We have put together this guide to help you prepare for your DofE Expeditions. Please take time to read the information inside. The better prepared you are the more comfortable and enjoyable your expedition will be.

If you have questions you may find the answer on the frequently asked questions page of our website www.azexpeditions.com/faq. If you need further advice please contact us.
Kit and packing
Make sure that you have got, or can borrow, all of the kit on the personal kit list. If you need to buy any kit, you will get 15% discount at Cotswold Outdoors, local outdoor shops may also offer a discount.

To help keep costs down we have also secured a 25% discount with Hi-Tec walking boots. Orders can be placed online using discount code DOE25 at www.hi-tec.com/uk. Be aware that not all boots sold by Hi-Tec provide sufficient support, avoid MID height boots! It is also worth looking at what’s available in supermarkets as they often sell good value fleeces and gloves.

Practice packing your rucksack with everything you need. Fill your water bottle and put all of your waterproofs into your rucksack. On a hot day you will be carrying rather than wearing most of your clothes.

Ensure that your kit will stay dry by packing everything in plastic bags and using a rucksack liner. This will help you to stay organised too.

In addition to your personal kit and food, you will each have to carry roughly 2kg of group kit. We will issue groups with tents, stoves, first aid kits, group shelters and maps at the start of the expedition. So make sure you leave plenty of space in your bag.

As a guide you should be aiming for a fully packed rucksack with group kit, personal kit, food and water to weigh around 15kg. The lighter your bag is, the more you will enjoy your expedition. If your bag is too heavy you will struggle to lift it let alone walk with it for hours.

Food
Visit your local supermarket to research suitable expedition food; look for lightweight and dehydrated food with minimal packaging.

Get together with the other people in your group and plan the menu for your expedition. The guidelines at the back of this booklet will help you with this.

Your menu should include breakfast, lunch, and dinner, snacks and hot drinks. Decide what each person in your group is responsible for bringing and make a shopping list.

You can order expedition meals from A to Z Expeditions if you want to include these in your menu. The deadline for orders is 7 days before the expedition. www.azexpeditions.com/expedmeals

Fitness
Do as much walking as possible. If you get a chance, head into the countryside or visit a park. Practice walking in your boots with your rucksack, gradually increasing the weight as your fitness improves.

Boots
Break in your boots so they are comfortable for your expedition, even if you have worn them before. This means wearing them and walking in them frequently before the expedition. Boots that are not well broken in will give you blisters.

Mobile Phones
We recommend you bring your phone, but for emergency use only. Please remind your friends and relatives not to call you or expect to hear from you during the expedition.

Weather
You need to bring all of the items on the kit list regardless of the weather forecast. A dry forecast doesn’t mean you can leave your waterproofs at home.

However we do suggest you check the weather forecast before your expedition. Knowing what to expect may help you to decide whether to pack more sun cream or an extra warm fleece.

Ticks
If on return from your expedition you discover a tick bite, visit our website for information on safe tick removal techniques and aftercare. www.azexpeditions.com/ticks

Look out for further top tips on our Facebook page or Twitter feed!

@AtoZExpeditions
www.facebook.com/AtoZExpeditions
Kit List - Personal

We will provide each group with tents, stoves, maps, first aid kits and group shelters, however you need to provide your own personal kit for the expedition.

All the items listed are essential, if you do not bring the correct kit you will not be able to take part in the expedition. For example if you forget your waterproof jacket or trousers you will not be allowed to start.

Waterproof jacket and trousers
- Both are essential.
- They must be waterproof. Ensure they have taped seams to stop the water leaking through, you can check this by looking at the seams on the inside. Storm flaps over the zips will also help.
- Jackets must have a hood.
- Lightweight ‘Mac in a Sac’ style waterproofs are not suitable as they will not keep you dry.

