

Philmont Gear Outfitter Notes

The most expensive personal gear items will be a backpack, sleeping bag, sleeping pad, boots, and tent. Each crewmember must have one of their own with the exception of a tent, which is shared between two people. Lightweight stoves can run up to \$100, but only 2 or 3 will be needed per 12-man crew. Below are notes on recent research.

Gear Evaluation

There are several websites that offer reviews on various brands of gear. One of the best is www.trailspace.com since it has both reviews and price comparisons. Another is www.backpackgearthest.com.

Gear Purchase

- REI (www.rei.com) in Brentwood, TN (1.5–2 hour drive away) is probably the best place to shop because it offers excellent variety, qualified personnel (many who have trekked Philmont multiple times), and good sale prices on a frequent basis. Even if you do not plan to purchase equipment there, it is worth the trip to become familiar with the best brands and how to get fitted. They also offer a 100% guarantee on gear that is defective or does not fit correctly. This is a difficult feature to realize with mail order companies. The best way to take advantage of their offerings is to become a member for a one time fee of \$15 which will keep you informed of sales, special offers, and provide up to a 10% refund on purchases in a calendar year.
- Alps Mountaineering (www.alpsmountaineering.com) has an excellent selection of good quality backpacks, tents, sleeping bags, and sleeping pads. They do not have as large an inventory as REI, but they offer substantial discounts to Boy Scouts at their website which is dedicated to Scouts at www.scoutdirect.com. For any troop leader or Scout parent who registers with them (no cost), they offer a 45% discount on their entire inventory any time of the year. For comparison to equal quality gear at other retailers without a substantial sale, Alps' price cannot be beat. In addition to this, they do have sales periodically that provide even more savings. They will have a major Labor Day sale, and their biggest annual sale is at Christmas.

Gear Education

The best place to get educated on what kind of gear is needed and how to get fitted is either at the REI store or on the REI website at www.rei.com/learn/Camping where they have an online interactive tutorial to help you select the equipment on your own.

Specific gear information:

Backpacks

- Typical name brands – Alps Mountaineering, Kelty, Jansport, REI, North Face, Gregory, Osprey, Mountainsmith, Lowe
- Best prices noted on good packs – Alps Mountaineering at their Scout website (www.scoutdirect.com). They offer a 45% discount to any Scout anytime.
- Other good sites to look for sales
 - Trailspace – www.trailspace.com for reviews, price comparisons, and additional websites
 - Sierra Trading Post – <http://www.sierratradingpost.com>
 - Sportsmans Guide – www.sportsmansguide.com
 - REI – www.rei.com
 - Oregon Mountain Community – <http://www.e-omc.com/catalog/index.php>
 - Moosejaw – www.moosejaw.com
 - Backcountry – www.backcountry.com

Boots

- Typical name brands – Merrell, Montrail, REI, Vasque, Asolo
- Best place to shop – REI in Brentwood, TN where they will do the correct fitting and let you try on as many brands as you like in order to evaluate them. They also offer a return guarantee if the boots do not perform as desired on the trail.
- Good places to look for sales
 - Trailspace – www.trailspace.com for reviews, price comparisons, and additional websites
 - Sierra Trading Post – <http://www.sierratradingpost.com>
 - Sportsmans Guide – www.sportsmansguide.com
 - REI – www.rei.com
 - Oregon Mountain Community – <http://www.e-omc.com/catalog/index.php>
 - Moosejaw – www.moosejaw.com
 - Backcountry – www.backcountry.com

Sleeping Bags

- Typical name brands
 - Bags – Kelty, Big Agnes, Marmot, Mountain Hardware, REI, Sierra Designs, North Face, Valandre, Alps Mountaineering
 - Pads – Pacific Outdoor, REI, Thermarest, Alps Mountaineering, Insul Mat
- Best prices noted on good bags and pads – Alps Mountaineering at their Scout website (www.scoutdirect.com). They offer a 45% discount to any Scout anytime.
- Other good sites to look for sales
 - Trailspace – www.trailspace.com for reviews, price comparisons, and additional websites
 - Sierra Trading Post – <http://www.sierratradingpost.com>
 - Sportsmans Guide – www.sportsmansguide.com
 - REI – www.rei.com
 - Oregon Mountain Community – <http://www.e-omc.com/catalog/index.php>
 - Moosejaw – www.moosejaw.com
 - Backcountry – www.backcountry.com

Tents

- Typical name brands – Big Agnes, Black Diamond, Marmot, Kelty, Mountain Hardware, MSR, REI, Sierra Designs, North Face, Alps Mountaineering
- Best prices noted on good tents – Alps Mountaineering at their Scout website (www.scoutdirect.com). They offer a 45% discount to any Scout anytime. Look at the Zephyr 2 for comparison.
- Other good sites to look for sales
 - Trailspace – www.trailspace.com for reviews, price comparisons, and additional websites
 - Sierra Trading Post – <http://www.sierratradingpost.com>
 - Sportsmans Guide – www.sportsmansguide.com
 - REI – www.rei.com
 - Oregon Mountain Community – <http://www.e-omc.com/catalog/index.php>
 - Moosejaw – www.moosejaw.com
 - Backcountry – www.backcountry.com

Additional places to look for various items

- Alabama Outdoors – located in Jones Valley at the corner of Cecil Ashburn and Carl T. Jones; provides scouting discount – www.aloutdoors.com
- Scoutstuff – BSA official site – www.scoutstuff.org