

10 Mistakes To Avoid When Packing Your Backpack

We, real preppers, tend to be religious about our backpack. At one point or another each of us have fallen victim to every slip-up in the book until we learned our lesson.

Do you remember the mistakes you've made when preparing your backpack?

Let's see what to avoid!

1. Choosing the Wrong Size of the Backpack

Usually, the bigger pack you have, the more tempting it is to fill it up even if you really don't need those things. What's next? In case you're bugging out, you might find yourself leaving behind a part of your pack because it's too hard to carry it.

That's why you need to choose the right size of your backpack, and it depends on how much are you able to carry, and also on how long is the trip you are planning.

As a general rule of the thumb, here are some basic weights:

- a 50-60 liter pack is appropriate for 1-2 day trip
- a 60-80 liter pack is appropriate for 3-5 day trip
- a 80-90 liter pack is appropriate for 5-7 day trip

Don't be mad if you don't get it from the start, people usually use three or four backpacks till they find the proper size for them.

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2. Too Much Weight

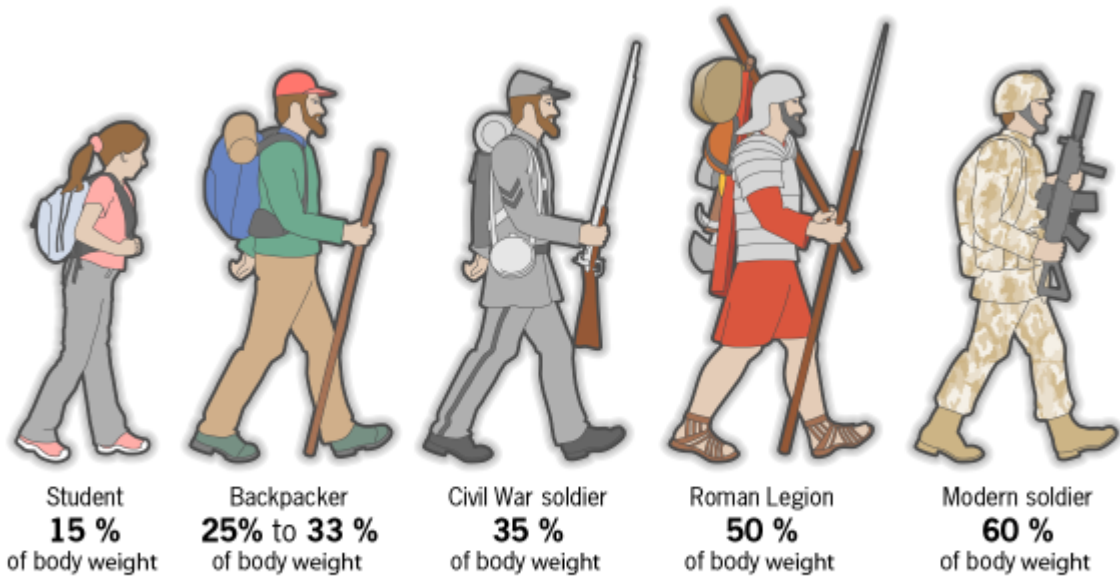
Contrary to conventional wisdom, ideal pack weight for survival scenarios is both relative and subjective: saying that everyone's pack should be x% of their body weight across the board is somewhat naïve.

That's why you need to take into account for each of the group member that you belong to:

- the overall fitness level
- lean body mass
- body fat percentage
- physical size
- cardiovascular fitness
- backpacking experience
- level of mental toughness
- determination of the individual.

Taking all of these factors into consideration, target pack weight may range anywhere from 15%-50% of target body weight for your build and height. That's 15%-50% of what you *should* weigh.

If you're overweight, calculating your pack weight based on your body weight will yield a pack that's too heavy and you will suffer miserably under its weight on top of the extra weight that you are already carrying.



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3. Wrong Choices about Items to Carry

There are different lists on what your bug out bag should contain. I will give you one too, but you're the only one that can decide over how many items should you carry.

And remember: more skills means less to carry.