Walking boots
- Walking shoes or trainers are NOT suitable, neither are fashion boots such as Timberlands or DM’s.
- You MUST have proper walking boots that cover the ankle bone in order to provide enough support for walking on rough terrain with a heavy rucksack.
- Check that they have a good sole and heel.
- The boots should be waterproof. Either by liner/membrane or leather with wax applied.
- Give yourself time to break them in so that they are comfortable. Walk in them as much as possible before the expedition.
- Make sure they are always done up properly. Laces can easily get caught causing you to trip and injure yourself.

Clothing
You should look for items which are warm, quick-drying and light.

Lots of layers are much better than one thick top. Thermal base layers and fleeces are best. DO NOT wear jeans or thick cotton hoodies and avoid all other cotton items. When it gets wet cotton becomes very heavy, does not dry quickly and will not keep you warm.

Clothing to walk in
- Underwear.
- Thermal base layer.
- Thin Fleece.
- Thick Fleece.

- Walking trousers (NOT jeans or cotton tracksuit bottoms).
- Walking socks.
- Woolly hat, sun hat and gloves: (even in summer it can get very cold, particularly at night; likewise you can get sunburnt in March, even in Wales!)
- If you want to wear fresh tops, underwear and socks each day then you will need to bring extra clothing, but this will add to the weight of your rucksack so think carefully about how many spares you need.

Spare clothing to sleep in and for emergencies
Spare clothing must be carried and kept dry at all times. If you get wet during the day, you will need dry clothes to wear in camp or at the end of your expedition. This list is the minimum required for an expedition:

- Spare base layer.
- Spare warm jumper (fleece ideally).
- Spare pair of trousers (NOT jeans or cotton tracksuit bottoms).
- Change of underwear.
- Spare pair of socks.

Navigation tools and other things you may need

Compass
- Silva compasses are very reliable. We suggest the ‘Ranger’ or ‘Expedition’ models.

Watch
- A cheap digital watch is ideal. The stop watch function is very handy for timing while you walk, so you can work out distances. An alarm can be useful in the morning.
- Don’t rely on your mobile phone, you need a separate watch.

Pen and paper
- Essential for making changes to route plans, taking notes for your Expedition Aim and writing down important information in case of an emergency.
- A good, practical pen for use on expeditions is the Staedtler fine liner. They are waterproof and can be used on laminated surfaces or maps.

Whistle
- Needs to be loud enough to attract attention in case of an emergency.

Mobile phone
- For essential calls only, not for calling home, taking photographs or listening to music.
- Make sure it is fully charged and has sufficient calling credit.
- Put it in a plastic bag to keep it dry. Jacket pockets leak – don’t rely on them.

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Money
• Coins for payphones. The minimum fee at many call boxes is now around £0.60 so bring a selection of coins to cover this. There may not be mobile signal in all areas.
• In an emergency you can always dial 0800 (REVERSE) to make a reverse charge call.
• Small amount of spending money, there may be an opportunity to purchase snacks, drinks and ice-creams at the end of your expedition or during the journey to and from the expedition area.

Sun cream
If you are walking all day you will need sun cream to avoid getting burnt, even when it is cloudy. Don’t get caught out.

Personal medication and blister kit
• Remember to pack any personal medications that you use eg. hayfever medication, epipen, asthma inhaler.
• Your group will be issued with a group first aid kit but you should carry your own blister kit containing blister plasters (Compeed) and zinc oxide tape.

REMEmBER TO PACK ANY PERSONAL MEDICATION THAT YOU USE

Sleeping kit
Sleeping bag
• For the majority of our expeditions we recommend 3 season (comfort rating of minus 5 degrees). It can be very cold at night even in summer.
• Compare down and synthetic. A down filled bag will be warmer for its size, but is no use if it gets wet. A synthetic bag is bulkier but will provide warmth even when wet.
• Use a stuff sack or compression bag to pack and compress your sleeping bag for packing.
• Then pack it in a waterproof bag – stuff sacks are not waterproof.

Sleeping mat
• Essential for keeping you warm when you sleep.
• Foam mats are cheap and lightweight but bulky. Inflatable mats (Thermarest) are heavier but they pack down better and can be more comfortable. Care needs to be taken when using an inflatable mat to avoid punctures.

