Ultralight Backpacking Checklist

Note: This list is intentionally extensive. Not every ultralight hiker will carry every item on every trip.

The Ten Essentials (for safety, survival and basic comfort)

1. Navigation
   - Map (with protective case)
   - Compass
   - GPS (optional)

2. Sun protection
   - Sunscreen and lip balm
   - Sunglasses

3. Insulation
   - Jacket, vest, pants, gloves, hat (see Clothing)

4. Illumination
   - Headlamp or flashlight
   - Extra batteries

5. First-aid supplies
   - First-aid kit (see our First-aid checklist)

6. Fire
   - Matches or lighter
   - Waterproof container
   - Fire starter (for emergency survival fire)

7. Repair kit and tools
   - Knife or multi-tool
   - Duct tape strips; repair kits as needed

8. Nutrition
   - Extra day’s supply of food

9. Hydration
   - Water bottles or hydration system
   - Water filter or other treatment system

10. Emergency shelter
    - Tent, tarp, bivy or reflective blanket

Beyond the Ten Essentials

   - Backpack
   - Tent, tarp or bivy sack (with stakes, guylines)
   - Footprint
   - Sleeping bag
   - Stuff sack or compression sack
   - Sleeping pad
   - Whistle
   - Signaling mirror
   - Ice axe
   - Trekking poles
   - ______________

   - Meals
   - Energy food (bars, gels, chews, trail mix)
   - Energy beverages or drink mixes
   - Stove
   - Fuel
   - Cook pot
   - Utensil(s)
   - Measuring cup/mug
   - Food-storage sacks or bear canister
   - Length of nylon cord (5’ or more)
   - ______________

Clothing Options (base choices on trip length and possible weather extremes)

   - Wicking T-shirt
   - Wicking underwear
   - Quick-drying shorts or convertible pants
   - Long-sleeve shirt (for sun, bugs)
   - Bandana or buff
   - ______________
   - Insulating fleece jacket (or vest) and pants
   - Rain jacket (or soft shell and waterproof hat)
   - Rain pants (or soft-shell pants)
   - Sun-shielding or insulating hat/cap
   - Gloves or mittens
   - ______________

Footwear; Assorted Personal Options

   - Light-hiking or trail-running shoes
   - Socks (synthetic or wool)
   - Gaiters
   - Sandals (for fording, in camp)
   - Insect repellent
   - Headnet
   - Toilet paper
   - Sanitation trowel
   - Hand sanitizer
   - ______________
   - ______________
   - ______________
   - Toothbrush
   - Permits
   - Route description or guidebook
   - Camera and memory cards
   - Monocular or binoculars
   - Two-way radios
   - Cell phone or satellite messenger
   - Small amount of cash or credit card
   - Trip itinerary left w/friend + under car seat
   - ______________
   - ______________
   - ______________