

Keeping your Gear Dry

Most rucksacks won't be waterproof, but there are several things you can do to help keep your pack and its contents dry.

Waterproofing your pack is a reliable way of keeping your gear dry even if no rain is forecast.

Rucksack Liner or Line your Rucksack with a Heavy-Duty Plastic Bag or bin liner

A rucksack liner is a large bag with sealed seams that goes inside your rucksack before your gear is put in, with all your contents then going inside this bag.

Choose a liner that is much larger than your pack. If your pack is 65L, use a 100L plastic bag. That way you can really push it into the corners of your pack, maximising space, and you'll have plenty of bag left to twist and tie it shut.

If you can waterproof anything inside your pack, make it your sleeping bag. If the weather is particularly wet, double line your sleeping bag by bagging it separately in its own plastic bag inside your pack. A wet bag is not much use to keep you warm, so it's important to keep it dry.



Rain Cover for your Rucksack

A rain cover goes over your backpack and gives your bag some water resistance – enough to keep your gear dry should it rain (unless it's really heavy rain). While rain covers won't keep all the water out, they're a handy first line of defence.

They are elasticated around the edge to ensure that your bag is kept completely covered.

The rain cover is usually stowed in a small pocket at the bottom of the pack and unfurls covering the entire pack before being cinched in by elastic, around the harness.

The downside of rain covers is they make accessing gear in the pack difficult and because they're made of a lightweight material, can easily get snagged on foliage and rip.



Dry Bags for Expensive Gear

Dry bags are commonly used for kayaking & canoeing where there is the chance your backpack could be submerged in water. The bags seal tightly at the top and fully taped seams to keep everything watertight.

If you have any expensive gear it's definitely a good idea to stow it in quality dry bags.

The other benefits of using dry bags is that they allow you to organise your pack, even colour code it – e.g. blue for cooking gear, red for clothes – and, should your rain cover or liner bag fail you, you have an extra line of defence.

It's worth it for gear like your first aid kit, headlamp, battery pack, and a notepad and pen in a little 2L lightweight dry sack – things you really don't want to get wet.



Go Crazy with Ziploc Bags

They come in all different shapes and sizes and do pretty much everything a dry sack does, but for way cheaper, and best of all, they're available almost everywhere.

First aid items, maps etc. can all go into Ziploc bags, as well as individual food servings and daily rations.

Rubbish and waste goes into a large Ziploc to keep it separate from your other gear.

Ziploc bags are especially useful for protecting the gear in your rucksack lid and side pockets.

