

Kit List - Mountain Leader Assessment

As a prospective leader we expect you'll be pretty well kitted out. Getting the balance between being prepared & not carrying too much is a constant battle - there's no prizes for carrying a heavy pack but equally ensure you'll cope with the wide range of conditions that the mountains can throw at us!

We understand that you might not yet have group kit such as emergency ropes, group shelters, group first aid kits etc but if you have your own please bring them. If you are struggling for anything please let us know and we'll try our best to help out where we can as we know kit can be expensive. Starred items * are optional.

Personal Kit - the stuff you would typically pack for any day out in the mountains.

1:25k Map - OL17 - Snowdon / Yr Wyddfa Ordnance Survey map is essential. We recommend a laminated map for longevity and waterproofness. If you have an OL18 - Harlech OS map, bring it along also but don't buy one especially.

Large Scale Map - either a Harvey's BMC Snowdonia North 1:40,000 Mountain Map (our preferred for personal walking) or the 1:50K OS Landranger 115 - Snowdon / Yr Wyddfa map (most commonly available mapping for UK). On assessment we will spend sometime assessing your skills on different scale maps from 1:25k.

Map Case* - waterproofed maps in good condition might not require a map case, up to you. We like Ortlieb cases.

Compass - a good quality compass that you can rely on. Our favorite is the new style Silva Expedition compass.

Spare Compass* - a good quality backup is worth considering. We like the Silva Ranger compass.

Stopwatch - essential for timing navigation legs, any cheap watch with a simple stopwatch function will be adequate. There are some very fancy smartwatches available with integrated GPS. For the purposes of assessment we ask these aren't worn if you own one, so there's no temptation to use the GPS function; so have an alternative basic watch ready.

Headtorch - we will likely head out at night to teach poor visibility navigation. A good headtorch makes a world of difference. Our favorite is the Petzl Nao, very powerful but adapts so as not to blind you when you look at the map!

Spare Headtorch* / Batteries - a headtorch is crucial. Personally, I always carry a spare headtorch as opposed to spare batteries as it's barely any extra weight; most of the weight is in the batteries themselves.

Water Bottle and/or Flask - we're big fans of Nalgens (BPA free), and Klean Kanteen or Frank Green flasks.

Food - we have lunch on the hill; so anything quick and easy that doesn't require cooking. Plenty of snacks & treats.

Personal First Aid Kit - a basic small kit; DIY is best. We recommend a light plastic whistle, personal meds & painkillers (pill-cases are great for organising), tick remover, compression dressing, zinc oxide tape (versatile), vetwrap, steri-strips, non-adherent dressing / cling-film, safety pins, alcohol wipes, latex gloves, CPR face shield, Dioralyte, GlucoGel or similar, small blade / scissors, waterproof paper and pen. Make sure it's obviously marked & waterproofed.

Mobile Phone - for emergencies and obligatory summit selfies. Think about waterproofing!

Sun Stuff - if we get lucky! Sun hat, sun glasses, sun cream etc.

Day Pack - around 25-40 litres for all your personal kit, and maybe a bit of shared group kit as needed.

Waterproof Liner &/ Dry Sacks* - personally I tend to just use stuff sacks unless the weather is truly biblical but ensure your kit can stay dry even in very wet weather.

Walking Poles* - I'm a big fan of these for myself but they're generally useful as a leader. Some companies now require leaders to carry a spare set for clients as group kit. They are a worthwhile investment in your knees; cheaper than physio! My recommendation are the Black Diamond Z poles as they can fold up small enough to fit inside a pack.

Personal Clothing - enough for typical days in the mountains and some spares for the overnight expedition.

Waterproofs - a good set of top and bottoms, 3-layer membrane such as Goretex, eVent or Paramo style.

Boots - properly fitted and broken-in. Need to be sturdy enough to cope with walking off the beaten path on rough ground. Need to have some ankle support and a stiffish sole (vibram are good) for edging on wet grass.

Walking Socks - synthetic or merino style, with a bit of padding for comfort, and fitted to pair with your boots.

Layers - a range of base and mid-layers to stay comfortable in a range of temps. Ideally synthetic or merino style materials rather than cotton.

Warm Kit - we'll be out no matter the weather, stopping along the way more than a typical personal hill day to chat about the environment, leadership and coach navigation. Something like a synthetic belay jacket that can be quickly thrown on over the top of everything at breaks is a great piece of kit to invest in. Otherwise a spare big fleece/jacket.

Hat and Gloves - warm hat and gloves, gloves could be doubled up with the gloves used for the steep ground day.

Gaiters* - not essential, but can be nice on really wet days or when walking through boggy ground.

Exped Kit - we'll head out on a 3 day expedition with 2 nights wild camping.

