

Climb to Beat Breast Cancer ~ Ben Lomond Challenge

RECOMMENDED CLOTHING & GEAR LIST

Upper body: A t-shirt might be enough for you if you are hiking uphill on a warm day, but extra shirts should be brought for the likely chill above treeline and for the less-exerting trip down. Wool or synthetic (acrylic, polyester, polypro) shirts are recommended. It's also good to have a jacket (fleece, pile, or synthetic insulation) to provide extra insulation.

Undergarments: Synthetic – NO COTTON!

Hiking shorts/pants: One pair of quick drying shorts. Hiking pants with zip-off legs are nice but not required.

Hat: A brimmed hat (such as a Red Sox cap) can help keep direct sun off your head and out of your eyes, and can keep rain from drumming on your head and from splashing your eyeglasses if you wear them. A stocking cap (wool, fleece) is recommended as well.

Gloves: Even in mid-summer, gloves or mittens (wool or fleece) are recommended.

Footwear: Should be sturdy, comfortable and well broken-in, water resistant, and with a good sole to give secure footing on rocks, mud, etc. Most hikers wear hiking boots to provide all of the above plus extra support and protection from rough rocks.

Socks: Appropriate socks should be worn to give good cushioning and to avoid the formation of blisters (wool or synthetic socks are recommended – cotton socks tend not to perform as well). Multiple layers help prevent blisters and keep feet dry. Extra socks should be carried for changing if your first set gets wet from rain, sweat, etc.

Raingear: Raingear is a crucial inclusion in your pack. Please leave your poncho at home – the winds above treeline, and the steepness and roughness of the rocks on the mountain, will wreak havoc with it. Also leave behind the very inexpensive light plastic raingear that is more at home on a golf course – it can tear easily on the rough rocks above treeline. Do bring a good rain jacket and rain pants, so that you can keep the rain (often wind-driven) from soaking your clothing and from chilling you to the bone.

Raingear also does double-duty as wind gear – even on a dry day, you'll want to be able to keep the wind from penetrating your clothing and chilling you. Regular coated raingear does not allow moisture from sweat to leave your clothing, so it may be a tad uncomfortable, but should be manageable. If you want, you can use one of the several "waterproof breathable" fabric rain suits or you can have separate, light and breathable wind shirt and pants.

Food: Bring along ample amounts of trail snacks and lunch food. A mix of quick-energy items and long-lasting energy providers are recommended. Bring items like Gatorade (powdered), "Emergen-C," "powerbars," "powergels," etc. It is very important to replenish your body's electrolytes as well as calories. Eat what you like, but eat! Do watch out for any items that may be perishable

RECOMMENDED CLOTHING & GEAR LIST CONTINUED

Water: The need to drink lots of water is sometimes overlooked by inexperienced hikers. A climb up and down Ben Lomond on a typical summer day can require 4 or 5 quarts of water! Avoid diuretic beverages, such as strong coffee or alcoholic beverages – they can result in a net loss of water. Since the possibility of water along the trail cannot be guaranteed, be prepared to treat it (such as by filtering or chemical treatment) if you're counting on it.

Day Pack: You'll want a roomy pack to carry the clothes you aren't wearing all the time, plus to carry other items. To keep things extra dry in your pack, line your pack with a large plastic trash bag. (Even high-quality packs can leak through seams, and water can often dribble in through the top.)

Sunglasses, sunblock and insect repellent: It is essential to have good eye protection especially at high altitude. Sunglasses that wrap around or have side shields or glacier glasses are good options. In June and July especially, insect repellent might be helpful to keep black flies and mosquitoes at bay. Sunblock and lip balm must have a SPF rating of 15 or more.

Medication: If you take medications, on a regular or occasional basis, remember to pack them. Also, if you wear eyeglasses, bring spares along, especially if the loss or breakage of your regular pair would make it hard for you to travel the trail safely and at your usual pace.

Emergency items: Bring items such as a basic first aid and repair kit, whistle, flashlight and some spare nylon cord, plus matches and basic emergency fire starting items. Also carry basic emergency shelter – it can be as elaborate as a climber's bivouac sack or as simple as a light poly tarp (such as a painter's drop cloth) or a couple of extra-large trash bags. The purpose is to be able to keep the worst of the rain and wind at bay should you need to stop for an extended period.

Personal first aid and personal medicines: This should include moleskin for blisters; pepto for stomach upset; Q-tips; anti-bacterial hand soap (Purell). Medical kit should include Tylenol or Ibuprofen.

Ziploc Bags: Bring along 5-15 extras as they come in handy on the trail for litter, keeping things dry, etc. It's a good idea to Ziploc anything in your pack that absolutely cannot get wet. Even with a waterproof bag, a pack cover and keeping diligent about things when it rains, items still manage to get wet.

Poles: Many hikers like to use a walking staff or a set of poles – whether "trekking" poles or just plain ski poles – which can be helpful to maintain balance and such. However, be prepared to secure them to your pack if you find that they get in the way on some of the steeper sections of trail, where you may wish to keep your hands free.

Compass: Visibility, or the lack thereof, could be a problem when mountain climbing. Compasses are small and lightweight and just might keep you heading in the right direction. GPS units are also very helpful, but they are more likely to not work than a compass.

TRAVEL LIGHT!!!!
(You won't be sorry!)