



Metropolitan Speleological Society

GEAR LISTS

Disclaimer: These lists are only a sample of what gear is needed. They do not take into consideration the equipment a trip leader would bring, nor any equipment needed for some specific trips. All equipment should be in working condition and used in accordance with the manufacturers specifications. Proper training in the use of the equipment should be sought prior to any trips.

HORIZONTAL CAVING

- UIAA rated Helmet – correct fit with chin strap
- Head lamp / or helmet mounted light
- Spare batteries for head lamp
- Two (2) additional sources of light (for example a spare torch/headlamp and a candle in your first aid kit) + spare batteries
- Cotton overalls. Optional/cordura suits good for the colder/wetter caves.
- Clothing under overalls a personal choice. Suggestions include thermal long johns and long sleeve top, or shorts and t-shirt for hotter climes.
- Wetsuit for wet conditions
- Gloves (tough rubber or gardening style depending on personal preference)
- Gumboots or other suitable footwear for muddy conditions
- Kneepads suggested for caves involving crawling. Elbow pads optional.
- Cave pack, or a suitable pack that can get muddy and wash up well, with a simple design (no/minimal external straps – to avoid getting caught on cave walls)
- Tough water bottle such as Sigg or similar. It gets tough treatment in a cave and many plastic bottles don't survive.
- Tip - keep food in a container, zip-lock bag inside a strong plastic case works well ... unless flattened squished sandwiches are your thing. No food remnants are to remain in caves, so food that will not crumble and leave crumbs is recommended. No tuna cans are to be drained in caves!
- For longer more serious trips consider a sealable pooh jar (with plastic bag) and wee bottle (with large mouth) – just in case of emergency
- First aid kit should be carried by the underground team, including at least one emergency blanket
- Otto bin liner (emergency bivvy bag) – optional
- Other – masks, whistle, hand-line.

VERTICAL CAVING

- Adjustable Chest Harness
- Chest Ascender
- (Seat or sit) Harness – the main carabiner must be horizontal, eg a D link
- Descender (eg Petzel stop or Rack) + additional braking carabiner
- Hand Ascender (eg Petzl Basic or equivalent)
- Double Cow's Tail (must be dynamic rope) with carabiners
- Adjustable Footloop with link to attach to hand ascender
- Petzl Pantin (optional)
- A lanyard (“donkey tail”) for hanging pack from your harness

Additional gear which a leader should carry (and arguably should be carried even if you are not THE leader):

- Spare carabiners
- A small pulley

- 5 – 6m of 5mm Dyneema (or equivalent) for anchors or to rig a counterweight to help someone in difficulty
- A spare lanyard should one of your party not have a lanyard for hanging their pack

CANYONING / ABSEILING – the basics

- Day pack with enough room to carry gear and a rope
- Harness / descender (Figure 8s not used) / carabineers / prussic loops
- Helmet
- Hydrolyte (always carry some particularly in hot weather)
- First aid supplies – snake bandage at the very least
- Gloves (optional)
- Wetsuit for wet canyons
- Dry bag for wet canyons

And when you decide to “get serious”!

- Compass – even an el cheapo one - everyone should carry one even if you’re not sure how to use it
- Thermals – most of us carry them “just in case”
- Spray Jacket – a cheap light weight rain shell – if you’re in a cold canyon and for some reason it’s really slow, or you have to stop it can mean the difference between shivering and not!
- Otto Bin Liner – if you ever get benighted, you’ll appreciate an Otto Bin Liner to hunker down in to keep warm – a poor man’s sleeping bag, weighs nothing but oh so handy!
- Head torch – no matter how hard we try, sometimes we walk out in the dark!
- Pooh jar – if you’re benighted in a canyon (or cave), you’ll appreciate this ... peanut butter jar with plastic bag and toilet paper.

BUSHWALKING (OVERNIGHT) – the basics

- Tent (optional ground sheet) or tarp / fly
- Sleeping mat (optional – but for a good night’s sleep foam mat or thermarest)
- Sleeping bag
- Hiking shoes or boots (personal preference)
- Hydrolyte (always carry some particularly in hot weather)
- First aid supplies – snake bandage at the very least
- Pack shovel (small trowel for digging a toilet hole) + toilet paper
- Billy, plate, cup, spoon
- Stove and gas if you’re not planning on cooking on the open fire
- Head torch (and optional spare batteries)
- Crocs (optional), spare socks / underwear (optional)
- Thermals (in winter)
- Warm jumper (in winter)
- Water bottle (Optional - water purification tablets)
- Pocket knife
- 2 x garbage bags if you need to waterproof your gear for river crossings

Extras

Sometimes when you get back to your vehicle from either canyoning or bushwalking, you will find that some people like to wash up and change their clothes after a particularly dirty trip (lol). There’s nothing worse than being a newby and everyone’s washing up and changing into clean clothes and you’re there with nothing.

So, a bag to leave behind in your vehicle with change of clothing/shoes and maybe a couple of litres of water to wash up with, which also comes in handy if you run short of water on the walk out!