



**HIKE ADK**<sup>®</sup>  
FOREVER EXPLORING  
THE FOREVER WILD

PRINTABLE FIELD SHEET

# SUMMER HIKING GEAR CHECKLIST

A practical Adirondack day hike packing and planning check. Built for summer conditions, then scaled up for longer routes, exposed summits, heat, storms, group needs, and overnight trips.

## BEFORE YOU PACK, CHECK THE PLAN

- Checked mountain weather, wind, storms, heat, and summit conditions?
- Confirmed trailhead, parking, access rules, reservations, and notices?
- Set a turnaround time with daylight for the full descent?
- Know your bailout, shorter option, or lower-risk backup?

Gear helps, but the first safety decision is choosing the right hike for the day.

- Know the route, mileage, elevation gain, terrain, and expected time?
- Have two forms of navigation and know the major junctions?
- Told someone your route, group, vehicle, and return time?
- Matched the objective to the slowest, least experienced person?

## 1 CORE CARRY

The basic items that should be visible in almost every summer day pack.

- Backpack
- Food plus extra food
- Map and offline route
- Sturdy hiking footwear: trail runners or hiking boots. Avoid casual street sneakers on rocky, muddy, or steep trails.
- Enough water (1 L / 5 miles as a baseline, more in heat)
- Headlamp and extra batteries
- Charged phone
- Non-cotton layers
- First aid basics
- Personal medications / critical medical items

Never use a phone as your primary navigation tool. Always have a map and know exactly where you are going.

Quality matters. Do not buy the cheapest gear just to get by. Build your kit over time. Reliable outdoor gear costs more, but good gear is worth the investment.

## 2 SECONDARY BUT NECESSARY

Not every item gets used every hike. The point is to have it before weather, injury, delay, or darkness changes the day.

- Rain shell
- Water filter or treatment
- Power bank
- Whistle
- Lighter or fire starter
- Bug net / bug protection
- Toilet paper / toilet kit / sanitizer
- Extra warm layer
- Compass
- Emergency blanket or bivy
- Knife or multi-tool
- Sunscreen
- Pack-out bag for trash and waste

Pack for the hike changing, not just the hike planned.

## 3 SUMMER CONDITIONS

Add or emphasize these when heat, humidity, insects, exposed summits, or storms are likely.

- Extra water capacity
- Hat or sunglasses
- Dry socks
- Bandana or cooling cloth
- Electrolytes or salty snacks
- Bug net or repellent
- Light gloves or hat for wind
- Check for ticks

## IF CAMPING OVERNIGHT

Know your gear. This is not a full backpacking checklist. Add shelter, sleep system, stove, food storage, extra layers, and a legal plan for where you will sleep. Check the camping rules for your exact area. Rules can differ by Wild Forest and Wilderness area. Know whether a bear canister or specific food-storage method is required. Review Rules & Regulations on [hikeadk.com](http://hikeadk.com).

## 4 LONG, REMOTE, OR HIGH PEAKS DAYS

If the route is long, steep, exposed, remote, or hard to exit, add margin instead of packing the bare minimum.

- Map and compass
- Bivy or emergency shelter
- Trekking poles
- More calories than planned
- Extra socks
- GPS / SOS device
- First aid kit with blister care, wrap, tape, and pain relief
- Reliable water treatment
- Extra insulation
- Written route notes and bailout points

## FINAL TRAILHEAD CHECK

Sign in where registers exist. Registers help track hiker use and can help searchers if something goes wrong. Do one last pack check so nothing is left in the car. Secure valuables, keep water and headlamp reachable, and start with a real turnaround plan.

## TODAY'S HIKE PLAN SNAPSHOT

Fill this in before you leave.

Destination / route \_\_\_\_\_ Trailhead \_\_\_\_\_ Start time \_\_\_\_\_ Turnaround time \_\_\_\_\_ Expected return \_\_\_\_\_

Contact notified \_\_\_\_\_ Backup plan or bailout point \_\_\_\_\_ Weather concern \_\_\_\_\_