

One of the most common pre-trip questions we receive is all about what to pack, and what the essential items are. This is a list of recommended kit to take on a UK challenge. We have tried to pare down this kit list to the absolute must-haves for your challenge, but above all you should use your common sense and your own personal preferences when you are packing. Check out our additional guidelines at the bottom of this list!

RUCKSACKS AND BAGS

- Day sack 30-40L
- Waterproof liner (a black bin bag is excellent)*

ACCOMMODATION

- Small bag with spare clothes (this can be left at the hostel during the trek).
- Towel (towels can be hired from the hostel for a charge)
- Personal toiletries
- Ear plugs*

FOOTWEAR

- Walking boots with ankle protection and excellent deep tread for grip
- Hiking socks

CLOTHING

- Waterproof and breathable jacket (GORTEX or similar recommended)
- Waterproof overtrousers
- Windproof softshell or fleece jacket
- Lightweight fleece top
- Wicking t-shirt
- Trekking trousers (not jeans)
- Underwear light and loose
- Warm hat
- Sun hat
- Gloves (preferable waterproof)
- Change of clothes for after the challenge*
- Hiking shorts*

TREKKING EQUIPMENT

- Water bottles/bladder (min. 2 Litres)
- High energy snacks (tracker bars, dried fruit, chocolate, nuts etc)
- Dry-bags (or plastic bags) for keeping clothes and documents dry
- LED Head torch plus spare batteries (we attempt to always finish before dark but sometimes this isn't possible and you should be prepared)
- Sunglasses*
- Walking poles*
- Camera*

SMALL FIRST AID KIT

- Pain killers
- Plasters
- Zinc oxide tape
- Compeed blister pads
- Antiseptic wipes
- Rehydration sachets
- Your own medication
- Knee supporters*
- Aftersun
- Sun protection (min. factor 30)
- Dextose tablets for extra energy

DOCUMENTS

- Joining Instructions
- Emergency Contact numbers
- Cash (Debit and credit cards aren't always accepted at small rural shops)
- Debit/Credit card
- Travel insurance*

KEY * Indicates Optional

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR KIT

IN THE HOSTEL

All bedding is provided for you by the hostel, so there is no need for you to bring a sleeping bag. Hostels can provide towels, but the hire cost is approximately £2 per towel. You will be able to leave a small bag in the hostel during the challenge. Whilst these bags will be stored in a safe room, please don't leave any valuables in this bag as all bags are left at your own risk.

PACKING

Make sure that you are able to carry all the essential equipment for the trek in your rucksack. Even if the weather forecast is favourable then please make sure that you always carry enough warm layers and your waterproof jacket and trousers. Your day sack should have a thick waist strap for maximum comfort. Other things to consider are back ventilation, hydration compatibility and gear loops for stowing walking poles. Waterproof liners or bags are essential for keeping valuables and clothes dry within your pack.

CORRECT SHOES

We would highly recommend wearing walking boots for all of our UK challenges as the additional ankle support can prove invaluable for preventing injury and also prevent water and other objects entering your footwear. Increasingly people are choosing to complete challenges wearing walking shoes, as opposed to boots. These 'Trail Shoes' have the advantage of being lighter and more comfortable but do not afford the same protection as boots. If you are considering wearing trail shoes then please make sure that they have an excellent level of grip, with deep tread on the soles. For this reason normal sports trainers are not appropriate for completing our UK challenges. The lack of grip on trainers can prove to be extremely dangerous on loose, wet rocks. Our leaders will not allow you to take part in the challenge if you only bring trainers.

CLOTHES

The weather in the UK can fluctuate enormously during your challenge. Lots of light layers are key, as well as a good quality waterproof jacket. A hat and gloves are also vital items of clothing for UK challenges. If possible, then try to bring two hats and two pairs of gloves as these items are often the most exposed to the elements. Make sure that you wear and test your kit before arrival, particularly your hiking boots.

HYDRATION

Staying hydrated during your challenge is vital. There are various ways to get the right fluids into your body, with many people using water bladders or bottles. On all of UK challenges you should be prepared to carry with you all of the water you require for the whole day as you should not expect to be able to refill your water bottle. We would recommend that you carry at least 2L of water and that you make sure that you are fully hydrated in the morning before beginning your challenge.

WALKING POLES

Walking poles are not essential kit. However, we receive many questions about using them. Anyone considering using poles on the challenge should make sure that they have experimented with using them during their training. For anyone who struggles with knee, or any joint, problems then walking poles can help significantly reduce the amount of strain being placed on your joints, particularly on any descents. They are also useful for helping with ascending up hill and many people find that they spread the load on your body more evenly during a long day of trekking.

HEALTH

Make sure you take a first-aid kit with you, as the group medical kit is designed for emergencies. Compeed blister plasters cannot be recommended highly enough, but you are required to carry your own as your leaders will not be able to supply them to everyone. Zinc Oxide tape is a handy addition, as it is often a lifesaver for blisters. Tape up your feet before trekking and this will reduce the chance of you developing hotspots. In addition, when applying your sunscreen, make sure that you cover the backs of your hands as well as your face and neck. Although you may feel cold, the sun will be stronger on the mountain. Don't forget to take an SPF stick for your lips as well.

