

BEGINNER BACKPACKING GUIDE



**Ready to transition from day hikes to backpacking?
You're in the right place!**

It can seem like a big step, but it's easier with tips, strategies & gear recommendations. Get ready to spark a life-long love for longer trails & nights spent under the stars!



Choose Your Trail

Look at each trail's **elevation gain, terrain, and area wildlife** to find a great, beginner-friendly option.

Grab any needed **permit in advance** (check Recreation.gov for national park/forest permits). Remember to **Leave No Trace** on any trail you hike!

Research nearby trails for inspiration. Start by hiking with friends, joining group trips, trying short overnight hikes, or hiring a guide.

- **Use AllTrails** to filter trails by area, length & difficulty
- **Research area wildlife** & how to protect yourself/food
- **Get needed permits** on Recreation.gov
- **Research forecast**, temps & trail conditions
- **Commit to Leave No Trace** -- leave the wilderness as you find it

Work your way up to longer, overnight hikes with **strength & endurance training**. Start with short hikes and **slowly increase trail length and intensity**.

Download my [Training & Backpacking Bundle](#) to get a 12-week plan with treadmill workouts and training for your backpacking adventure -- packing, tips, and more!

Condition Yourself



- **Strength training** for legs & core muscles
- **Cardio training** for endurance
- **Balance training** for stability
- **Train with gear** to get ready



Food & Water

- *Minimum* 1 qt. water/2 hrs hiking
- Water bottle/reservoir
- Electrolyte powder/tablets
- Water filter/purification
- Meals (2,500-4,500 cal/day)
- Energy food & drinks
- Extra days' food

Make sure you pack enough calories (**aim for 2,500-4,500/day**) & water for your hike.

Don't overpack food and water (these are some of the heaviest items in your pack).

Pack more water in hot temps or on strenuous hikes. **Don't forget your water filter!** Learn how to use it and research places to use it on the trail.

Always **thoroughly inspect & try out your gear** at home first. Set up your tent, inflate your sleeping mat, use your stove, try your solar chargers out, and break in your boots.

On the trail, you'll only have what you're carrying, so **pack smart!**

Check out my [Hiking Essentials Gear List](#) to see my backpacking gear recommendations.

Basic Gear



- Backpack
- Backpacking tent
- Sleeping pad
- Sleeping bag
- Pillow
- Headlamp or flashlight
- Extra batteries/power bank
- Trekking poles (optional)



Navigation Gear

- Map in plastic sleeve
- Digital map/trail guide
- Compass
- GPS device/satellite beacon

