

# Hot Desert Backpack Gear List

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## Clothing

### Outerwear

- waterproof/breathable jacket shell
- fleece jacket or wool sweater (optional)
- synthetic or softshell hiking pants (optional)
- synthetic shorts

### Base Layer

- midweight long john top (optional)
- midweight long john bottoms (optional)
- synthetic briefs & bra
- synthetic T-shirt
- cotton T-shirt

### Accessories

- sun hat, wool or fleece hat (dependent on season)
- synthetic liner gloves (optional)
- bandana (soak in water and lay it on your neck and head)

### Footwear

- hiking boots
- camp footwear (optional, but Tevas, Chacos, etc. are great for getting in a creek, and letting your feet breathe in camp)
- wool or synthetic blend socks (3)
- liner socks (2) (optional)

### Gear

- Internal or external frame backpack
- screen tent or tarp (Note: it *does* rain in the desert, monsoon in the Southwest is roughly July through August, thunderstorms are common)
- down sleeping bag (-30° to 20°F) (I didn't take one on my July Rim to Rim in the Grand Canyon) \*Temps fluctuate as much as 40° from night and day, depending on season
- sleeping sheet (alternative to sleeping bag)
- closed-cell foam sleeping pad
- trekking poles
- personal locator beacon (optional)



This is what you do on a backpack trip in the desert: Find the water and soak it up!  
*Ribbon Falls, North Kaibab Trail,  
Grand Canyon, AZ*

- canister stove and fuel canisters (or forgo the stove and plan food accordingly)
- lighter and waterproof matches
- cookset, eating utensils, bowl, and insulated mug
- headlamp w/extra batteries and bulb (essential for hiking in the dark at 4am to beat the heat)
- 32 oz. water bottles (2)
- water treatment (filter, tablets, or drops)
- small spray bottle for cooling off (optional, but so refreshing)
- pocket knife or multitool
- compass or GPS (and map)
- sunglasses
- first-aid kit with personal medications
- stuff sacks
- assorted zipper-lock bags
- insect repellent (optional)
- waterproof sunscreen (SPF 30+)
- lip balm (SPF 15+)
- toilet paper and trowel
- earplugs (optional)
- watch with alarm (optional)
- sport towel (optional)
- backcountry permit
- camera, film, batteries (optional)
- keys, money, credit cards, license
- pen and journal (optional)
- paperback (optional: nice for siestas in the hot part of the day)
- personal toiletries (contact lenses, individually packaged hand/face sanitizer wipes, comb—for the tangles after dunking in a waterfall or creek, etc.)



*South Kaibab Trail, Grand Canyon, AZ*