

Gear lexicon – Trekking tours

The Icelandic Mountain Guides Gear Lexicon provides more detailed information on specific items of gear required for our trekking tour.

Trekking tour - definition:

Hiking tour where all the overnight gear is transported from one camp-site/hut to the next. You will only need to carry your daypack during each day's hike. Your daypack should only contain a small amount of extra clothing for the day (rain gear, puffy jacket etc.), sunglasses, and river crossing gear, sunblock and food and water for the day.



Scarpa Hekla



Salomon Quest

Hiking boots:

Sturdy hiking boots with good ankle support. Leather or synthetic with a waterproof membrane, e.g. Gore-Tex. Make sure they are a good fit, leaving some space for your toes – and wear them in, even if it is just by light hiking in the city.

Long sleeve- / T-shirt (thermal underwear):

A thin base layer (next to skin). The most popular is merino wool – comfortable to wear for multiple days without the smell of synthetic materials. Most people should be fine with the same merino shirt on for 2 – 3 days. Having short and long sleeve is great for adjusting to different weather conditions. A sleeveless shirt (merino wool) can also be a good addition for a base layer as well as a sports bra for the women.



Bergans Merino

Light wool or fleece sweater:

This is your regular insulation layer for hiking during the day. Options from Merino wool are available as well as

the standard fleece jacket. Not too thick for summertime use, but consider layering with two jackets or a jacket and a vest – that way you will be prepared for any type of weather.

Trousers – softshell:

Soft shell is strong and durable, wind resistant and quick drying. Perfect for hiking pants. Some might consider a thin base-layer for extra insulation on colder days. If you have a thinner trousers consider having long-johns handy for cold days.



Mountain Equipment
Chamois Pant

Jacket with a good hood (wind and waterproof):

A good “hard-shell” jacket with a large protective hood. Gore-Tex membrane or similar to keep you dry. Make sure it is not too tight and that you can fit insulation underneath. Note that a soft-shell jacket is a great addition but will not replace a good waterproof hard-shell when you really, really need one! **Good rain gear – tops and bottoms are mandatory on all our tours.**



ME Manaslu

Rain trousers – wind and waterproof:

Good rain pants are absolutely compulsory in Iceland. They should be lightweight – as they are in the backpack most of the time. If they have zip-up legs to ease getting into it is a big bonus. Make sure they are breathable and strong enough to take some abuse from walking. We often see cheap rain pants come apart on the seams. Gore-Tex or similar waterproof breathing membrane is appropriate. **Good rain gear – tops and bottoms are mandatory on all our tours.**



ME Firefox pant

Gloves:

A light pair of fleece or wool gloves or mittens does the job. You can also take a pair of ski-gloves or other wind and waterproof shell gloves. Having an extra pair is recommended, and then of different thickness.

Socks:

Wool is definitely the preferred material for hiking socks. Different blends are available. If you are prone to blisters or have new boots you might consider wearing a thin liner sock underneath your hiking socks. Make sure you have a few pairs of socks to keep your feet dry and in good conditions.

Warm hat:

A normal ski-hat/beanie is perfect. You could also use a thick buff. As an extra a buff is also nice to have, you can use it to protect your neck and face when needed or as a thinner option for a hat.



ME Knitted beanie

Duffel-bag:

Your overnight gear is going to be transported from hut-to-hut and space is limited. We therefore ask you to pack your gear in a soft bag rather than a regular hard suitcase. A 70 - 80L bag should be more than enough for all your extra kit including a sleeping bag. If it is reasonably waterproof that is a big bonus.



ME Wet & Dry bag

Backpack / day-pack:

You will need a nice daypack to carry your extra clothes, river crossing shoes and food and water for the day. Having a compartment for smaller items like sun screen and sunglasses is also good. The pack will never be heavy but a bit of padding on the shoulder- and hip straps is good. Unless you have some bulky personal needs like photographic equipment then you should be fine with a 30L pack.



Love Alpine AirZone Trek 30L



Neopren socks



Keen Newport Sandal

River shoes:

An old pair of running shoes will do just fine. Closed hiking sandals or neoprene kayaking shoes will also work great. Any quick drying shoe with a good sole that can be securely attached to the foot will do. **Loose slippers, flip-flops etc. are not acceptable.**

A good addition to your river crossing shoes are **neoprene socks** – they should go well above the ankles and the best once have welded seams. You will be able to do most of your river crossings without them, but it is just so much nicer with them. They should be a tight fit, but not too tight to get one when wet.

Sleeping bag:

The mountain-huts during the summer are usually warm, although not heated during the night. Any old sleeping bag will therefore do, unless you get cold easily. For temperature control having a full length zipper is great. A liner bag is also a very nice addition and will improve your ability to regulate your head during the night. If you are doing a winter trip or summer camping a 3 season sleeping bag would be sufficient. All the huts we use have mattresses on the beds so no need to bring your own for hut trips.

Towel:

To save weight and bulk, a light weight microfiber towel is ideal. You might like a big one for drying off after a swim and a small one for drying your feet after river crossings.

Sunglasses and sun protection:

Believe it or not, you will need those things in Iceland. There are no big issues with sun, so a high SPF rating for sun block is not an issue unless you plan to be on a glacier or on snow. You should have a small bottle to save weight in your pack. Likewise; any pair of sunglasses would be sufficient – but make sure you pack them. If you plan to be in snow or on ice a pair of glasses with a high UV (close to 100%) and/or cat (3 – 4) rating and side shields will be appropriate.

Water container / thermos flask:

In Iceland you can drink from the stream, no filters, not iodine or chlorine! It is good to have a small water bottle at hand. For most days a 0,5 – 1L bottle should be plenty as water is easily found all over. If you are a warm drinker we will be happy to fill up your thermos in the morning and a selection of teas will be available (very dedicated tea drinkers often bring an emergency stash of their favourite brand).

