



Equipment Selection and Packing Tips

General Information

Equipment Lists

- Parents/Carers - please ensure you read the **Equipment List** with details on essential/recommended items, items that are not required at camp and the items that Somerset provides.
- The Equipment List appears online on the Camp/Expedition event page, or a link is found in the Confirmation Email sent to you after you complete the Online Form.
- To hire or purchase equipment after you have already completed the Online Form please visit our [Online Store](#). This can be done up to night prior to the program. All equipment will be labelled and ready and waiting for your child/ward upon arrival at Somerset.
- Please don't hesitate to contact us with any query at all. [Contact Us](#)

When You Arrive at Somerset

- Somerset Group Leaders will check that your child/ward has all necessary equipment for the program.
- For all Duke of Ed programs gear will also be checked and repacked by the Group Leader as required.
- The Group Leader will assist with waterproofing (where required) and repacking into Rucksacks. Rucksacks are used for Duke of Ed & some School programs. Please check your Equipment List for detail.
- Any gear that has been purchased or hired from Somerset will be allocated and packed at this point.
- Items brought to camp that are not permitted (nut products, pocket knives, mobile phones etc.) will be requested, collected, then stored at base camp until the completion of the camp. Please note that Somerset cannot accept responsibility for items that are not handed in and are subsequently damaged.
- Any excess items not required (extra clothes, the bag the gear was brought to camp in etc.) will be stored at Base Camp until the completion of the program.
- If a Rucksack is being used – it will be adjusted to fit and weighed to make sure it is not too heavy.
- If you are struggling to get it right, your Group Leader will be able to assist you further upon arrival.



Re-pack with Leader at Base Camp

Equipment Selection – Helpful Tips

Rain Jackets

- A good quality, seam sealed raincoat with hood is essential for camp, regardless of forecast. Ponchos, parkas, coats or raincoat with fabric lining are not suitable.
- Mid-thigh length is ideal, or at least covering bottom - any shorter and clothing will get too wet.
- The raincoat must be well-fitted but with enough room for clothing underneath.
- A lightweight raincoat is ideal as students will be carrying it for program duration.

- Somerset has a good quality raincoat available for purchase on our website.

Shoes

- While at Somerset, your child/ward will be walking (most likely bushwalking) over terrain that is uneven & often rocky/leafy. **Comfort, support and grip** are essential features of the shoes required to bring.
- Please remember to select thick, comfortable socks as this helps in the prevention of rubbing and blisters.

For Camp Activities and Hiking:

- Hiking shoes or boots are best as they provide ankle and arch support, and have good grip.
- Runners/sneakers are fine as long as they are for running or cross-training. Basketball or flat-sole shoes are not ideal.
- Street shoes like Volleys/Rabens/Vans are not suitable as they have little to no grip & are flat-soled.
- Shoes are likely to be exposed to harsh or dirty wear - bring ones that you don't mind spoiling.

For Water Activities:

- 'Aqua' shoes are best as they are flexible, enclosed, lightweight and dry relatively easily.
- Raben or similar street shoes are fine as water shoes - bring ones that you don't mind spoiling.
- Thongs are not suitable as they are not enclosed.



Footwear appropriate for Somerset

Sleeping Gear

Sleeping Bag

- Sleeping bags should be of good with hood. Cheaper bags from department stores are not adequate.
- The sleeping bag rating should be 5° lower than expected temperature (check tag for temperature rating). Temperatures at Somerset are usually 1°-3° hotter in summer and 1°-3° colder in winter than Sydney. Use the Richmond weather forecast as a good indication.
- For the months of May to September sleeping bags will require at least a -5° rating.
- Sleeping bags should be compact and lightweight (less than 2kg). A compression sack is a great idea as the bag can be 'squashed' to be as small as possible.
- A sleeping bag liner adds insulation and helps keep the inside of the bag from becoming too dirty or sweaty.
- Waterproof your sleeping bag in either a dry-bag or a garbage bag (any colour but black).
- Consider investing in a down bag if it will get future use.

Sleeping Mat

- A mat is essential to provide a layer of insulation between the sleeping bag/ground.
- A simple foam mat is adequate & lightweight.
- Self-inflating mats are comfortable and suitable if further use is envisaged.
- Airbeds or stretchers are not appropriate as they are too heavy.
- Somerset has different sleeping bag / mat options available for hire / purchase through our website.



Sleeping Mats and Sleeping Bag with compression sack

Clothing

- Ensure that you pack enough for the duration of the program.
- Please select in respect to the season and the predicted weather.
- Select with respect to whether the gear needs to be carried for some or all of the camp (ie. 'Rucksack' or 'Day Pack' on the Equipment List).
- Clothing will be subject to harsher than normal wear.
- Comfort and suitability is better than fashion.

Rain Jackets

- Essential.
- Refer to specific notes above on Rain Jackets.

Footwear

- Essential.
- 2-pairs required.
- Refer to specific notes above on footwear.

Sun Hat and Sun Protection

- A hat is essential, even for May to September programs.
- Choose a hat with a brim – caps don't really provide adequate protection.
- Sunscreen with a 50+ sport variety is best. Sunglasses are a good idea too.

