

Packing Tips & Tricks

GRAND CANYON RAFTING



Rivers & Oceans



The key to victory on any type of remote expedition is to be prepared. No matter what time of year your rafting trip is scheduled, the weather and conditions inside the Grand Canyon can fluctuate drastically. This guide will give you crucial tips and tricks on how to pack so you can be fully prepared for your Grand Canyon rafting adventure.

TIPS & TRICKS

PACK LIGHTLY. The more you pack, the more time you will spend unpacking or re-packing your gear. Pack lightly and you will have more time on your trip to enjoy your surroundings and relax.

RAIN GEAR IS NOT JUST FOR RAIN. It protects you from rain, wind, and the inevitable splash of the rapids and can add one more layer of insulation on a chilly evening. It is one of the essential items that all passengers need to have no matter what time of year you are traveling. Look for a jacket and pants that are 100% waterproof, not just water resistant (trust us!). A hooded jacket is recommended with secure closures around your head, neck, wrists, and ankles. We do not recommend wetsuits.

PLAN TO WEAR YOUR CLOTHES FOR MULTIPLE DAYS. Clothing can easily be washed in the river with soap and air dry in the warm, arid Canyon. Make sure everything is completely dry before packing it away because dry bags are tightly sealed and wet items can quickly develop an unpleasant smell.

PILLOW PLAN. Pack clean clothes in a pillow case and it can double as your pillow at night.

FRESHEN UP. Bring a large plastic bag for dirty clothes and a couple of dryer sheets to help freshen up your dirty clothes.

FEET CAN TAKE A BIT OF A BEATING. Bring sturdy water sandals or a multi-sport shoe that can get wet with good tread and support for hikes. Chaco, Teva, and Keen are especially good brands that will not get slippery when wet. If you are planning to purchase shoes before your trip, break them in beforehand. This will help to reduce blisters, chafing and sore spots. Be sure to pack a backup pair of shoes or sandals as well. You never know what will happen and you'll be happy that you have another pair.

BACK-UP SHADE. Bringing two hats guarantees that you will have a backup if one gets lost due to wind or waves. Make sure you can attach it to your shirt or lifejacket to minimize the risk of losing it.

FUNCTIONALITY VS. FASHION. When it comes to clothing on the river, function takes precedence. In camp, however, you have the opportunity to change out of your river clothes and mix it up with something fun and fashionable - a colorful sarong, printed happy pants, Hawaiian shirt, or tie-dyed sundress.



PROTECT VALUABLES. Wallets, car keys, and anything else that won't actually be utilized on your river trip should be stored in a plastic bag and packed away at the bottom of the dry bag.

PACKING FOR THE COLORADO RIVER IS A BALANCING ACT.

You want to bring nice gear for the trip, but you also must accept that most of what you bring has the potential to get dirty. A year after your trip, you might open a backpack or unzip a camera case and Grand Canyon sand will fall out. The super-fine particles are unforgiving and you should keep that in mind when packing electronics. Bringing extra Ziploc baggies allows you to have a clean place to stow your camera, phone, memory cards, backup batteries, and other electronics you may bring. Ziploc bags can also be used to store toiletries to prevent any leakage.

SMART BATHING. Shampoo and soap products should be biodegradable and dissolve well in cold, hard water.

SHOULDER SEASONS. For trips in the spring or fall, we suggest bringing two sets of long underwear and fleece. If you have a cooler day, you will want to wear one set on the boats and have a dry set to wear in camp.

SOCKS AND GLOVES. Not only are clean pairs of socks and gloves recommended for hiking shoes and sun protection, they are great to wear when sleeping to seal in moisturizer for dry & cracked hands and feet.

BRING 2-3 CARABINERS. You will find you can clip miscellaneous items to the boat, your day bag, lifejacket, etc. You'll be surprised at the number of uses the humble carabiner can have.

PRESCRIPTIONS. Any prescription medications should be brought in duplicate and stored in two different places during the trip.

Our best advice is to remember that it's about being present, not about being distracted by your gear.



RECOMMENDED PACKING LIST

BASICS

- Day pack with hydration bladder
- Sunglasses (preferably polarized) with safety strap
- Wide brimmed hat with safety strap or clip
- Bandana or buff
- Headlamp (with extra batteries)
- Sunscreen and lip protection (waterproof and SPF 30 or higher; aerosol sprays not recommended)
- Cash for gratuities - *Your guides will make every effort to see that your trip is enjoyable and successful. Gratuities for guides are appropriate, greatly appreciated and at your discretion, as a gesture of thanks for their professionalism and service. A suggested tip guideline is 8-12% of the total trip cost. The common practice is to give the gratuity to the trip leader on the last night. It will later be divided equally with the rest of the crew.*

FOOTWEAR

- Sturdy water shoes or sandals with a heel strap; water socks are discouraged
- Hiking shoes or trail runners for use during hikes or while in camp
- 2-3 pairs of hiking socks

CLOTHING

- 2-3 quick drying shirts; lightweight and light color for sun protection
- 1-2 pairs of long pants; lightweight and light color for sun protection
- 1-2 pairs of quick drying shorts
- Waterproof jacket and pants ("water resistant" rain gear is NOT sufficient, trust us!)
- 1-2 swimsuits (2-piece suits recommended for women)
- Lightweight fleece top
- Sarong; useful for sun protection, changing clothes, etc.

