

# “THE 10 ESSENTIALS”

The first ten items in this list are the selections of essential backpacking gear, which *The Mountaineers* refer to as The Ten Essentials and promote as critical items that belong in your pack as insurance against the unexpected. Although you may not use all the backpacking ten essentials every day, they can be lifesavers in an emergency. Also, if you shop with prudence, these essential gear items can be lightweight, as well. In addition the ten essential items, which are pretty important to our health and welfare in the wilds, there must be some careful thought given to other necessary items that should be included in your pack such as proper clothing for the season, food, sleeping gear, and personal hygiene items.

## BACKPACKING TEN ESSENTIALS:

The “**Ten Essentials**” can be found on page # 264 of The Boy Scout Handbook:

- [ ] **Compass / Map**
- [ ] **Pocketknife** (Totin' Chip required)
- [ ] **Personal First aid kit**
- [ ] **Extra clothing** (appropriate for season)
- [ ] **Rain gear** ((Poncho or rain jacket)
- [ ] **Water Bottle(s) with water** (preferably \*two 1qt. bottles) or a Canteen
- [ ] **Flashlight / Head Lamp** (with fresh batteries)
- [ ] **Trail food** –(Snacks)
- [ ] **Matches and fire starters**
- [ ] **Sun Protection / Chap stick / Lip balm**
- [ ] **Hiking Boots\***

Insect repellent, a whistle, and other items also might be considered essential, depending on your destination, the length of your trip, or the season

**\*Note: Hiking boots and socks must be worn on all hikes.** (Preferably with liner socks)

**The most important essential**, however, is not on the list--“**Common Sense**”. Having the right gear is one thing, knowing how and when to use it is quite another. Most often, it's not a person's equipment that saves their bacon. It's their experience, know-how, and good judgment. Conversely, it is generally inexperience and lack of good judgment that gets people into trouble. Not only must we have the proper equipment -- including the ten essentials --you must know how to use them.