



## Student Clothing & Equipment List

### ADVENTURE GUIDING CERTIFICATE

At the start of the program, part of the first week’s orientation will include tips for preparing yourself with the right gear. Quality gear is important to your success in the program and in your new career. You rely on your equipment to keep you warm and dry in remote and challenging conditions. Your gear could mean the difference between spending an enjoyable day on the water or becoming hypothermic. Also, as a professional guide you are a model to your guests about what is appropriate dress across a variety of conditions.

All items on this equipment list, with the exception of the optional items, are required for this course. Some items may be available to rent through industry friends/contacts if you choose not to purchase them (e.g., PFD, paddling jacket, wetsuit, dry bags). We will discuss these options at the start of the program.

During field sections of the course, we will be doing a mix of land- and water-based activities in the coastal marine environment, sometimes on multi-day expeditions. We will use a variety of craft including sea kayaks, sailboats, powerboats and canoes. During the program, we will likely be exposed to a range of challenging and often adverse weather conditions. Obtaining quality gear (fit, function, and durability) will help set you up for success during the field sections and for your work as a guide.

**You should try to organize most of this clothing & equipment before the course so you aren’t scrambling to do this during the first 2 weeks.** Careful consideration should be given to ensure the piece is suited for the needs and demands of a professional guide. Feel free to contact the Program Coordinator or alumni you know regarding specific equipment questions. Many of these items can be found on sale, or used (e.g., wetsuits & PFD’s at kayak shops; nylon pants, fleece and waterproof jackets at thrift stores, etc.).

Some sources of quality equipment are given below:

| Name                    | Phone          |                     | Notes  |
|-------------------------|----------------|---------------------|--|
| Comox Valley Kayaks     | (250) 334-2628 | Courtenay           | 15% discount to CAT students on new gear   |
| Alberni Outpost         | (250) 871-0264 | Courtenay & Nanaimo | 10% off regular prices for CAT students  |
| Blue Toque Sports Swap  | (250) 871-0302 | Courtenay           | used clothing & equipment on consignment   |
| River Sportsman         | (250) 286-1017 | Campbell River      | 10% off gear (except sale items or ‘net’ items)  |
| Mountain Equipment Coop | (800) 474-7704 | www.mec.ca          | \$5 membership fee<br>have an online “gear swap” at <a href="http://www.mec.ca">www.mec.ca</a> |

If you have any equipment-related questions, please don’t hesitate to contact the Program Coordinator by email ([david.pinel@nic.bc.ca](mailto:david.pinel@nic.bc.ca)). **Several local retailers** support the Adventure Guiding Certificate by offering students the above noted discounts while enrolled in the program. To take advantage of these discounts, you must have a student card (available through the NIC Library once your program fees are paid in full) or other proof verifying your enrollment in the program.

## FOOTWEAR

**Socks:** 5 pairs. Socks must be heavy synthetic or wool designed for light trekking or hiking – mainly for the warmth. A pair of neoprene socks (for use when kayaking) may be substituted for one pair of wool socks.

**Camp Shoes:** 1 pair. To wear around camp – e.g., old running or lightweight hiking shoes.

**Rubber Boots:** 1 pair. A tall all-rubber boot with a tread or “deck” sole. Only non-marking (not black) soles are permitted on the keel boats when sailing. Recommend purchasing extra felt insoles or thermal liners/booties (e.g., Bama socks – available at work clothing supply shops, e.g., Workwear World, Ono’s, Marks Work Warehouse, etc.).

**Neoprene Booties:** 1 pair with thick rubber sole (for foot protection on rocky shores – imagine carrying the extra weight of gear and a kayak over sharp rocks). Can substitute with a combo of neoprene socks worn inside sandals or wet shoes (i.e., old runners).

## MISCELLANEOUS STORAGE BAGS

**Dry Bag:** one or two **20-25 L** size for clothing. note: dry bags larger than 30 L are difficult to stow in kayak hatches – avoid large dry bags unless you plan to only partially fill them. Some of the newer materials are a coated nylon which are easier to pack and seem to stow more smoothly in the kayak hatches. Big dry bags won’t work for kayaking. Purge valves can be useful if well constructed.

**Lap Bag:** 1 small 10-15 L dry bag for storing smaller personal items to have handy while paddling (e.g., extra shirt, warm hat, sunscreen, snacks, binoculars, log book, etc.).

**Nylon day pack:** preferably compressible and light for easy storage – used for day hikes on kayak trips.

**Plastic Bags:** 10 each. Large, extra heavy duty garbage bags for additional waterproofing inside nylon stuff sacs.

**Ditty Bags:** 3 or more. Nylon or mesh stuff sacs or bags used to organize small items in your pack or kayak.

## SLEEPING GEAR

**Sleeping Bag:** We recommend synthetic-filled bags (Qualofil, Hollofil, Polar Guard, fiberfill, etc.) for the variety of wet winter coastal conditions we encounter on courses. Down or feather-filled bags are not acceptable unless with waterproof shells (= very expensive!!). Please ensure you have a sleeping bag that will keep you warm in the often wet and cold marine environment that we will experience on multi-day field trips – though it’s hard to rely on “temperature ratings”, a bag rated to -7°C is generally appropriate.