Head-lamp:

Even though the summer night is bright the inside of the hut might not be. A headlamp is also useful for a bit of reading. There are plenty of options available for LED head lamps that are just perfect for reading and getting around the hut. A small flash-light will also do the job. Most LED headlamps have more than enough light for our purposes and the battery life is so good that one set will do for your Iceland trip.



Casual clothes / change of clothes:

Once in the hut it is good to be able to change out of your trekking gear. Even if we do not like you to wear jeans during the hike you are welcome to wear them in the hut in the evening - same with a cotton T-shirt. If it is could a warm jumper or an extra fleece jacket is always nice. Few pairs of comfy socks and some fresh underwear. Avoid bringing to much extra clothing - life in the mountains is simple and nice, so one pair of extra pants, warm jumper and a few t-shirts and briefs should do the job just fine.

Personal first-aid-kit:

The guides on our tours will have a first aid kit available. It is still nice to have some small items to be self-sufficient with minor things. Band-Aid, Compeed for blisters, pain killers and/or anti-inflammatory drugs.

Personal items:

Make sure to have all your prescription medication with you, if you have any medical condition that could in any way affect you during the trip make sure to let your guide know. For those suffering from allergies having antihistamine is advisable - or any other medication that works for your conditions. Items for personal hygiene should also be included, having a small bar of soap handy or some liquid hand soap is a good idea. Toothbrush, toothpaste and dental-floss should be packed. Pack shampoo, conditioner and shower gel in small plastic bottles that close tight. Avoid liquid antiperspirant and glass containers due to risks of spilling. Feminine products like pads, tampons etc. should also be packed if needed. If you take vitamins or other supplements you should continue to do so during your holiday.

A bit of toilet-paper in a plastic bag along with a lighter to burn it after use is the way to go in Iceland. In most cases you are sharing a room with a few fellow travellers - so a pair of good ear-plugs can ensure a good night sleep. Those not used to the bright summer might also like to bring an eye mask. Contact lenses, lens liquid etc.

Swim suit:

Bathing in the natural hot-pools will be one of the highlights of your trip in Iceland. Make sure you come dressed for the occasion. There are no specific rules, written or unwritten on how to dress or not to dress; board shorts, speedos, bikinis or bathing suits - anything goes. Quick drying is good.

Trekking pole(s):

One or two poles are nice to have. Some trekkers like to use them all the time, other use them only during river crossings or on steep ups and downs. If you like them,



Black Diamond Trekking / hiking poles

make sure that they are foldable and light weight. A small basket is also nice.

Gaiters:

For summer time use you should normally not need gaiters as they are designed to keep snow from getting into your boots. Some like them also for scree slopes. Keep in mind that the volcanic soil in Iceland is very abrasive so you will want to be able to remove the strap that goes under your boot sole to keep it from getting trashed.

Neoprene Socks: - see in River shoes.

Sun/rain hat or Cap:

A baseball cap or a comfortable hat with brim is great to have. If it is a bite water and weather proof that is a great addition. It will keep the rain from running down your face and into your layering. Be prepared to take it off if the wind picks up.

Shorts:

It does get warm enough in Iceland to wear shorts. They are also nice for sleeping in, in case you need to get out in the night. For hiking it is nice to have some pockets, for the items that other ways would be in the pockets of you pants. But any old pair of shorts will do.

Thermal mattress:

It is really nice to have a small thermal mattress to sit on during lunch break and other stops. It should not be big, just enough to sit on. And it should fold up nicely so it does not get in the way inside your pack.

Puffy Jacket:

A nice light puffy is great during brakes. The insulation could be down or synthetics (Primaloft). It should not be very big or bulky - Iceland is not that cold. Synthetic insulation is preferred in Iceland as it keeps most of its insulating properties also when wet. A puffy vest would also be a good option.



ME Compressor Hooded Jacket PrimaLoft

Dry-bags:

There are plenty of different products available for storing your equipment inside your pack and keeping it dry. A rain cover over your pack often has limited use in Iceland due to the wind - a safer option is to pack whatever needs to be kept dry into dry-bags inside your back-pack. It is also a great way to organize the inside of your pack. One bag for electronics (camera and phone) and one bag for extra clothing, as an example.



Slippers for indoor use:

A pair of comfy slippers to use in the hut is a great thing to have. If your river shoes are fast drying you might also use them.

Aperitif of other heart-warming spirits:

Liquor laws in Iceland prohibit the sale of alcohol in most places you come by on your trip in the highlands and limited opening hours stop you from buying any most other places. So having a flask (preferably plastic or metal) to share with your fellow travels in front of the camp fire (gas heater) can be the crowning of a good day. You can take care of this in the duty-free up on arrival in Iceland if you like. Just follow all the Icelanders on your flight – they will take you straight to duty-free!

Other cool things to have:

Book – to read during the evenings.

Music - and head phones. Some of our guides also have speakers with them to share Icelandic music.

Diary or note-book – to write down your good memories from Iceland. Also a **pen or pencil**.

Power-bank / extra battery for you electronics – small solar cells usually do not work that well in Iceland so a pre charged power bank is a better option. Charging your electronics in the highlands often is not an option or will cost you extra. Having converters adapters for 220 V and/ or USB will help.

Playing cards and travel games – or other toys you might like and can travel

Cash – for the showers, a shower normally costs about 500 ISK.

Travel pillow – as long as it is not very bulky, other ways you can just use your clothes.

Powder drink mix – Icelandic water is great – but you might like a bit of variety. Some also contain vitamins and minerals that help your body after a hard day.