Shorts and T-Shirts

- Collared shirts are recommended.
- Shorts must be at least mid-thigh length and not too tight.
- Denim shorts are not suitable as they are too heavy and don't dry easily.
- A set of shorts & t-shirt per day is ample. For expedition style programs, 2 days wear per set is typical.

Long Sleeved Tops and Pants – October to April

- Jeans are not suitable – too heavy, retain moisture, don't dry easily, uncomfortable.
- Not essential – please make a call dependent on the weather and exact time of year....
- Useful for sun and/or insect protection.
- And useful for cooler nights, wet weather cool, etc.
- Ensure they are lightweight and not too bulky.
- Leggings, outdoor pants, lightweight tracksuit or sports pants are good options.
- Outdoor shirts, long-sleeved t-shirts or 'skivvy' tops are good options.

Long Sleeved Tops and Pants – May to September

- Essential - Used for warmth in the evenings and mornings.
- Jeans are not suitable – too heavy, retain moisture, don't dry easily, uncomfortable.
- Leggings, outdoor pants, thermal pants, lightweight tracksuit or sports pants are good options.
- Thermal tops, long-sleeved t-shirts or 'skivvy' tops are good options.

Jumpers/Jackets

- Always bring at least one jumper – even October to April.
- Fleece material is best.
- For colder months it is good to "layer". 2 to 3 layers of thermals / fleece instead of one massive jacket.

Socks

- 1 pair per day & a spare set.
- Ankle socks are not suitable. Thicker sport socks are the best bet.
- Consider purchasing specifically designed hiking, moisture-wicking socks if you will get future use.

Swimwear

- A sun-top / rash-vest & shorts must be worn over your swimming costume (for both boys and girls).
- A small pack or travel towel is a good idea.

Toiletries

(you really won't need much, and why carry extra weight?)

- Shampoo (hotel size). If there's a chance to shower, shampoo will suffice for body wash & in hair (no need for soap).
- Small toothbrush & paste (you can cut-off handle & squeeze most out of the tube if you'd like).
- Sunscreen and insect repellent – don't choose massive tubes. No aerosols.
- Sanitary items – visit here for helpful tips lotsafreshair.com/2015/03/11/how-to-deal-with-periods-when-hiking/.

How to Fit a Rucksack

Useful tips for those that have a personal Rucksack for their Duke of Ed Program. Please note:

- Hired Rucksacks will be given out on arrival & will be checked at Somerset before starting any Dukes expedition.
- School Camps - Rucksacks will be provided. Packing and checking will be undertaken upon arrival at Somerset.

A few Simple Points to Keep in Mind

- Limit what you need – you can add any 'luxury' items (such as a book) later if space and weight permits.
- Layout everything before you start packing.
- Keep things in groups. For example, all clothing together; toiletries & first aid; utensils, cup & bowl; all food together so as everything is at hand when you need to perform a certain task.
- Separately waterproof your sleeping bag in waterproof stuff sack or in garbage bag (any colour but black).
- Separately waterproof your clothes in waterproof stuff sacks, zip locks or in plastic bags (not black).
- Refer to pack weights.

Starting to Pack



- Loosen all straps on your pack to open up the inside space as much as possible.
- Place your sleeping bag at the bottom of your pack, squeeze any other lightweight items such as clothing into the gaps.
- Place the heavier items like your tent, food and water in the middle of your pack. This helps to reduce the downward & backward pull on your back, making it more comfortable to carry.
- Place medium weight items like clothing, foam mat or Thermarest (self-inflating mat) around the heavier items.
- Place any items that you may need quick access to such as snacks, maps, rain jacket or first aid items on top or in any side or top pockets.
- Do not hang any items on the outside of your pack. The swinging motion interferes with your walking rhythm and makes it harder and more uncomfortable to carry. You also risk damaging or losing items which could litter the bush.

Adjusting the Pack to Fit You

Rucksacks have several straps to adjust to maximise greater comfort on your load. Your legs have some of the strongest muscles in your body and the goal is to adjust your straps so the majority of the load rests on your hips.

There are four primary adjustment straps and they should be adjusted in the order they are listed below:

1. **Hip-belt** – sits on top of your hip bones
 2. **Shoulder straps** – adjustable near your lower ribs
 3. **Load-lifter straps** – adjustable at the top of the shoulders
 4. **Sternum strap** – sits across your chest, approximately 1 inch below your collar bone
- Before you start to adjust your Rucksack, make sure it is packed completely (full water bottles included).
 - To get it onto your back, first lift it onto your knee and slip your right arm through the strap.
 - Without swinging, gently transfer the weight onto your back & swiftly loop your left arm through the other strap to finish.
 - Do up the hip-belt buckle so the padding sits on top of your hip bones & adjust clothing underneath to avoid bunching.
 - Adjust straps 1 and 2 and when they feel comfortable, continue to adjust straps 3 and 4.
 - The final adjustments should feel snug, but not make you feel stiff and tense. You should also feel like your centre of gravity and weight-load is centred at your hips. This means you should feel balanced and not top-heavy.
 - Please note: adjusting your rucksack is a dynamic process, which means it will need to be done regularly to accommodate changes in weight and developments of any sore spots over the duration of the expedition.