PERSONAL ITEMS

- Personal hygiene products - toothbrush, toothpaste, sunscreen, lip balm, moisturizing lotion
- Biodegradable soap and shampoo in small bottles
- Water bottle(s) with 3-liter capacity
- Major credit card and photo ID in case of evacuation

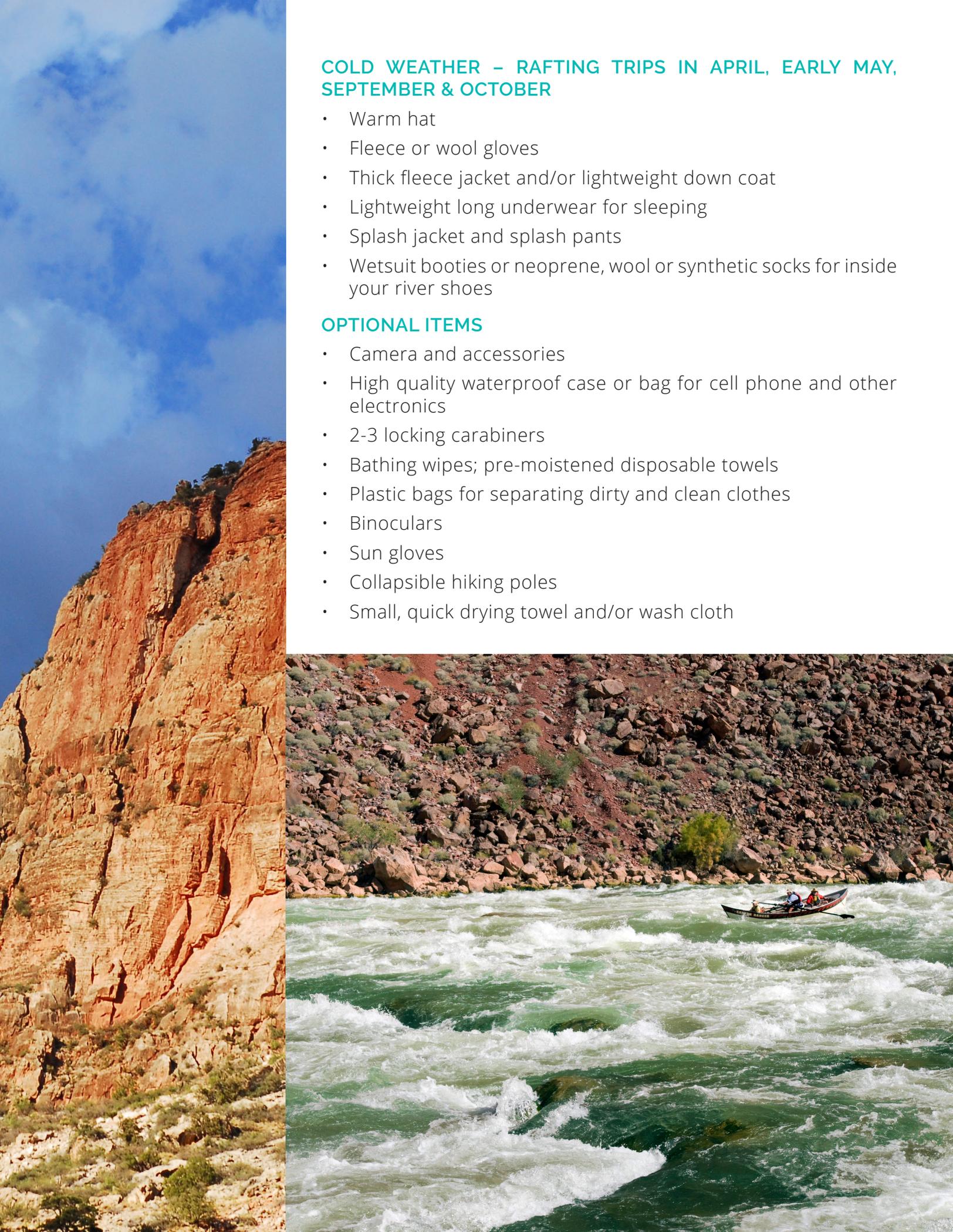


COLD WEATHER – RAFTING TRIPS IN APRIL, EARLY MAY, SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER

- Warm hat
- Fleece or wool gloves
- Thick fleece jacket and/or lightweight down coat
- Lightweight long underwear for sleeping
- Splash jacket and splash pants
- Wetsuit booties or neoprene, wool or synthetic socks for inside your river shoes

OPTIONAL ITEMS

- Camera and accessories
- High quality waterproof case or bag for cell phone and other electronics
- 2-3 locking carabiners
- Bathing wipes; pre-moistened disposable towels
- Plastic bags for separating dirty and clean clothes
- Binoculars
- Sun gloves
- Collapsible hiking poles
- Small, quick drying towel and/or wash cloth



Are you ready for adventure?

We hope this guide helped you gain a better understanding of packing and preparing for your Grand Canyon adventure. No matter which trip you choose, the Grand Canyon never fails to touch the heart and inspire a deep longing to return.

Still have questions? Give us a call - we'll guide you through!

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Photos: National Park Service, John Andrew Rice, Paxton Woelber, Robb Hannawacker