**Compression Stuff Sac:** super useful and effective for packing your sleeping bag and has compression straps to reduce the bulky volume of the bag. We recommend lining the compression sac with 2 plastic bags for waterproofing, or simply using the compression sac as is, then putting into a dry bag for storage in the kayak. You can also buy compression dry bags that work well, but are sometimes more difficult to use when stuffing the sleeping bag in – best if has a purge valve.

**Thermarest or ensolite sleeping pad:** Three quarter or full length; for padding and insulation between sleeping bag and ground. Recommend inflatable style pad for compact storage and maximum comfort and insulation. Some very compact synthetic-filled ones are now available...though cost a little more.

## CLOTHING

**UPPER BODY GARMENTS** should consist of 3 insulation layers that will fit comfortably over each other, plus a windproof layer and a rainproof layer. **Please note that cotton garments of any kind are not acceptable for the field trip and outdoor components of the course – do not plan to bring any cotton.**



Combinations of the following garments are advised and acceptable:

**Under Layer:** Lightweight or medium-weight polypropylene/synthetic or wool long-sleeve top.

**Secondary Layer:** Expedition-weight shirt or jacket of polyester/synthetic or wool fabric.

**Top Layer:** Heavier weight shirt or jacket of polyester/synthetic or wool fabric (e.g., pile or fleece jacket)

**Wind Shell:** A nylon wind shell (not necessarily waterproof). Roomy enough to fit comfortably over your upper body layers. Breathable fabric rain parkas are acceptable.

**Fleece Vest (Optional):** This is optional but recommended for our early season field trips particularly if you chill easily. A vest is sometimes considered as an extra half layer.

**Paddling Jacket:** A waterproof nylon jacket with neoprene seals on cuffs and collar to stay dryer while kayaking.

**Foul Weather Suit / Rain gear:** Heavy duty waterproof jacket with hood and preferably bib length pants. Helly Hansen or Grunden are two examples of quality brands. Please ensure you have high quality, durable, full rain gear.

**LOWER BODY GARMENTS** should consist of 3 insulation layers plus a durable wind layer for everyday wear.

**Primary Layer:** 2 pairs mid-weight polypropylene/synthetic or wool long-john bottoms.

**Secondary Layer:** Expedition weight polyester/synthetic long-johns or wool/pile pants.

**“Quick Dry”/Wind Pants:** Durable nylon wind pants (quick drying nylon or synthetic fabric, but not waterproof). Should be roomy enough to fit comfortably over lower body layers. Zippered or partially zippered legs are useful for putting on over boots. Breathable fabric rain pants are acceptable. Sierra Design’s specifically make pants that they call “Quick Dry”, however most other manufacturers have an equivalent product a different proprietary name

**Shorts:** 1 pair. Lined, nylon athletic or running shorts.

**Underwear:** Synthetic/silk underwear is generally recommended over cotton underwear. Women should bring enough underwear to meet their needs, and may be better to opt for cotton for hygiene reasons. Some consider underwear as an optional creature comfort on outdoor trips.

## MISCELLANEOUS

**Swimsuit:** A swimsuit is required for pool sessions (kayaking skills) and may also be worn under a wetsuit

**Gloves or mittens:** 1-2 pair, wool or polypropylene.

**Warm Hat/Toque:** A ski hat or balaclava of wool or polypropylene/fleece.

**Sun Hat:** Baseball cap or wide brim hat (e.g., Tilley or Outdoor Research style).

**Rain Hat:** We suggest a wider brimmed OR-style or sou’wester type rain hat if your foul weather jacket doesn’t have a hood with visor/peak.

## KAYAKING SPECIFIC

**Personal Flotation Device (PFD):** A Canadian D.O.T. approved life vest suitable for kayaking (shorter cut torso length). Please note that we have some college PFD's, but encourage students to buy their own to ensure a good fit, features, and familiarity that will be useful when later working as a guide.

**Wet Suit:** Preferably 3-5 mm sleeveless farmer John/Jane style cut for kayaking. (rentals available). Please note: Comox Valley Kayaks have sometimes have some dry suits available for rental – if you know that you are very susceptible to getting cold, please arrange in advance of the program to reserve and rent an appropriately sized drysuit.

**“Fuzzy Rubber” or thin neo or lycra top:** Some students like to wear an additional thin insulating layer on top of or under their neoprene wetsuit. Make sure that this doesn't restrict circulation to your arms or pinch and chafe in the shoulder and armpit areas.

**Wind Gloves/Pogies:** Made to fit over a kayak paddle, either insulated or non-insulated – Pogies seem to be the preference for warm fingers and positive paddle control.

