

MOUNTAINEERS “TEN ESSENTIALS”

Navigation: map, altimeter, compass, GPS device, PLB, satellite communicator, or satellite phone, extra batteries or battery pack, battery pack and cable for phone.

Headlamp: plus extra batteries, in a waterproof ziplock bag or stuffsack

Sun protection: sunglasses, sun-protective clothes, and sunscreen, or wind protection, goggles, buff, balaclava

First aid: including foot care and insect repellent (if required)

Knife: plus repair kit (I don't carry a knife but imagine if Joe Simpson hadn't had one!) Duct tape is also very useful in the outdoors! Wrap some around your hiking poles so it's readily available.

Fire: matches, lighter and tinder, or stove as appropriate (I don't carry this for a day hike but some carry a JetBoil in the winter)

Shelter: carried at all times (can be a lightweight emergency bivy or a tarp)

Extra food: beyond minimum expectation, something sugary is useful for energy

Extra water: beyond minimum expectation, or the means to purify (I do carry an MSR Trailshot water filter in the summer, a LifeStraw is also good.

Extra clothes: sufficient to survive an emergency overnight. I love my big overjacket that packs down small, Alan has the same one. Also, if you have room did you know you can get down trousers? They are incredibly warm and pack into a tiny ball. Not for hiking in obviously, but in case you are stranded overnight in the cold.

AlanW says **Kendal Mint Cake** should be Number 11 of the 10 essentials

Register your phone for emergency texts:

Do this now, while you remember, you only have to do it once.

Text “Register” to 999 and receive a reply, reply yes, then if there's a weak phone signal you can text 999 for help in an emergency.

What do I carry in my winter daypack?

Top pocket

ICE card, compeeds, asthma inhaler/essential meds, pain killers, buff, hand wipes, NAV cards, NAV beads, hand gel, tissues, headtorch and batteries (in a ziplock snack bag)

Security pocket under hood

Spare car keys (in a ziplock bag), phone battery pack and cable in a ziplock bag, hand warmers ready to be used when needed

Main pocket (from the bottom up)

First aid kit, PLB, group shelter, actually Loz carries this ;) foil blanket, foil bag, big overjacket in a stuff sack, waterproofs, all rolled and packed vertically so I can find them, spare hat, spare socks, balaclava, buff & gloves in a stuff sack, extra layers in a stuff sack, microspikes, goggles, helmet (if needed), gloves and food on top, maybe a flask down the side, sit mat & hydration bladder. When I carry crampons they will be hanging on the outside of my pack.

Side pockets

Hiking poles, bottle of water

Front pocket

Waterproof pack cover, map in a case, pre-folded, attached to your pack!

Hip pockets

Snacks, snickers bars or if it's too cold and they are as hard as a rock, don't break your teeth, have mars bars instead, jelly babies, tissues (in snack bags), compass.

Discussed:

Hydration

It's very important in the winter to stay properly hydrated, it's a way of staying warm and it also helps you think clearly! Some prefer a hydration bladder that you can sip from as you hike along, but the tube can freeze, so you either blow the water back into the bladder or you can get insulation for the tube, both work well. Others prefer a bottle and you stop and take a proper drink break. I like a mix of both and I've had bladders leak all their contents away so it's good to have a backup.

Clothing colours

Bright colours are better than dull colours if mountain rescue are trying to find you. Something orange is ideal if you have it but anything colourful is better than clothing that camouflages you. You want to be seen.

Hand warmers

I use these because my hands get cold and painful. They easily slip into the palm of my hand inside my gloves and I can use my poles unhindered, they really make a difference on a freezing or wet day, in fact if your gloves get wet the hand warmers can help dry them out which helps keep your hands warm.

Stuff sacks

I tend to have lots of little stuff sacks inside my pack but others use one big waterproof pack liner.

Spare car keys

One set for you and one set carried by your passenger, in the underside security pocket, in a ziplock bag so waterproofed.

ICE cards and emergency contacts

This wasn't discussed today but we've talked about them a lot in the past. If something happens to you we need to know who to call. The committee do have access to your records but let's have the info easy and quick to find. Print or write two emergency contact names and phone numbers on a card and laminate the card, carry this card at all times in the top pocket of your pack, it's the first place we will look if we need the information. We didn't this year but we can do it at the AGM.

Also, if you haven't already set up emergency contacts in your phone please do so. On Apple phones you can bypass the password lock screen and click on emergency, then medical ID, and there you'll find a list of the emergency contacts that you've set up in the Apple Health App. I'm sure Android phones must have something similar. This isn't just for the mountains, you can have an emergency anywhere. It's good to have it set up before someone needs it.

Sit mat

Why have a cold wet bottom when you stop to eat your lunch. Sit mats are £3 in Go Outdoors and are worth their weight in gold, well almost.

Packing

I roll everything and pack it all vertically as much as possible, that way I can find what I want and pull it straight out without emptying the pack in bad weather. The warm overjacket is always down one side so I can get to it quickly.

Extra layers

If you have a warm extra layer with a hood, it really helps keep you warm to put the hood up.

Goggles

I think it's essential to have goggles with you in the winter if you're going to a high summit.

Map in case

Attached to your pack, you don't want to drop it.

Scrambling

This was a winter day hike session, but if you are winter scrambling you will need extra kit in the winter, including but not limited to: a confidence rope, a couple of slings, harness, helmet, belay device, abseil kit.

Pack weight

We also talked about pack weight, some go as light as possible whereas I carry everything I can think of that anyone might need if they sprained an ankle and mountain rescue couldn't reach us by nightfall ;) What's the minimum you could get away with? Ask a fell runner ☺ somehow they fit everything they need into a tiny pack!

High viz jacket or vest

Useful when hiking back along a dark road to your car! Reflective stickers useful!

Disclaimer: These are rough notes for members from an evening session by Gill, not an official MKMC document. I hope you find them useful and if there's something you'd like to add, please do.