



Planning for Success on Your Trip

Having the Right Attitude

We want your trip to be a success and we will do everything we can to make it happen. But the mountains are an environment that holds many unknowns and, while this is part of the attraction to wilderness-based trips, it means that we can't always get to the summit or follow the planned itinerary. Be flexible and prepared for changes due to weather or unforeseen circumstances.

We also ask that you recognize that our guides are trained to make the best in-the-field decisions to ensure your safety. We know that it is disappointing to change plans, objectives or not to make the summit, but the mountains are always going to be there; we feel our responsibility is to make sure that you are able to keep coming back to enjoy them.

Acclimatizing

Your best defense against problems with acclimatization is to spend a few days and nights before your trip at high elevation. Look at it as an additional investment in your trip; prior exposure to altitude will help you feel stronger and will help you get the most out of your trip. Take care of yourself before the trip and arrive well-rested and well-hydrated. The higher trailheads with good day hiking and camping include Cottonwood Lakes (trailhead elevation 10,000', good walk-in campground), Kearsarge Pass (trailhead elevation near 10,000', good drive-in campground), South Lake and Lake Sabrina (trailhead elevation 9,000+', good walk-in campgrounds as well as reservable camps), Rock Creek Canyon (trailhead elevation 10,300', good walk-in campground), and the Mammoth Lakes area (virtually unlimited hiking at moderate altitudes). If you need help putting a pre-trip itinerary together please call us; we'd be glad to help.

Packing Properly

When packing, **STICK TO THE EQUIPMENT LIST**. Much of the gear on the list is a necessity and is not negotiable. Showing up without the proper gear means that you are not going on the trip. Having said that, we have far fewer problems with folks not bringing enough gear than we do with people bringing unnecessary items. And remember that usually we'll have group gear like food and tents to add to your load.

Coming with the Right Experience

Each trip's information page has prerequisites spelled out for that trip. It's important that you understand these prerequisites and meet their requirements. When in doubt, please call us and we'll do our best to help find the trip that best matches your skills and goals. We can always change the itinerary or objective.

Staying Well-Fueled

Our scheduled backcountry trips include main meals such as: warm and quick breakfasts like two instant oatmeal packages, a lunch bagel sandwich and snack, and a dinner of soup followed by pasta, rice or chicken stir-fry, or on some trips a dehydrated meal. A dessert finishes the day.

You need to bring your favorite snack items, cold drink mixes, and hot drinks. The longer the trip the more important it is to plan carefully. For your snacks we suggest one to four bar-type items per day, plus a small bag of snack mix (2 oz/day). For hot drinks bring individually packaged items that require the addition of hot water. We provide powdered milk.

Keeping the Bears Out of Bad Habits

People who leave food in their vehicles have conditioned the bears to know that cars = food. Many cars each summer get broken into by bears who are hunting for food. Do not leave any food or food packaging (wrappers, coolers, etc.) in your car. This includes any scented items such as toothpaste, deodorant, gum etc. In some places such as Whitney Portal the Forest Service will issue a citation for improper food storage. Bring a tarp to cover any peripheral items left behind.

Just in Case Travel Insurance

Things happen that we do not anticipate. Someone at home gets sick, your trip over the dog and sprain an ankle, your time off is cancelled, or many other things. Even though your reason is a good one, you are liable for trip fees in the case of cancellation. Therefore, we recommend obtaining trip cancellation insurance. Two online providers are listed here to get you started, though we do not advocate either company: www.travelinsured.com and www.travelguard.com