

Light-Pack Bushwalking Check Lists

Essentials summary: the minimum you need for a weekend walk down south

	<u>Low range</u>	<u>Medium range</u>	<u>High range</u>	
Pack	500 g	600 g	850 g	
Tent	400 g	1000 g	2000 g	(1)
Ground sheet	150 g	200 g	300 g	(2)
Eating utensils (plastic)	50 g	100 g	100 g	
Stove & fuel	0 g	150 g	500 g	(3)
Billy & lifter	100 g	100 g	100 g	(4)
Water bottle(s)	100 g	100 g	100 g	
Torch (including batteries)	50 g	100 g	100 g	
Sleeping mat	600 g	800 g	800 g	
Sleeping bag	450 g	1000 g	1200 g	(5)
Silk liner	100 g	150 g	200 g	
Rain Jacket	50 g	350 g	550 g	(6)
Spare clothes	250 g	450 g	750 g	(7)
<u>Personal effects</u>	<u>150 g</u>	<u>250 g</u>	<u>350 g</u>	
Fixed weight necessary items	2950 g	5350 g	7900 g	

Now lets look at a few optional extras.

Camera and film	0 g	250 g	400 g	
Pillow	0 g	100 g	300 g	
Camp sandals	0 g	150 g	300 g	
Book	0 g	200 g	300 g	
<u>Misc personal</u>	<u>100 g</u>	<u>250 g</u>	<u>500 g</u>	(8)
<u>Optional item total</u>	<u>100 g</u>	<u>950 g</u>	<u>1800 g</u>	(9)
Fixed weight total	3050 g	6300 g	9700 g	

This is what you'll still be carrying at the end of the walk.

Now add on the items that decrease in weight as you go:

Water	1000 g	1500 g	2000 g	(10)
<u>Food (mod eater)</u>	<u>700 g</u>	<u>750 g</u>	<u>800 g</u>	(11)
Total weight overnight walk	4750 g	8550 g	12500 g	

This is what you carry at the start. For complete fire ban days, subtract the billy and stove weight, add on an extra 200 g for something fresh. That adds an extra 150 g for the lightest case, subtracts 100 g for the medium and 200 g for the heavy. The difference is negligible.

<u>Extra food and fuel for 3 day walk</u>	<u>750 g</u>	<u>650 g</u>	<u>750 g</u>	(12)
Three day total	5500 g	9200g	13250 g	

This is what you start with. You finish with no more than you would for the two day walk.

You can easily do a two or three day walk carrying no more than 10 kg.

If you work carefully with one or more other people and don't have to carry more than a litre of water, you should be able to do a weekend walk without ever carrying more than 6-7 kg.

Notes to essentials checklist for southern bushwalks

- 1) Low weight is for some of the GoLite gear, 2 people sharing; medium is 2 people sharing something like a Microlight; high is one person in something like a Microlight. One person in a Microlight is not really lightweight walking, but I've included it as it is so common.
- 2) If you are using a tent with a floor, you might not need a ground sheet. You should use a groundsheet with the lightest shelter. Use light plastic. I use a fairly heavy piece of coated nylon that weighs 300g. You certainly don't need more than that.
- 3) Light (stove = 0) is where you can have a campfire or where you are walking during a complete fireban. Medium is based on two people sharing a lightweight gas canister stove. High range stove is based on two people sharing a shellite or Trangia stove. Four or more people sharing a shellite stove should bring the weight back to about 300 g each.
In seriously cold conditions, you'd probably need more fuel.
- 4) Billy = 100g per person. (Share with more than 2 and it will drop.) If you are not cooking as with a fireban, I've left the 100 g to allow for something like a piece of fresh fruit.
- 5) Light is one person using something like the Macpac "Firefly" or two sharing a heavier one. Medium is one person with a light bag. Heavier is a cheaper, heavier bag for one person.
- 6) Light is with a 50g rain poncho/shell. Medium is a very lightweight breathable raincoat. Heavy is a moderately lightweight breathable rain jacket.
- 7) Light is lightweight thermal top or t-shirt, spare socks and underwear. Chux for drying.
Medium is slightly heavier top, light thermal pants, socks, underwear, small pack towel. In warmer weather it is light thermal top or t-shirt, sarong, socks, underwear.
Heavy adds an extra 300 g to medium for another warm layer. If it is so cold that you need more than that, you are no longer talking about really lightweight bushwalking.
- 8) Almost everyone will have some small extra item that they want to bring so I've given the light a minimum of 100 g. The heavy list allows for things like lightweight binoculars.
- 9) For the medium and heavy lists, I've simply totalled the medium and heavy weights for each of the listed items. As few people would take the heaviest of everything, the heavy list is definitely heavier than anyone acting on these recommendations is likely to carry.
- 10) Difference depends on whether you are starting with one, 1½ or two litres. All should go to zero or near zero as you walk. If you have to carry more than 2 litres, it's not really a light-pack walk unless you are toward the low end of the other items.
- 11) 110 g breakfast, 110 g lunch, 280 g dinner, 50 g trail snack. 1 breakfast, 1 dinner, 2 lunches, 2 trail snacks. Rounded to nearest 50 g. Heavy adds extra 100 g for heavier eater.
- 12) 3 day walk extra: 1 each, breakfast, lunch, dinner, trail snack = 550 g, 650 g for heavy eater. Fuel 100 g extra per person. Or substitute something fresh if you have a fire ban or use a campfire.

