

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 the Oxfordshire trek and kayak 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)*

FOOTWEAR

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

CLOTHING

- Waterproof and breathable jacket (Gore-Tex 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 (preferably 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*

KAYAK EQUIPMENT

- Swimming shorts/costume*
- PLEASE NOTE:**
All safety equipment (life jacket and helmet) is included in the cost of the challenge. You may wish to have a different set of clothes to change into for the kayak section but this is not mandatory and many people use the same clothes that they used for the trek

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)
- Dextrose tablets for extra energy

DOCUMENTS

- Final Details document (available in your Account Area one month before the challenge)
- 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

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. Waterproof liners or bags are essential for keeping valuables and clothes dry within your pack.

KAYAK

All equipment for the kayaking section will be provided for you along with safety instruction. If you wish to bring spare clothes for after this section then these can be stored at the event venue. Similarly, if you wish to bring swimming shorts or costume then you can. Swimming shorts or costumes are not vital and we would recommend having spare clothes instead.

You will be paddling two-person, sit-on-top kayaks that are designed to be extremely stable. You will be sharing the kayak with another participant from your group. Full safety instruction is provided by our qualified leaders and these same leaders will accompany you on the water in-case of any difficulties.

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.

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.