**Nose plugs and ear plugs:** These are very highly recommended for when we are practicing kayak wet exits and rescues in the pool, lake and ocean – some people are very prone to getting water trapped in their sinuses or ears, and this can lead to an infection... which can lead to getting sick, feeling rotten, getting others sick, and missing classes ☹.

## MISCELLANEOUS PERSONAL GEAR

**Compass:** Preferred style for orienteering with hinged mirror cover; used for navigation exercises and practice

**Insulated non-breakable mug**

**Sunglasses:** 1 pair.

**Eyeglass retainer(s):** necessary item on the water (e.g. Chums). Have enough for sunglasses and prescription eyewear.

**Pocketknife:** A Swiss Army type knife with can opener.

**Lighter:** 2 each. Butane BIC type lighter.

**Water Bottle:** Wide-mouth quart or liter size Nalgene brand are recommended (BPA free plastic or stainless steel). Could also simply re-use the container from any commercially bottled water.

**Pencils:** 2 each – mechanical style work well when in the field

**Waterproof Notebook/writing paper:** “Wetnotes” or “Rite in the Rain” are required for all field components – generally can be found or ordered at stationary, marine or safety supply shops. Size of approx. 7” X 4.5” is useful.

**Watch:** Water resistant. An alarm is required for early morning starts. Not optional!!!

**Headlamp & batteries:** Petzl, Princeton Tec, and Black Diamond brands are recommended for their quality and durability. You will use these a lot. Combination LED/Halogen bulb styles are very versatile. Consider getting one that is also water proof or at least “weather resistant”.

**Lip balm:** Sunburn protection is highly recommended – sun is one of our bigger risks as guides.

**Sunscreen:** Sunblock with SPF 30 minimum and preferably ‘waterproof’. Consider zinc for your nose.

**Toilet Articles:** Toothbrush, toothpaste, comb, female hygiene products, etc.. Bring enough for your needs.

**Towels:** 1 chamois-style for expeditions (e.g., Pack Towel) and 1cotton bathing towel for pool sessions.

## OPTIONAL ITEMS

**Chart #3673 for Clayoquot Sound & Chart #3539 for Discovery Passage & Quadra Island:** The program has some charts, however students often appreciate having their own for navigation practice and future reference/use when traveling or working in these areas.

**Binoculars (encouraged):** Students have commented on the dual use of binoculars: it aids your ability to assess sea conditions and is useful for observing wildlife. Compact 7 x 35 or 8 x 25 are good choices. You may want a waterproof container/bag.

**Camera:** If photography is your interest, you may be willing to risk having your camera around the salt air environment. A 35 mm or digital compact camera is preferable to the heavier, bulkier SLR camera. Be selective about how much camera gear you bring. A waterproof bag or box for camera and film is necessary. Pelican and OtterBox brand dry boxes offer high quality, durable protection for your camera in a marine environment.

**Technical Sandals:** Teva or Chaco brand sandals or equivalent are recommended. No thong or 'flip-flop' styles accepted.

**Hand Cream:** A small tube is sufficient (e.g., Vitamin E cream, aloe vera lotion, Lubriderm, etc.) – good if your skin has a tendency to dry and chafe from sun, wind, and salt, or from being wet all day.

**Candle(s):** Useful if you have a small Candle Lantern.

**Glasses:** If you need corrective lenses, have an extra pair.

**Thermos:** We recommend having your own thermos – especially if you are a tea or java junkie. A 500 mL or 1 L stainless steel vacuum bottle is very handy to have on cold, rainy days. Be sure it is stainless steel and not glass.

**White Water Helmet:** If you have one, bring it for kayaking (we have some available for use through the program)

**Personal 3-4 season tent:** If you have one, we encourage using it (preferably 2-3 person size that can be shared with classmates; full fly coverage to the ground); otherwise, some available for use through the program.

**Personal tarp shelter:** If you have one, bring it for additional tent coverage and changing shelter during heavy rain conditions; some available through the program.

**Nylon duffel bag:** If you have one, please bring it; used for packing your gear for field trip transportation and for managing your gear in the field (e.g., unloading your kayak at a campsite and carrying gear to your tent-site); some available on loan through the program.

## GROUP EQUIPMENT

The following is a list of items shared by the group. NIC provides this equipment – though many students choose to use their own for fit, comfort, or familiarity (e.g., tents, charts, helmets). You will be asked to sign an equipment use agreement (covering damage, loss, and cost of repairs/replacement). Your program fees cover in-program use of the following group gear items:

- reference books
- shared tents and tarps
- group kitchen shelter/tarp
- camp stoves, kitchen kit, & fuel
- sea kayaks and safety accessories
- whitewater helmets (for surf)
- canoes and accessories
- maps & charts
- kayak & canoe paddles
- first aid kits
- safety equip. (VHF, flares, etc.)
- repair kits
- fishing gear (for fishing course)
- nylon duffel bags
- group water containers