Now compare this with walking for a week or more on one of Willis's Walkabouts Kakadu or Kimberley Expeditions.

Essentials summary: the minimum you need for a one week walk up north

	<u>Low range</u>	<u>Medium range</u>	<u>High range</u>	
Pack	500 g	600 g	850 g	
Tent	400 g	800 g	1200 g	(1)
Ground sheet	150 g	200 g	300 g	(2)
Eating utensils (plastic)	50 g	100 g	100 g	
Stove & fuel	0 g	0 g	0 g	(3)
Billy & lifter	100 g	100 g	100 g	(4)
Water bottle(s)	100 g	100 g	100 g	
Torch (including batteries)	50 g	100 g	100 g	
Sleeping mat	600 g	800 g	800 g	
Sleeping bag	450 g	1000 g	1200 g	(5)
Silk liner	100 g	150 g	200 g	
Rain Jacket/ Windcheater	0 g	50 g	150 g	(6)
Spare clothes	250 g	400 g	600 g	(7)
<u>Personal effects</u>	<u>150 g</u>	<u>250 g</u>	<u>350 g</u>	
Fixed weight necessary items	2900 g	4650 g	6050 g	

Now lets look at a few optional extras.

Camera and film	0 g	250 g	400 g	
Pillow	0 g	100 g	300 g	
Camp sandals	0 g	150 g	300 g	
Book	0 g	200 g	300 g	
<u>Misc personal</u>	<u>100 g</u>	<u>250 g</u>	<u>500 g</u>	(8)
<u>Optional item total</u>	<u>100 g</u>	<u>950 g</u>	<u>1800 g</u>	(9)
Fixed weight total	3000 g	5600 g	7850 g	

This is what you'll still be carrying at the end of the walk.

Now add on the items that decrease in weight as you go:

Water	1000 g	1000 g	1000 g	(10)
Breakfasts and lunches	1500 g	1800 g	2100g	(11)
<u>Food (mod eater)</u>	<u>2300 g</u>	<u>2300 g</u>	<u>2300 g</u>	(12)
Total weight one week walk	7800 g	10700 g	13250 g	

You can easily do one of our standard one week walks without ever carrying more than 10-11 kg! If you choose the lightest possible gear, you should be able to get it down below 9 kg.

It gets better.

- Compared with a weekend walk down south, a larger percent of your weight will be food. At the end of the walk you should be carrying less than you would be carrying at the end of a weekend walk down south.
- Our climate is conducive to lots of rest breaks and swim stops. You will carry your pack for a smaller percent of the time than you would on many southern weekend walks.

Don't believe it's true? We have some real life examples at the end of this document.

Notes to essentials checklist for northern bushwalks

- 1) Low weight is for one person in a mossie net. Medium is two people in a mossie dome. Heavy is two people in a mossie dome with a fly.
- 2) If you are using a tent with a floor, you might not need a ground sheet. You should use a groundsheet with the lightest shelter. Use light plastic. I use a fairly heavy piece of coated nylon that weighs 300g. You certainly don't need more than that.
- 3) Outside of the Bungles, there is no where we walk for a week where we need to use a stove. Campfires are the order of the day.
- 4) Billy = 100g per person. This is your share of the group cooking utensils.
- 5) Light is one person using something like the Macpac "Firefly" or two sharing a heavier one. Medium is one person with a light bag. Heavier is a cheaper, heavier bag for one person.
- 6) Light is the normal dry season nil. Medium is something like a 50g rain poncho/shell you could use as a windcheater. Heavy is a lightweight windcheater. Forget the raingear. You don't need it.
- 7) Light is lightweight thermal top or t-shirt, spare socks and underwear. Chux for drying.
Medium adds light thermal pants and a small pack towel.
Heavy replaces the pack towel with a sarong (+150g) and adds an extra 50g for a slightly heavier thermal top. It is never cold during the day. Use these to increase the warmth of your sleeping bag if needed.
- 8) Almost everyone will have some small extra item that they want to bring so I've given the light a minimum of 100 g. The heavy list allows for things like lightweight binoculars.
- 9) For the medium and heavy lists, I've simply totalled the medium and heavy weights for each of the listed items. As few people would take the heaviest of everything, the heavy list is definitely heavier than anyone acting on these recommendations is likely to carry.
- 10) You will never have to start by carrying more than one litre of water. Although you may have to carry two litres later in a trip, by the time that happens (if it does), you will have lost at least one kg of food.
- 11) Medium allows 110g breakfast, 110g lunch, 50 g trail snack. 7 days = 6 breakfast, 7 lunches, 7 trail snacks. A light eater might eat about 300g less, a heavy eater about 300g more.
- 12) Approximate average per person for our three course meals for six nights.