Eating, drinking and being in camp
Small torch
• Head torches are best as they leave your hands free for doing things.
• Put new batteries in it before the expedition (and bring spare batteries for silver and gold expeditions).

Water bottle
• You need to be able to carry 2 litres of water. 2 x 1 litre bottles would be ideal. Make sure they are tough enough to last the expedition.
• Camelbak/Platypus/bladders with hoses, are popular as they enable you to drink whilst walking; but they can leak or burst. It is also harder to keep track of how much water you use. If you do use one, please carry a 1 litre water bottle as a back-up.

Eating utensils
• Spoon. You can usually prepare and eat all of your expedition food with a spoon. Knife and fork are optional.
• Bowl.
• Cup for hot drinks.

Matches and lighter
• Bring both or whichever you find easiest to use.
• Pack these in a plastic bag to keep them dry.

Washing up and rubbish
• Bring a scrubber and a small amount of washing up liquid to clean your pans. Brillo pads are good as they have soap inside them.
• Bring plastic bags for your rubbish.

Insect protection
• Insect repellent is useful for protecting you from midges, mosquitos and ticks.
• A midge head net is essential for all Scottish and Welsh expeditions as well as other expeditions in wild country between May and September.

Personal toiletries
• Toothbrush, toothpaste (consider sharing a tube between the group), tissues or toilet paper, wet wipes and antibacterial hand wash.
• Ear plugs are also handy to help you sleep better.

Optional extras
These items are not essential, but will make your expedition more comfortable and enjoyable. However think carefully about what you want to bring as they will add to the weight you have to carry.

Walking poles
• Great for helping you balance and for taking some of the weight off your legs. Should be used as a pair, not just one pole.

Sleeping bag liner (optional)
• A sleeping bag liner will add extra warmth and is easy to wash between expeditions. Silk liners are the best as they are lightweight and warm, but they are expensive. Cotton liners are cheaper but bulkier and not quite as warm, so it’s worth looking at the options carefully before buying.

Camp footwear (optional)
• You should not walk barefoot around camp. You may want to bring a lightweight pair of trainers if you don’t want to wear your boots in camp but DO NOT bring sandals. Be aware that changing footwear is not always practical.

Camera
• You may want to bring a camera to record your journey – don’t use your phone as a substitute as you need to save battery for essential calls.

Fun item
• You may have some free time in the evening so bring something to entertain yourself. Eg. a book, a pack of cards, a small ball or Frisbee.
• Do not bring iPods or other electronic items.
Packing - Rucksack

Rucksack
- For Bronze and Silver expeditions, a 65 litre rucksack is ideal. For Gold expeditions you may need an extra 5 litres.
- Everything should fit inside your rucksack, kit must not be strapped to the outside. The only exception to this is a foam sleeping mat, this can be attached outside the rucksack if it is wrapped in thick plastic to properly protect it from the elements.
- Ensure that your rucksack fits properly, most are adjustable. When trying it on, put something heavy in it to test how it will feel when it is fully packed.

Rucksack liner
- You will need a rucksack liner because rucksacks are not waterproof. Rucksack covers are not a replacement for a liner.
- You can buy rucksack liners or make one using a survival bag (thick orange plastic bag) or a heavy duty rubble bag. Bin liners are too thin and rip easily so are not suitable.
- If you do not suitably waterproof your kit, you will not be able to take part in the expedition.

Plastic bags, zip-lock or dry bags
- You should use waterproof bags to pack your kit. Strong zip lock bags or dry bags are perfect. This will further waterproof your kit and will help to organise your rucksack.
- Investing in a good quality rucksack liner and packing kit into supermarket bags ‘for life’ is a cost effective, practical option.

The ABC of packing
A  accessibility – think about when and how often you are going to need each item during the day and organise your bag accordingly. Pack frequently used items near the top or in side pockets and items you won’t need till camp at the bottom of your bag.