BUG OUT BAG CHECKLIST



WATER & CONTAINERS

- Water
- Water Filters/Purification Tablets
- Canteen

FIRE ESSENTIALS



- Lighter
- Flint & Steel
- Matches
- Tinder
- Waterproof Storage

FOOD & UTENSILS



- Metal Pot
- Metal Cup
- Spork
- Protein Bars
- Can Opener
- Portable Stove
- Stove Fuel
- Canned Foods
- Dried Fruit
- Trail Mix
- Peanut Butter
- Fishing Kit



FIRST AID

- Bug Repellent
- Anti Diarrhea Meds
- Prescriptions
- Bandana

CLOTHING



- Underwear
- Zip-Off Pants
- Long Sleeve Shirt
- Wool Hiking Socks
- Fleece
- Hat
- Gloves
- Rain Coat
- Sunglasses
- Shemagh
- Sewing Kit

BEDDING

- Tent or Tarp
- Sleeping Bag or Blanket
- Sleeping Mat

HYGIENE



- Hand Sanitizer
- All-Purpose Soap
- Toilet Paper
- Toothbrush & Toothpaste
- Small Towel
- Wet Napkins
- Mirror
- Condoms



TOOLS

- Multi-Tool
- Survival Knife
- Rope
- Duct Tape
- Survival Guide

LIGHTING



- Headlamp
- Glowstick
- Candles
- Batteries
- Mini LED Keychain

COMMUNICATIONS

- Cell Phone
- Crank Power
- Charger
- Radio with Hand Crank



NAVIGATION

- Emergency Whistle
- Pencil & Note Pad
- Compass
- Map/Atlas
- Cash in Small Bills



4. Not Having a Balanced Pack

You need to create a balanced pack so you could carry it properly.

Briefly, the core of your backpack is best for heavy objects. If you place them on top, they will make you fall forward, if you have them on the bottom, they will drag you down.

Do you wonder where this mistake comes from? Read the following one!

5. Not Packing Properly

If you have to unpack half of your items to get to the fire starter and prepare your meal on the go, then something is definitely wrong in the way you packed your things. Keep it simple and keep it light!



6. Not Having a Waterproof or at Least a Water Resistant Pack

When you go into the wilderness, things can go wrong and they probably will. For example, you can fall into a water or face a heavy rain for hours. After that, you will definitely need dry clothes and a warm shelter, and you won't get them if your pack turns into a wet sponge.

Waterproof pack or a water resistant one? Well, let's see the difference before choosing what's best for you.

A water resistant pack will keep your items dry when raining because it won't let the water in. A waterproof one will seal the content inside and will keep it dry even if you fall into a river. And it will be even 30% lighter, as the seams are welded instead of being sewn together.

7. Putting Your Pack On in a Wrong Way

A fully loaded pack sitting on the ground is a load that can harm you if not lifted properly.

Use your legs to lift the load, not your back with straight legs. Get into a lunge position to prepare to hoist your pack, then lift pack and rest it on your bent knee.

Thread an arm through the shoulder strap, swing the pack around and thread your other arm through the other shoulder strap. Lean forward to plane the pack against your back and snug your straps in the same order as you did when fitting your pack.

8. Not Adjusting the Fit of Your Backpack

Start with all straps loose and set the hipbelt on your hipbones, then fully tighten. Pull forward the hipbelt stabilizer straps, and tighten shoulder harness so that it fits over your shoulders with no gaps.

Pull down on the upper load stabilizer straps, and make them snug but don't tighten too much. Back off a little pressure from the shoulder harness, if needed.

When taking off the backpack, remember to loose all straps in reverse order.

Does it feel better or what?

9. Not Being Physically Fit, but Still Backpacking

Exercises and practice cannot be overrated. How could you carry your backpack on foot if you are not able to walk more than one mile?

All of us get old, but aging is more than just getting a few lines around your eyes; it affects the way you move and the way you think. Being able to move well and think quickly may be two of your greatest tools in a survival situation. Looking young while you're using those tools is just a bonus!

Exercise doesn't necessarily have to take place at a gym; you can walk or jog around the neighborhood, do lawn work or housework, or play a sport. Hiking is a great way to get your exercise and to teach your kids survival skills at the same time.

7. Not Caring for Your Backpack Properly

If you don't care of your pack, it will let you down, which means you need to wash it and store it so you could preserve it for later use.

Wash it by hand and avoid detergent, as it may harm the coating. Waterproof it and use a plastic coat to protect it when walking in the rain, but also to keep the items packed dry.

Keep your backpack in a cool, dry place, and avoid storing it against a concrete wall or floor, because the moisture and the chemicals in the concrete might damage the pack. And avoid storing chemicals in your backpack, for the very same reason.

Did we lose something? Do you have anything to add? Share your thoughts so other people could learn from it!



Survival Things That **The Pioneers
Took With Them When They
Traveled For Months**

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