

Denali

West Buttress Route

Packing List

Denali is one of the most physically demanding and equipment-intensive expeditions in the world. Climbers must be prepared for severe cold, high winds, glacier travel, hauling heavy loads and living independently on the mountain for an extended period.

All mandatory equipment must be expedition quality, fit correctly and have been tested before departure.

SUN PROTECTION

- ☐ SPF 50+ sunscreen
- ☐ High-SPF lip protection
- ☐ Glacier glasses
- ☐ Goggles
- ☐ Sun hat
- ☐ Face / nose protection

HEAD & FACE

- ☐ Warm beanie / toque
- ☐ Sun hat / baseball cap
- ☐ Glacier sunglasses – Category 4
- ☐ recommended
- ☐ Spare glacier sunglasses
- ☐ Ski / expedition goggles
- ☐ Buff / neck gaiter
- ☐ Face mask or balaclava
- ☐ Nose / face protection for high UV exposure

HANDS

- ☐ Lightweight liner gloves
- ☐ Mid-weight working / climbing gloves
- ☐ Waterproof expedition gloves
- ☐ Expedition mittens
- ☐ Spare liner gloves

UPPER BODY – LAYERING SYSTEM

Base Layers

- ☐ Lightweight long-sleeve base layer
- ☐ Additional base layer
- ☐ Lightweight sun shirt

Mid Layers

- ☐ Active insulation / fleece layer
- ☐ Softshell jacket
- ☐ Lightweight insulated jacket

Outer Layers

- ☐ Waterproof / breathable hardshell jacket
- ☐ Expedition-weight down parka with hood

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FOOT WEAR

Socks

- ☐ 4–6 pairs expedition-quality mountaineering socks
- ☐ Liner socks if personally preferred

Mountaineering Boots

- ☐ High-altitude double or integrated expedition mountaineering boots suitable for Denali

Examples of the type of boot required include:

- La Sportiva G2
- La Sportiva Olympus Mons
- Scarpa Phantom 6000
- Scarpa Phantom 8000
- Millet Everest Summit GTX

Boots must be compatible with your crampons and thoroughly tested before the expedition.

Additional Footwear

- ☐ Expedition overboots if required for your boot system
- ☐ Gaiters if not integrated into boots
- ☐ Lightweight insulated camp booties

TECHNICAL MOUNTAINEERING EQUIPMENT

- ☐ Mountaineering ice axe
- ☐ Lightweight climbing harness
- ☐ UIAA / CE-approved climbing helmet
- ☐ 12-point steel crampons
- ☐ Anti-balling plates fitted to crampons
- ☐ 2 trekking poles with snow baskets
- ☐ Mountaineering snowshoes
- ☐ 2 × 60cm sewn slings
- ☐ 3 locking carabiners
- ☐ 4 non-locking carabiners
- ☐ Mechanical ascender
- ☐ 2 prusik loops / suitable accessory cord

PACKS & EXPEDITION BAGS

- ☐ Large internal-frame expedition backpack – approximately 90–100+ litres
- ☐ Large expedition duffel – approximately 120–140 litres
- ☐ Second duffel / travel bag for equipment left in Anchorage / Talkeetna
- ☐ Waterproof stuff sacks / dry bags
- ☐ Heavy-duty pack liners

SLEEP SYSTEM

Sleeping Bag

- ☐ Expedition down sleeping bag rated approximately -29°C or colder

Sleeping Mats

Two sleeping mats are required:

- ☐ Full-length closed-cell foam mat
- ☐ Full-length insulated inflatable sleeping mat

Additional

- ☐ Sleeping bag compression / dry sack
- ☐ Pillow or stuff-sack pillow – optional

EATING & HYDRATION

- ☐ Large insulated mug
- ☐ Bowl / insulated food container
- ☐ Spoon / spork
- ☐ 2–3 × 1-litre wide-mouth water bottles
- ☐ Insulated bottle covers / parkas
- ☐ Personal flask / thermos – optional

PERSONAL MEDICAL & REPAIR KIT

Personal Medical

- ☐ Personal prescription medication
- ☐ Blister treatment
- ☐ Compeed / similar
- ☐ Personal pain relief
- ☐ Personal first-aid supplies
- ☐ Any medication specifically advised by your doctor

Packing List

Repair Kit

- ☐ Duct tape
- ☐ Therm-a-Rest / sleeping mat repair kit
- ☐ Boot repair materials
- ☐ Cable ties
- ☐ Small sewing kit
- ☐ Multi-tool / small knife