B  balance – pack heavier items lower in your bag. Pack both sides of your bag evenly so the weight is equally distributed to both shoulder straps. This will make your bag easier to carry.

C  compression – Sleeping bags and clothes can take up a lot of space unless you pack them tightly. Use stuff sacks to pack soft items.

D  dangling is NOT allowed – do not strap anything to the outside of your bag, it will get lost or damaged. Only exception is your foam roll mat which should be protected with a thick plastic bag.

E  environment – rain, mud, barbed wire and thorns. You need to protect all of your kit by packing it in watertight plastic bags (or dry bags) and then use a thick rucksack liner to line your bag, as a second layer of protection.

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## Packing - Checklist

### Waterproofs
- Waterproof jacket: 1
- Waterproof trousers: 1

### Footwear
- Walking boots: 1

### Walking Clothing
- Underwear
- Thermal base layer
- Thin fleece
- Thick fleece
- Walking trousers
- Pair of walking socks
- Woolly or fleece hat: 1
- Pair of gloves: 1
- Sun hat: 1

### Spare and Sleeping Clothing
- Underwear: 1
- Base layer: 1
- Fleece: 1
- Trousers: 1
- Pair of socks: 1

### Navigation and Walking Kit
- Compass: 1
- Watch: 1
- Pen and paper: 1
- Whistle: 1
- Mobile phone: 1
- Money: 1
- Sun cream: 1
- Personal medication: 1
- Blister kit: 1

### Sleeping Kit
- Sleeping bag: 1
- Sleeping mat: 1

### Eating, Drinking and Being in Camp
- Torch and spare batteries: 1
- Water bottle or bottles able to hold 2L
- Spoon: 1
- Bowl: 1
- Cup: 1
- Matches and lighter: 1
- Sponge/scrub/brillo pads: 1
- Washing up liquid: 1
- Bags for rubbish: 1
- Insect repellent: 1
- Personal toiletries: 1

### How to Carry It
- Rucksack: 1
- Rucksack liner: 1
- Dry bags or plastic bags: 1

### Food
- Day 1
- Day 2
- Day 3
- Day 4
- Day 5

### Optional Extras
- Walking poles
- Sleeping bag liner
- Camp footwear
- Midge head net
- Camera
- Fun item

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T: 01981 550 433
Expedition Food

Choosing the right expedition food is incredibly important for morale as well as energy.

How much food should I take?
Enough for each meal with lots of snacks and hot drinks to keep you going. Writing a menu plan for each day will help you decide how much you need.

Typical Bronze Expedition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Lunch, Dinner and snacks</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day 2</td>
<td>Breakfast, Lunch and snacks</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Typical Silver Expedition

<table>
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<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Lunch, Dinner and snacks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day 2</td>
<td>Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner and snacks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day 3</td>
<td>Breakfast, Lunch and dinner and snacks</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Typical Gold Expedition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Lunch, Dinner and snacks</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day 2</td>
<td>Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner and snacks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day 3</td>
<td>Breakfast, Lunch and dinner and snacks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day 4</td>
<td>Breakfast, Lunch and snacks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You will need to eat more than you would in a normal day in order to give you enough energy for the expedition. As a guideline we recommend between 2500 and 3500 calories per day.

How will I cook the food?
You will be provided with a Trangia stove. With this you can heat food and boil water. You can cook things like rice and pasta, heat up ‘boil in the bag’ meals or add the hot water to dehydrated food. You cannot roast, bake or fry food on a Trangia stove.

You will normally be given two stoves per group, each stove has one burner, two pans and one lid.

You should only use the stove while in camp – so you can cook Breakfast and Dinner but not Lunch.

What should I consider when choosing food?

- Will it go off, or will it harm you if not cooked properly? Do not bring anything which needs refrigeration. Do not bring meat, poultry or fish unless they are cured or tinned.
- Allergies - consider group members’ food allergies when deciding on a menu plan.