Real life example #1

Here is a list Arthur Weston compiled rather quickly, using our figure for dinner (his would probably be much less). Arthur says, "I could reduce weight in some areas (especially after I have made some lighter weight gear with silicon-impregnated nylon and repaired some of my much lighter weight air mattresses), and I would probably also add some weight (e.g. binoculars, stove, cookwear). I often do not take a camera and usually do not take a Swiss Army Knife."

<u>Item</u>	<u>One person</u>	<u>If sharing</u>	<u>* = shared item</u>
Pack (GoLite Gust)	700 g	700 g	with plastic bag liner & pack cover
Sleeping bag	650 g	325 g	*
Bag liner	120 g	120 g	
DAM (mat)	800 g	800 g	
Tent, ground sheet	1050 g	525 g	* with fly and cord
Eating utensils	45 g	45 g	(bowl, cup, spoon, fork, knife)
Toiletries, 1st aid, etc	150 g	150 g	
Warm and spare clothes	500 g	500 g	approx
Sandals for camp	250 g	250 g	also for emergency use if shoes fail
Day pack (home made)	70 g	35 g	*
Water bottle & water	1060 g	1060 g	
Breakfast, lunch, trail food	1700 g	1700 g	
Dinner	2300 g	2300 g	
Torch & 15 hour battery	30 g	15 g	*
Spare specs	10 g	10 g	Not needed if you don't need specs
<u>Book</u> (flora?, and map)	<u>250 g</u>	<u>250 g</u>	
Grand total	9685 g	8785 g	

Real life example #2

Frank and Micky Whitehouse read the first draft of these notes, then sat down and weighed the items they take when they come on our walks. They came up with the following.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Micky</u>	<u>Frank</u>
Pack	1790 g	1815 g
Sleeping bag and sheet	1760 g (shared)	
Tent and poles		1465 g (shared)
Ultralight ¾ length thermarest	485 g	485 g
Eating utensils for 2	125 g	
Toiletries, 1st aid, etc	250 g	
Warm clothes	380 g	755 g
Spare clothes	580 g	840 g
Sandals for camp	100 g	205 g
Day packs (home made)	30 g	30 g
Water bottle & water	1100 g	1100 g
Breakfast, lunch	1700 g	1700 g
Dinner	2300 g	2300 g
Camera & film		350 g
Torch & spare batteries		75 g (shared)
Spare specs	55 g	55 g
Swiss army knife		145 g
Paints, brushes, paper		115 g
<u>Book</u>	<u>210 g</u>	<u>210 g</u>
Grand total	10865 g	11645 g

The above was for Kakadu. On Kimberley trips they bring a second sleeping bag (1575 g), a tent fly (650 g), and fishing lines (70 g). This adds an 1150 g each. This gives a total of 12 kg for Micky and 12.8 kg for Frank.

These weights may drop. If they replace their packs with the ultra light ones mentioned early on in this document, they would each save about 1 to 1.2 kg. In Kakadu, this could drop Micky down as low as 9.7 kg and Frank as low as 10.5 kg. On Kimberley trips where their packs are heavier, Micky would still only be carrying a total of 10.8 and Frank a total of 11.6 kg.

5 kg of each of their total weights is food and water. By the end of the trip, their packs weigh 5 kg less! When they go out for 10-11 days instead of 7 they add about 2 kg more per person. By the end of the first few days, their weights have dropped to the above.

This is an example of what one particular couple carries. If you compare it to our list, you can see that it is possible to drop the total weight lower still.

Note. Winter temperatures and the possibility of cold rain in the Red Centre and Pilbara mean that packs on our trips there cannot be as light as those on our Kakadu and Kimberley trips. Even so, they can still easily be kept well below what most people carry.