

## Suggestions of What to Carry for a Day Hike By Wally Herrod

First, you would do well to consider what are widely known as the “Ten Essentials.” These are items everyone should have if they venture out from civilization. Many can be kept in your day pack all the time, and you can pack other things in around them. The ten essentials, then, are: Map and guidebook for your hiking area

- Compass
- Whistle
- Pocket knife
- Flashlight/headlamp
- First-Aid Kit
- Matches/lighter
- Extra food/water
- Warm clothing
- Rain/wind gear

Got ‘em? Then let’s make sure you have a large enough day pack to easily hold what you are bringing. Other hikers don’t want to put your cast-off layers into their packs so they are out of the weather, and sometimes too small of a pack means you just can’t and won’t carry what you should.

Next, pack a decent lunch and drinks, besides what you carry for emergencies. Such items as hiking pole, insect repellent, sunscreen, bug net, camera, small collapsible umbrella, binoculars, cap for sun, bandana, and extra socks may come in handy, in addition to what you are wearing.

Footwear should give good traction and ankle support. Clothing should be able to be layered for comfort, and it is good to consider non-cotton clothing if you are counting on it for warmth (wet cotton kills). Many will want to carry a cell phone, but consider that many places will be out of range. Hiking with other people is not the time to be doing business or getting/making non-essential calls.

Personal care and individual medications should be carried. For example, someone allergic to bees should have their kit with them.

Lastly, it is vital that you leave word of your destination and itinerary with a responsible person.