



The Gear: Cut the Fluff

Shave pounds from your whole packing list.

By Michael Lanza, November 15, 2007

Sample JMT gear list	Weight (per person)	Savings*
Pack: 3,000 cubic inches	1 lb. 6 oz.	2.5 lbs.
Pack Cover	3 oz.	None
Sleeping bag: 32°F down	1 lb. 4 oz.	1 lb.
Sleeping pad: 60" long	1 lb. 7 oz.	8 oz.
Tarp: 2-person (11 oz. total, including stakes and guylines)	5.5 oz.	1 lb. 10 oz.
Clothing (see Step 5 above)	3 lbs. 14 oz.	2 lbs.
Headlamp (small LED)	4 oz.	4 oz.
Personal (toiletries, sunblock, TP, etc.)	1 lb. 8 oz.	8 oz.
Trekking poles	1 lb. 2 oz.	None
Water bladder	8 oz.	None
Assorted team gear (water treatment, first aid, compass, etc.)	7 oz.	8 oz.

Bear canister Optional in many places	1 lb. 4 oz.	None
Total	13 lbs. 9 oz.	8 lbs. 14 oz.

*Savings versus most common alternative



GoLite Jam 2

GoLite Jam2

Carry any pack for 30 miles and 18 hours a day and you would expect some hip and shoulder soreness—but not with the Jam2. Our JMT testers hauled the men's and women's versions with up to 22 pounds, and called it impressively comfortable, thanks to a simple back pad and a wide, unpadded hipbelt that effectively distributes small loads. The roll-top main compartment has a big front pocket and side mesh pockets. A distinctive feature is the PacKompactor bottom—two clips and loops that let you compress the pack to 1,300 cubes, which stabilizes the contents when the pack is underfilled. We had no trouble fitting four days' food and gear inside the 3,000-cubic-inch interior. We just wish it had hipbelt pockets. \$100; 1 lb. 6 oz. (medium); two men's and two women's sizes. (888) 546-5483, golite.com.

ULA Conduit

This frameless rucksack satisfies the ultralight philosophy that gear should serve multiple functions. You slide your folded foam sleeping pad into an internal sleeve to create the pack frame. Two of our JMT hikers praised the minimalist design—the packbag has a roll-top closure with no lid—yet were also impressed that the Conduit has external mesh pockets, big hipbelt pockets, and one internal valuables pocket for easy access. The lightly padded shoulder straps and hipbelt can handle 25 to 30 pounds, and at 3,200 cubic inches, the pack is big enough for an AT or JMT thru-hike. \$125; 1 lb. 4 oz; two men's sizes. (435) 753-5191, ula-equipment.com.

Gossamer Gear SpinnTwinn Tarp

Do this math: Including its stuff sack and recommended six titanium stakes, this waterproof, siliconized-nylon tarp weighs a scant 11 ounces, yet it easily protects two people plus gear from rain—and could fit a third in a pinch. Properly staked out, it didn't even ripple in steady wind above treeline, and 10 tie-down loops let you pitch it in various configurations, depending on whether you want ventilation or complete wind protection on one side. \$135; 12x6.5 ft.; 8 oz. (877) 858-7258, gossamergear.com.

Mountain Hardware Phantom 32

Ultralight mummies are often a, uh, mixed bag—good weight savings at the cost of warmth. But not this one. Both male and female testers both found this 800-fill down sack toasty on most late-August nights; Heather needed extra layers when the mercury neared freezing. It stuffs down barely bigger than a cantaloupe, yet lofts quickly and dries rapidly in the sun after a dewy night under the stars. The hood clamps down to a little breathing hole on chilly eves. \$245; 1 lb. 5 oz. (regular). (800) 953-8375, mountainhardware.com.

Big Agnes Insulated Air Core Pad

Hard-core ultralighters would scoff at this luxurious mattress, insisting on something more Spartan. But we believe that you don't gain any extra energy if you can't sleep at night because you're carrying a too-thin pad. This short air mat delivers the Z's you'll need, insulates against cold ground, rolls up to liter-bottle volume, and is several ounces lighter than full-length models. Our testers have logged many nights on Air Core pads and reported just one leak. \$65; 1 lb. 7 oz. (20x60x2.5-inch mummy); 7 sizes, rectangular and mummy. (877) 554-8975, bigagnes.com.

Bear Vault BV400

We know from experience that the only thing more inconvenient than carrying a bear canister is losing all your food to a bear. When we need one—and they are required in the High Sierra—we pack this former Editors' Choice Award winner (April 2004), which is also approved by major bear-management agencies. The larger of Bear Vault's two models, it holds 7 days' food, has clear sides for viewing contents, and is lighter and more spacious than the competition. \$80; 2 lbs. 9 oz.; two sizes. 866-301-3442, bearvault.com.

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