Tent - we might go out in pretty full on conditions, so something that will cope with wind & rain but isn't too heavy. My personal pick is a Terra Nova Superlite Voyager which is a classic geodesic shape, strong yet light. There is the option, depending on other team members, for candidates to share tents which can help reduce pack weight.

Sleeping Bag - warm and light, my preference is for synthetic on really wet days where I might worry about down getting damp. If you have the luxury a few different weight sleeping for the changing seasons is nice.

Sleeping Mat - my personal favorite is the Thermarest Neoair range.

Camping Stove and Fuel - for cooking & brews! Again, candidates are welcome to share to help save on weight.

Other Cook kit* - pots, utensils, bowl, mug, lighter/matches, cleaning kit (eco friendly), purification tablets etc.

Food - dehydrated stuff is lightest (we'll camp by water), whilst boil in the bag style is quick and convenient for evening meals / breakfasts. Plenty of snacks and quickbites for on the go to stay fuelled.

Toiletries* - eco friendly. Think light, e.g toothpaste shared in group or travel size, sawn off toothbrush, wipes etc.

Exped Rucksack - a good-sized expedition pack that you can comfortably fit all your personal and a bit of shared group kit for the overnight expedition. No points for carrying a heavy pack, try to pare kit down where possible.

Trowel* & Toilet Kit - we like the Tentlab Deuce, we can provide. Other bits e.g hand-gel, TP, nappy/dog poo bags...

Midge Net* & Spray* - they're not as bad here in Snowdonia as they can be in Scotland! But depending on the season these can be invaluable, particularly in the mornings and evenings when midges are out in force.

Group Kit - everything in this list can be provided if you don't have your own.

Group Shelter* - key piece of Mountain Leader kit. Needs to accommodate the largest size group you'll work with. If you're feeling flush, a selection of different sized group shelters allows lighter packs on days with less clients.

Walking Rope* - 25-30m in length & around 8.5 - 9.5mm is a nice balance of weight v strength v handling.

Group First Aid Kit* - a decent sized kit to cover mountain incidents, balancing weight v usefulness.

Other kit* - any other personal or group kit you think is good for walking in the British Mountains. If you already lead groups hill walking, working as a volunteer, Lowland Leader or Hill & Moorland Leader; and have any useful resources for working with groups then please bring them along.

Kit for Steep Ground Training - for looking at steep ground and ML ropework.

Helmet* - a mountaineering/climbing helmet, bring your own if you have one or we can provide.

Gloves - a pair of gloves for hand protection handling wet slippery ropes, ideally leather palmed.

Kit for River Crossing Training - we'll likely workshop this to allow you to quickly change into dry kit.

Wet Clothes and Shoes - a pair of trainers, socks, trousers, etc. you don't mind getting wet!

Dry Kit - towel to dry off, and dry clothes to change into.

If you're buying a few items of kit don't be scared to ask for a discount (most stores offer discount to [BMC members](#) (worthwhile joining), mountaineering club members, students etc. as standard).

We highly recommend [V12 Outdoor](#) in Llanberis. They are our favorite climbing shop with an amazing range of kit, super friendly and knowledgeable staff and they're local - 100m from our door in Llanberis! We've set up a 15% discount for Mountain Independence clients with them.

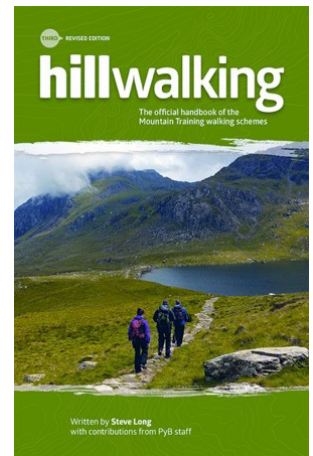


Recommended Reading -

Hill Walking by Steve Long* - this is the official handbook for the Mountain Training Walking schemes and is a very worthwhile investment towards your development. Much of what we cover on the course is included within the book. With helpful diagrams it's a great reference for your Mountain Leader journey. Look out for the latest revised 3rd edition.

Logbook - please ensure your logbook (ideally DLOG) is up to date and you have all the [prerequisites for training](#) which can be found here. If your logbook is up to date we can give you more structured feedback and advice on how to progress toward assessment.

Mountain Leader Instructor Skills Checklist - I highly encourage printing out a copy to bring with you; or alternatively bring a laptop / tablet to fill this in digitally. It's a great resource for candidates to record and chart their progress throughout the training and beyond. It can be downloaded free from [Mountain Training](#).



We use the above Skills Checklist as a framework to create a personalised Action Plan at the end of the course; with feedback and advice to help you set goals for your Mountain Leader journey. It's an invaluable tool for developing your skills and confidence in preparation for assessment.

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