

## Time to pack your bags!

Right so its time to get your bag sorted. This is something that you need to spend time on to get right. This will ensure that your bag is comfortable to wear and shouldn't cause you pain or injuries and also ensure that your equipment is looked after and accessible when you need it.

**PACK YOUR OWN BAG; DON'T LET A PARENT DO IT!**

The golden rule is that ALL your equipment, accept your sleeping mat, goes inside the bag. You don't need to have anything strapped to the outside, if you find yourself in this position then you are taking too much stuff!

First of all, lay out all your stuff to take. This is kit for a two day expedition:

Tent (taking the outer of the tent and another team member taking the inner)

Hat and gloves

Fleece top and thermal top and bottoms

Food organised in two bags, one for each day (see the 'what food to take' document, also on the exped info page)



Sleeping bag

Trangia cooking stove and fuel bottle

Waterproof jacket and trousers

Under the sleeping bag is a torch and spare battery, toothbrush etc, 1 pair of socks, 1 pair of flip flops, first aid kit, survival bag and a whistle.

The next decision to make is how you are going to ensure your kit is waterproof, you basically have four options:



This is a large dry bag which is completely waterproof. You fill it with stuff and then roll down the top and do up the clips. These bags are great as they keep everything dry and are really strong so won't rip or tear when taking things in or out. You can buy dry bags from most outdoor shops or off the internet. This one is 100 litres in size so will fit everything in. If you don't want to buy one this big then you could buy a smaller one, about 40 litres. You can put the essential things to stay dry in, like your sleeping bag and spare clothes.

I do sometimes have these available to buy, you must give me plenty of notice if you want one. It's no good texting me the night before!



This is a rucksack liner that you can buy for about £3 or £4 in an outdoor shop. It's basically just a thick plastic bag that you can just about fit the essential things in to keep dry; like a sleeping bag and spare clothes. They are not nearly as good as the dry bag above, but will do the job for a Bronze expedition in the summer!



This is a survival bag that you must carry on expedition and training walks. These are massive bags that you can get into to keep warm and dry in a crisis! They can be purchased for a few pounds from most outdoor shops. You would normally just keep them folded up small in the bottom of your bag, however, they are just about thick enough to be able to use to keep your stuff dry. If you put it in your rucksack empty and then fill it with the things you want to keep dry, then fold the top over and it should be OK.

A final option is to buy 'rubble sacks' from a DIY or building supplies. They are incredibly thick plastic bags that won't rip or tear. You will need a few of them, but its also good for separating your stuff as you can have your sleeping bag in one, clothes in another etc. Make sure you leave plenty of room to roll the tops down and use string or a bungee cord to keep them closed.

**DO NOT TRY AND WATERPROOF THINGS WITH CARRIER BAGS OR BIN LINERS! FROM YEARS OF EXPERIENCE OF WATCHING PEOPLE DO THIS, IT DOES NOT WORK. IT HAS TO BE VERY THICK PLASTIC!**

The next thing to do is to get to know your rucksack and decide how to pack it:



Most rucksacks have a main compartment and a smaller bottom compartment. This photo on the left shows the bottom compartment. There is a piece of material that divides the rucksack in two and can usually be opened up if you want to create one big compartment.

Have a really good think about what you want access to at what times during the day and then plan how to pack your bag so you can get to the things you need when you need them.

The next photo shows a packed bag:

The very top pocket of the bag has got lunch and snacks for the day so can easily be accessed.

Water for the day is in the side pockets

The bottom compartment has a waterproof jacket and trousers and the Trangia stove and fuel bottle. If it starts to rain you can access waterproofs fast and can unzip the bottom compartment and get them quickly. Also none of the items in the bottom compartment need to be kept waterproof.



Above the tent, is the big drybag shown in the photo on page 2 which takes up the main part of the bag. It has got a sleeping bag in the bottom, then first aid kit, torch, food for the evening and day two and spare clothes. Therefore if you want to put on a warm fleece, it's at the top and easy to get to.

In the main compartment of the bag is the outer of the tent to the bottom. You will not need this until the end of the day so you don't need quick access to it. Also, it does not need to be kept waterproof and on day 2 it will probably be wet with rain or dew, so it's separate from clothes etc.

The only thing on the outside of the bag is a sleeping mat and walking pole. You can also use a dry bag to cover.

