



Five things to bring on your first hike

It's your first hike, and you're a little intimidated. For starters, you have no idea what to bring. Here's a quick primer for the first timer.

Footwear: Hiking boots or shoes are preferred. A true hike is on natural surface trail, trail that is sometimes rocky, sometimes rooty, usually both. For hikes over three miles you'll be glad you have a sturdy sole to help absorb the shock of the trail. [Learn more here.](#)

Clothing: For the most part, we encourage synthetic clothing that dries quickly, especially in cooler weather. You start moving, you sweat; you stop moving and unless that fabric pressing against your skin is quick-drying and pulls the moisture away from your body, you will cool down quickly. Not a bad thing in the dead of summer, but potentially dangerous otherwise. [Learn more here.](#)

Water: This is a biggie: no matter how long the hike, bring water. Dehydration is your enemy on the trail, and it can happen on even short hikes. If you don't have a daypack or fanny pack and it's a short hike, you can carry your water bottle. If you don't own a water bottle, pick up a bottle of water at the store. Don't forget water!

Snacks: Again, even on a short hike it's good to have a snack or two. An energy bar, a pack of cookies — whatever works for you. It's a bummer to get midway through a hike and suddenly have your fuel gauge plummet to E. And since hiking is new to you, you likely don't know how you might feel a mile down the trail.

Camera: You've got a smart phone? You've got a camera. Bring it. Switch to Airplane Mode at the trailhead, then shoot freely — you have social media obligations, don't you?

There are additional "musts" by season: bug spray in the summer, layers in the winter. But this is a good, basic starting point for the typical, not-so-long (2-4 miles) hike.