

Sample Classification Paragraph

Selecting the Right Backpack

Most backpacking enthusiasts will agree that having a different backpack for different activities is preferable to having one multi-purpose pack. A general guideline is the shorter the hike and the less there is to carry, the smaller the pack. Conversely, the longer the hike and the more there is to carry, the larger the pack. While this may seem obvious, it is surprising how often people will overstuff a small pack or use a pack that is far too large for the purpose. For a short hike or an outing with no overnight stay, a “day hiker” pack is sufficient. A good day hiker pack will typically be less than 25 litres in capacity and have fewer features than its larger counterparts. The day hiker should be just large enough to carry some water, minimal survival gear, snacks or a light lunch and some miscellaneous extras like a field guide and a Swiss Army knife. For an extended day hike or a quick and light overnight trip with favourable weather, a larger “weekend pack” would be suitable. Most weekend packs are in the 30 to 50 litre range. Often these packs will have extra features such as compression straps, built-in hydration, or water-proof construction that add to their functionality. It is important that these packs provide adequate support to carry moderate loads over short to medium distances. Finally, there is the “expedition pack”. An expedition pack would be used for extended treks or short trips where extra gear is essential due to weather, terrain or secondary activities. Packs of this type should be 60 litres or larger and have more than adequate padding and support for the large loads and additional weight they are required to carry. Expedition packs are generally more expensive than other packs but tend to have many added features. At minimum, these features should include exterior gear loops, multiple pockets and access points, and a separate lid compartment. There is a bewildering amount of choice when it comes to selecting a backpack, just as there is wildly varying opinion as to which gear best suits each purpose. By selecting a pack properly suited to the needs of the activity, it is possible to avoid using inappropriate gear, eliminate redundancy, and achieve maximum comfort.