

Backcountry Ski Equipment Checklist

Below is a list of the gear that you will need for a backcountry ski trip to one of the huts in the 10th Mountain Division system with Bob Taylor. If there something on the list that you do not have you can probably borrow it from one of us. You will be carrying all of the food, clothing, and equipment that you bring on your back up the mountain. Keep everything to the bare essentials. You cannot bring an entirely fresh clothing outfit for each day.

This list is a provided as a guideline. You do not have to match it exactly. The important thing is that you need multiple layers so that you can adjust your clothing for everything from a full-on blizzard to thin lightweight clothing for touring on a sunny day when you need surprisingly little insulation.

A. Ski Equipment

You can rent or purchase randonee, also called alpine touring, style gear from:

[Mountain Outfitters](#)

112 S. Ridge St.

Breckenridge, CO 80424

(970) 453-2201

You will need skis with bindings, boots, climbing skins, and adjustable length ski poles. Call several weeks ahead of time to reserve the equipment. They will need your boot size. Tell them you are going to 10th Mountain Division Hut and that our trip will mostly be touring with no steep downhill skiing. You will need to pick up the gear two days before the hut trip so that we can practice with it the day before we will hike to the hut. I can go with you to pick up the rental gear.

B. Other Equipment

1. Backpack

Must be large enough to hold bulky winter clothing and gear – 4,000 to 8,000 cubic inches (65-130 liters) is about right.

2. Headlamp with Extra Batteries

The new LED varieties are nice because they burn many hours on one set of batteries

3. Hydration System

Water bottles – Bring at least two, wide mouth, 1 liter containers. Nalgene brand is popular. Many people like using a camelback type system but I find them difficult in the winter because the water freezes in the tube despite insulating the tube, blowing to clear it, et cetera. Some people bring a small lightweight thermos for tea or hot chocolate.

4. Sunglasses and Goggles

5. Sunscreen and Lip balm

6. Watch

7. Toiletries, other Personal Items

8. Reading Material

9. Pocket knife

10. Sleeping Bag

Light weight, small sleeping bag, down is the best for this type of trip, 30° F rating is warm enough.

C. Clothing

1. Base Layer

Long Underwear, Top & Bottom – Moisture transporting wool, synthetic, or blended layer worn under shell pants during warmer conditions, or under intermediate layers in extremely cold conditions. Examples are polypropylene, Capilene, and bi-component DriClime. Not more than two pair of each for most trips.

2. Intermediate Lower Layers

Traditional wool pants or fleece tights/pants than can be worn alone or under shell pants for average Colorado conditions. Synthetics include 100 weight microfleece or Polartec 100 stretch.

3. Intermediate Upper Layers

Midweight or expedition-weight fleece, wool, or blended shirt or pullover, or vest.

4. Heavier Insulating Layers

200 to 300 weight fleece, piles, or wool sweaters, or full zip jackets; useful in very cold conditions or for lunch breaks and trips to the outhouse.

5. Shell Jacket

Waterproof breathable (Gortex) or soft shell (Schoeller). Should have a generous cut that goes overall all of you layers and has superior venting capability, pockets large enough for gear (including skins), and a hood for blizzard conditions.

6. Shell Pants

Waterproof breathable (Gortex) or soft shell (Schoeller).

7. Some Kind of Pants, Knickers, or Tights

8. Windbreaker or Windshirt

9. Socks

Two to three pairs, wool or wool blend is good.

10. Handwear

Mitten Shell, Wool or Pile Mittens, Gloves, Glove liners - A versatile system of layers and shells works best. Having options of thicker and thinner layers allow you to adjust to the changing weather conditions.

11. Wool or Fleece Hat

12. Visor cap

Ball cap, providing a bit of shade over the eyes and face.

13. Balaclava, neck gaiter, or buff

The ability to cover the entire neck and face is an absolute necessity. Buffs are useful for shielding your face from the high altitude intense UV rays reflecting from the snow when it is too warm for an insulating balaclava or neck gaiter.

14. Leg gaiters

They will keep your pants dry, your legs warmer, and the snow out of your boots. They should be 12-16" high. Outdoor Research is a good brand. If using ski pants with built-in snow cuffs, you can do without the gaiters.

15. Hut Wear (cotton is ok for the hut)

a) T-Shirt

b) Light pants or shorts

c) Hut Slippers or Booties

Shoes for hut wear - Down booties are popular. Almost anything that covers your feet when you take off your ski boots will do.