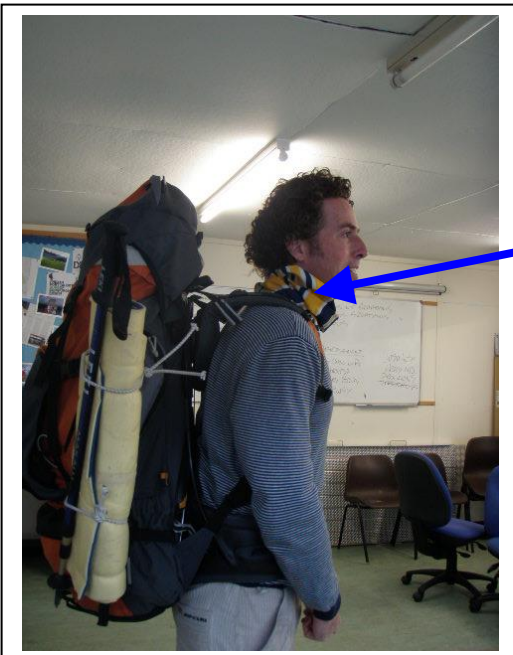
## And Try it for Size!

This next stage is crucial, you must get your bag to fit properly, otherwise you will be dropping out of the expedition within the first few hours with shoulder / back pain. The first photo shows how a rucksack should look when it's on:

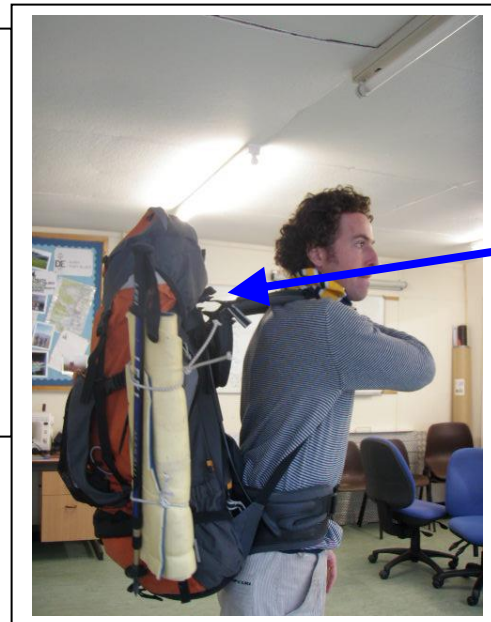


The most important thing to note is that very little weight is on the shoulders. You can see the shoulder strap is coming from higher than the shoulder.

This is because the weight of the bag is mainly going through the waist belt, which is firmly done up around the thinnest part of the body above the hip bones.



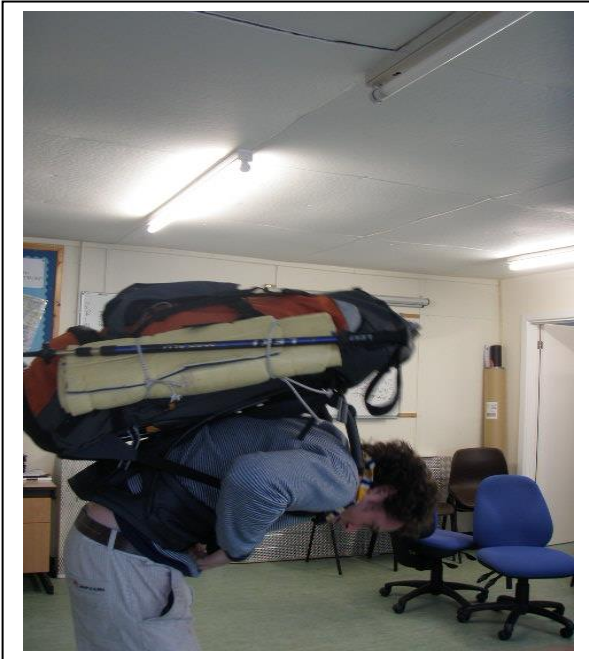
In this photo, the waist strap is too loose and all the weight of the bag is going through the shoulders.



In this photo the shoulder straps are too loose. You can see the bag is pulling backwards.

The end of the strap needs to be pulled tight through the buckle.

In order to get your bag on right, what you firstly need to do is to get the waist belt the right size. You need to make it a certain size without the bag on and then put the bag on. Lean forward and lift the bag up your body, so the waist belt will be around the thinnest part of your waist. The waist belt needs to be tight around the thinnest part of your body, (your waist) just above your hip bones. If it's too tight, then loosen it off and try again. If when you stand up again and the bag drops down (and all the weight is on your shoulders), then undo the waist belt, tighten it and lean forward. Move the bag up your back, do up the waist belt and stand up again. Keep repeating until it feels just right. This picture shows body leaning forward and moving the bag further up the body and doing the waist belt up.



Alternatively find a friend or family member to lift the bag from behind up your body while you tighten the waist strap:



Once it's done, it should look like this. Tight to the back and **LITTLE WEIGHT** on the shoulders.