What sort of food should I bring?
You can find lots of suitable expedition food in any supermarket. We also stock a number of expedition meals which we sell at a discounted rate to DofE participants, see the order form on our website for further details.

www.azexpeditions.com/expedmeals

Breakfast
Bread: wraps, brioches and pain au chocolate etc
Cereal: porridge or muesli with hot chocolate or powdered milk.
Add dried fruit for extra energy.

Expedition breakfast meals. See our website for more information.

Cereal bars on their own are not enough, but they’re great to eat in addition to any of the above.
A hot drink is essential; tea, coffee, hot chocolate or cup ‘a’ soup.

Lunch
Rolls or sandwiches are good for day 1, after that consider wraps, pitta bread, bagels, malt loaf, oat cakes or Ryvita. Serve with cheese, tuna, corned beef, Peperami, smoked sausage, jam, pate or sandwich spread.
Fruit (apples and oranges are better than squishy bananas). Dried fruit, cake, biscuits, chocolate, cereal bars.

Dinner - should be 3 courses

Starter
Something quick and easy for when you arrive in camp. Soup, noodles, wraps etc.

Main Course
Carbohydrate - pasta, boil in the bag rice, couscous or Smash. Accompaniment – expedition meal, pasta sauce, tuna, Peperami, chorizo, grated cheese, herbs and spices.

Pudding
Cake and custard, semolina and jam, brownies, biscuits, cheese and crackers with a hot drink.

DO NOT BRING ANYTHING THAT NEEDS REFRIGERATION. NO MEAT, POULTRY OR FISH UNLESS CURED OR TINNED

www.azexpeditions.com
Expedition Food

Expedition Food

Snacks
Cakes, malt loaf, flapjack, cereal bars, biscuits, chocolate, fruit, dried fruit, nuts, crisps and sweets (jelly babies, wine gums and Haribo are particularly good). Having a treat to share with your group (or your instructor) can really help to lift morale if you are cold and tired.

Hot drinks
Hot chocolate, cup ‘a’ soup, coffee, tea and fruit or herbal teas.

Other things to pack
Ketchup, brown sauce or mayonnaise sachets, salt, pepper, sugar and powdered milk.

Emergency rations
You should have some spare food set aside – just in case. You can eat this on your way home if you haven’t needed it during the expedition.

Foods not to bring
• Do not bring anything that will go off – it could give you food poisoning.
• Do not bring anything that needs refrigeration.
• No meat, poultry or fish unless they are cured or tinned.
• Avoid bringing foods that your team members are allergic to.

Organise your food
• Make a bag for each day and then bag up each individual meal into that day’s bag.
• This will help you work out how much to bring. It will also help you to ration your food so that you don’t get carried away and eat tomorrow’s lunch.

How much will I need to drink?
You should drink at least 3 litres of water each day to stay hydrated.

Water is heavy so there is no need to carry a full day’s supply but we would recommend carrying at least 2 litres.

There will be a water supply at your campsite to cook with and refill bottles. We suggest you use this water supply to hydrate well in camp before and after walking.

Hot drinks are an excellent way of hydrating and warming yourself up.

What will I do with my rubbish?
Depending on the location you may need to carry all your rubbish with you for the duration of your expedition. Everyone should carry their own rubbish; if it’s all collected together it becomes unmanageable.

Consider this when you are buying and packing your food. Remove all excess packaging before your trip.

How will I wash up?
You will have access to water at your campsite. Some campsites will have a tap, but hot water will be a luxury. Remember to bring something to clean your pans, such as a scrubber, washing up liquid or brillo pads.

If you plan your meals carefully you may not have much to wash up, however if you burn something to your pan, you may be scrubbing for a long time to get it clean.

For more ideas, help and advice why not visit our website?

And finally...
We would like your expedition to be as enjoyable as possible. We hope the advice we have given will help you to make wise choices about what you need to bring and how to pack it.

If you have any questions please read our frequently asked questions page www.azexpeditions.com/faq or you can contact us info@azexpeditions.com 01981 550 433