



## How to pack a backpack

Packing a backpack is more than just throwing every thing you need into a bag. When you're hiking have to carry all your equipment for extended periods of time and a poorly packed and balanced backpack goes a long way in tiring you quickly. See the diagram below, a culmination of experience after carrying like a mule.

### The 'Top Deck' as I call it...

Most backpacks have a compartment on the 'lid'. This is ideal for small and fragile items you want to reach quickly like a compass, knife, binoculars, sunglasses, cell phone, etc. Remember that this compartment can become quite hot in the sun.

### Heavy or dense items...

This part is crucial, the heaviest items (for their size) goes here. You want them to be high up in the pack and as near to your back as possible. This helps allot with your balance. If they are to far back the pack will pun you back, if they are too low the pack will 'sag' on your back and balance would be harder. Item to go here are gas canisters, water, heavier food items, etc.

### Lighter items...

Here you can put lighter items. I normally put my food in the lower part of this 'section'. It is good to have a warm top or rain jacket high up in the pack to reach easily when needed. Same goes for you toilet paper. Tip: Always put your toilet paper in a bag, because it dampens easily.

### Soft items...

Most modern backpack are well padded, but just to be sure put something soft like a jacket, towel or pillow here to make sure nothing is a pain in the back.

### Clothes...

This is were you can put your spare clothes and other tings you don't need during the day like your toiletries and your towel.

### Sleeping bag...

Most multi day hiking packs have a separation at the bottom. Whether or not, this is the ideal place for your sleeping bag, its not heavy for its size and you normally need it only once a day. A good tip is to put it in a plastic bag if there is any chance of your pack getting wet. Your sleeping bag should remain dry at all costs.

### Outside pockets...

Backpacks often has pouches on the side or on the waist belt. These are ideal for a first aid kit, snacks, etc. It is also a good idea to attach a whistle to the shoulder strap.