PERSONAL & TOILETRIES

- ☐ Toothbrush
- ☐ Toothpaste
- ☐ Hand sanitiser
- ☐ Face / body wipes
- ☐ Toilet paper as advised
- ☐ Pee bottle – minimum 1 litre
- ☐ Foot powder / antiperspirant
- ☐ Personal hygiene products
- ☐ Small quick-dry towel

For Female Climbers:

- ☐ Female urinary device if desired
- ☐ Menstrual products / menstrual cup according to personal preference

EXPEDITION ACCESSORIES

- ☐ Headtorch
- ☐ Spare headtorch or backup light
- ☐ Spare batteries
- ☐ Power bank
- ☐ Charging cables
- ☐ Ear plugs
- ☐ Camera / phone
- ☐ Journal and pen
- ☐ Garbage bags
- ☐ Personal entertainment for weather/rest days

PERSONAL EXPEDITION SNACKS

- ☐ Energy bars
- ☐ Gels
- ☐ Nuts
- ☐ Chocolate
- ☐ Sweets
- ☐ Electrolytes
- ☐ Favourite summit-day snacks
- ☐ Personal drink powders

TRAVEL & DOCUMENTS

- ☐ Passport
- ☐ ESTA / US entry documentation as applicable
- ☐ Travel insurance
- ☐ High-altitude mountaineering insurance
- ☐ Emergency evacuation / rescue cover
- ☐ Flight documentation
- ☐ Copies of passport and insurance documents
- ☐ Emergency contact information
- ☐ Expedition documentation supplied by Black Mountaineering

BLACK MOUNTAINEERING

EQUIPMENT CHECK

- ☐ Expedition boots fit correctly
- ☐ Crampons correctly fitted to boots
- ☐ Harness fits over full winter clothing
- ☐ Backpack fitted and tested under heavy load
- ☐ Gloves allow operation of technical equipment
- ☐ Sleeping system tested
- ☐ Goggles and glacier glasses fit comfortably
- ☐ Down parka fits over the complete layering system
- ☐ No new or untested critical equipment
- ☐ brought directly to the expedition

Additional Personal Items

(Add your own personal items here)

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SLED HAULING & EXPEDITION EQUIPMENT

Denali is very different from many other high-altitude expeditions. Climbers are responsible for moving significant amounts of personal and expedition equipment up the mountain. On the lower glacier, this normally involves a combination of carrying a heavily loaded expedition backpack and hauling equipment in a sled.

PERSONAL HAULING EQUIPMENT

- ☐ Large expedition backpack – approximately 90–100+ litres
- ☐ Climbing harness suitable for wearing with full winter clothing
- ☐ 2 × 60cm sewn slings
- ☐ 3 locking carabiners
- ☐ 4 non-locking carabiners
- ☐ Personal prusik system
- ☐ Trekking poles with large snow baskets
- ☐ Snowshoes
- ☐ Heavy-duty dry bags / stuff sacks for organising equipment

TEAM EXPEDITION EQUIPMENT (provided)

- ☐ Expedition sleds
- ☐ Sled hauling systems
- ☐ Expedition tents
- ☐ Cooking equipment
- ☐ Stoves and fuel systems
- ☐ Group ropes
- ☐ Snow and glacier protection equipment
- ☐ Group repair equipment
- ☐ Communications equipment
- ☐ Navigation equipment
- ☐ Group medical and emergency equipment
- ☐ Snow shovels
- ☐ Group food and mountain supplies
- ☐ Waste management equipment

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT VS TEAM EQUIPMENT

It is important that every climber understands the difference between personal equipment and team equipment.

YOU CARRY

Your personal clothing, boots, technical climbing equipment, sleeping system, personal food/snacks, water, personal medical supplies and other personal expedition equipment.

WE PROVIDE / COORDINATE

The main group camping, cooking, rope, communication, safety and expedition systems required to operate the team on Denali.

However, team equipment still has to be moved up and down the mountain.

Every climber should expect to carry or haul an allocated share of group equipment, food and fuel as part of the expedition team.

LOAD HAULING

Denali requires a different mindset from a supported Himalayan expedition.

There are no porters carrying your personal expedition equipment up the West Buttress.

Team members should be prepared for:

Heavy backpack + sled + altitude + cold + consecutive mountain days.

As the expedition progresses and the terrain becomes steeper, the way loads are transported changes.

Equipment and supplies may also be cached as part of the team's acclimatisation and mountain strategy.

Load carrying is therefore not simply a fitness requirement. It is a core Denali expedition skill.