Sportiva TC Pro*

- Buy  
 Own  
 Rent

### Belay Device or Assisted Braking Device

You may need one or the other depending on your program, confirm with your guide.

*Examples: Black Diamond ATC Guide, Petzl Reverso, Petzl GriGri, Black Diamond ATC Pilot*

- Buy  
 Own

### Slings (Optional - but HIGHLY recommended)

Bring one 48in (120cm) and one 24in (60cm) pre-sewn sling. Must be UIAA-rated for climbing.

*Examples: Mammut Contact, Black Diamond Nylon Runner*

- Buy  
 Own

### Cordelette (Optional - but HIGHLY recommended)

A 180cm-240cm length sling or 18-24 feet of 6mm accessory cord.

*Example: Mammut Contact, Bluewater Titan Cord*

- Buy  
 Own

### Belay Gloves

Lightweight and breathable gloves with a durable leather palm are ideal.

- Buy  
 Own

# CLIMBING

## Carabiners

Must be UIAA-rated for climbing. Suggested:

- 4 large pear-shaped munter-style locking carabiners
- 5 non-locking wire gate carabiners

*Examples: Petzl Attache, Camp Photon Wire*

Buy  
 Own

## Multi-Pitch / Day Pack

18L to 25L is an ideal size.

*Example: Patagonia Linked 18 Black Diamond Blitz 28*

Buy  
 Own

## Rappel Backup (Optional - but HIGHLY recommended)

The Sterling hollow Block or Beal Jammy are recommended for their heat resistant properties. A 4ft length of 6mm nylon accessory cord will also suffice.

*Examples: Beal Jammy 35mm, Sterling HollowBlock 2 13.5*

Buy  
 Own

## Rock Climbing Rack and Nut Tool (Optional)

If you have these then bring it. Make sure and mark your gear so it doesn't get mixed up. Nail polish is the best way to permanently mark your gear, tape is discouraged as it tends to fall off.

Buy  
 Own

## Chalk Bag and Chalk (Optional)

Nice for hot days and sweaty hands.

Buy  
 Own

## Crack Gloves (Optional)

Can also use climbers tape.

Buy  
 Own

## Hydration

3L capacity is recommended, though some people need more. Most folks bring a 2-3 liter bladder and a 1 liter hard sided bottle. A bottle is an important backup to the bladder.

*Examples: Nalgene 32 oz bottle, Hydrapak Seeker 2-3L, MSR Dromedary 4-8L*

Buy  
 Own

## Snacks and Food

You are responsible for bringing your own food for the duration of the course.

Buy  
 Own

# SUGGESTED CAMPING GEAR

OPTIONAL - ONLY NEEDED IF YOU PLAN ON CAMPING

## Tent

3 season tents are appropriate for this course's camp locations.

*Example: Big Agnes Copper Spur, REI Half Dome*

Buy  
 Own

## Sleeping Bag & Sleeping Pad

Synthetic or Down bag, rated 20°F to 30°F (-6°C to -1°C). Also bring an inflatable or foam pad.

Buy  
 Own

## Stove, Fuel, Pot, and Lighters (x2)

*Example: Soto Windmaster, MSR Windburner*

Buy  
 Own

## Utensils and Bowl / Plate

Bring a spoon or spork and something to eat out of. You can eat out of your pot as well.

Buy  
 Own

# OTHER ESSENTIALS

## Toothbrush and Toothpaste

Travel size recommended

Buy  
 Own

## Hand Sanitizer and/or Wet Wipes

Required. Used after going to the bathroom and before eating.

Buy  
 Own

## Toilet Paper

We recommend bringing half a roll to a roll in a ziplock bag.

Buy  
 Own

## Pee Cloth (Optional)

A reusable, antimicrobial pee cloth, used in the place of toilet paper or wet wipes.

*Example: Kula Cloth*

Buy  
 Own

## Urination Device (Optional)

Pee funnels such as the GoGirl or Freshette. Rigid pee funnels hold their shape better.

Buy  
 Own

## Menstrual Cup (Optional)

*Examples: Diva cup, Saalt, Lunette*

Buy  
 Own

## Sunscreen and Lip Balm

At least an SPF of 30+, zinc-based is preferred. Small travel-size tubes are recommended.

*Examples: ZBlok 45, Sunbum Mineral FaceStick 50*

Buy  
 Own

## Personal First Aid Kit

- Band aids; Blister treatment
- Prescription Drugs, Ibuprofen, etc
- If you wear contacts, make sure you have spares if you can't see without them

Buy  
 Own

# OTHER OPTIONAL ITEMS

## Entertainment

Books, games, cards, music player, kindle, etc.

Buy  
 Own

## Portable Charging Device or Car Charger

Phone charger, battery pack, or solar panel.

Buy  
 Own

## Camera

Phone cameras or small point-and-shoot cameras are preferred.

Buy  
 Own

## Comfortable Clothing and Footwear

Breathable footwear, like flip flops, and some comfortable cotton clothing can be nice to change into after you get back to the car.

Buy  
 Own