



Winter Trip Leader Equipment Considerations

As leaders it's helpful to create systems that allow us to remember what to bring each time so we don't spend precious pre-trip energy trying to remember. Consider creating packing lists or checklists so you know what to pack each time in the following areas:

1. **Trip Plan & Emergency Action Plan** (aka "Loop Plan") – Kept on you, and filed with someone not in the field.
2. **First Aid Kit** – Make sure you're trained to use what you carry. Keep in mind the following for winter -
 - a. Blisters - Often participants are in unfamiliar footwear, or simply experiencing more movement of their foot in their footwear due to moving through snow, both of which can lead to more blisters. [Leukotape](#), athletic tape, and duct tape can all work for pre-wrapping blister-prone areas of the foot. Extra moleskin, gauze, gel pads, and other similar treatments are handy for dealing with blisters once they occur. Extra foam shins are handy to adjust the fit of someone's ill-fitting boots.
 - b. Wind & Sun Exposure – Products like [Dermatone](#) are great for protecting lips, noses, and cheeks from the added sun and wind exposure of snow travel.
3. **Cold / Comfort Kit** – Freezing and non-freezing cold injuries are one of our biggest concerns in winter outdoor recreation. Consider having these items on hand for any length of trip:
 - a. Hand and foot warmers
 - b. Extra dry layers – Leggings, shirt, hats, mittens, socks, puffy coat
 - c. Short closed-cell foam pad – For someone to sit or stand on to insulate them from the frozen ground
 - d. Rapidly digestible sugar – Jell-O mix, drink mix, candy, ramen noodles help provide that quick shot of energy which can support generating heat through metabolism
 - e. Hot water, or a way to make hot water – This could mean bringing a stove and a pot to melt snow, or bringing a thermos of hot water. Staying hydrated is critical for being able to maintain warmth. Psychologically something warm to drink can make us feel better, and can also be helpful in more quickly dissolving sugar mixes for someone that needs that quick energy boost.
 - f. Rewarming Wrap – This can include a sleeping bag, sleeping pad, and tarp, or simply extra layers, your shorty pad, and a tarp. The goal is create an insulated, waterproof environment that a person can lie in while they rewarm.
4. **Repair Kit** – Think about the items that could break and create major issues for you in the field. This can include stoves, snowshoes, poles, skis, bindings, and other gear. Look to include items in your repair kit that can serve multiple functions like zip ties, bailing wire, needle & thread, and fabric tape. Also think about items that are hard to manufacture or repair in the field for which it might be easier to bring a spare, such as a pole basket.
5. **Waterproof Journal & Non-Freezing Writing Implement** – This is important for recording field observations, and making notes about things you'd like to improve upon for your next trip!