

Maryland Sled Dog Adventures LLC



Maine Winter Cabin Adventure

Gear List for Maine Winter Cabin Adventure

This list is a guideline. If there are items you would prefer not to buy, they may be available for rent at some specialized outdoor gear stores. Items can also frequently be found at a discount online. Best places to purchase or rent gear in the Baltimore – Washington area are: [REI](#), [LL Bean](#), [EMS](#), [Princeton Sports](#), [Cabelas](#), and [Hudson Trail](#). Good online retailers (some are discount) include: [Sierra Trading Post](#), [Campmor](#), [Cabelas](#), [LL Bean](#), and [Lands' End](#).

Please be aware that when working with sled dogs, you are likely to get dirty and furry and clothes may get damaged.

The key to staying warm in the varying conditions and temperatures winter in Maine can bring is to dress in breathable layers and **avoid wearing cotton**. There is an expression among outdoor enthusiasts: “Cotton kills.”

Mainers frequently say: “If you don’t like the weather in Maine, wait a minute.” Temperatures in February in Maine are on average in the low 20s with normal lows at night in the teens but can vary tremendously day to day and even within a few hours. During our Maine Winter Cabin Adventure, we have experienced temperatures as low as minus 20° F and has high as 50° F. We will be outside for long periods of time each day.

Personal toiletry items, medications, etc.

One pair of winter Pac boots: They need to be suitable for wet or very cold conditions and should have a temperature rating of **40 degrees below zero or colder**. If you can invest in just one item, this is it. Cold weather boots of this type (rated to minus 40 or lower) can be purchased at [Cabelas](#). Most winter boots from LL Bean, Lands End, REI, EMS, etc., are NOT warm enough for dog sledding in cold temperatures. Sled dog dad and infamous Can-Am musher, [Eric](#), wears Cabela’s boots rated to minus 100.

Socks: We recommend varying your layers for warmth. Winter weight wool or Smart Wool type socks are best. Cotton should not be worn because once wet, it will keep your feet wet and cold. Wool and Smart Wool socks can be purchased at any of the above outfitters.

Underwear: They should be synthetic, quick drying material, and not cotton.

Base Layer (top and bottom): Examples of good base layers are silk, wool, or a polypropylene fabric. This layer needs to wick the moisture away from your body in order to stay warm. Cotton does not do this. It holds moisture against your body. You can purchase different thicknesses for different temperatures or activity levels at places like [REI](#), [LL Bean](#), [Sierra Trading Post](#), [Campmor](#), [Cabelas](#), or [Lands' End](#).

Interior Layer (for top and bottom): Fleece comes in different thicknesses for different temperatures. The fleece layer is where the moisture goes once wicked away from the body. It is then allowed to evaporate through your outer breathable layer.

Additional Interior Layer (for top): Another fleece or wool layer is a good insulator from the cold.

Optional Down Layer (for top): A down jacket or vest on top of the additional fleece layer and under the wind layer keeps you nice and warm in cold temps.

Outer Layer (for top and bottom) with a hood: A wind shell that is water proof, wind proof, and breathable keeps the wind chill out of the cold and keeps the moisture out at warmer winter temps. It also allows moisture from your body to escape, keeping you warm. Wind chills are more significant when dog sledding because you are exposed to the wind, but not as cardiovascularly active as when cross country skiing. You may have a down jacket that is water proof and wind proof that will work, however, keep in mind that you may get hot out on the trail and not have that extra layer to remove. An optional ruff on the hood warms the air before it reaches your face and helps to keep you warmer. You will need ski pants that are water proof and wind proof to wear on the bottom.

Heavy Winter Coat: If you are considering purchasing a winter parka for this trip, feel free to email [Catherine](#) for tips and suggestions. Both Eric and Catherine wear [Trans Alaska Anoracks](#) from [Cabelas](#).

Gloves: We recommend using a two glove system with a thinner inner glove and an outer mitten or glove. Light fleece wind proof gloves work well for activities that require the use of your fingers (for example, attaching dogs to the gangline). Lightweight fleece gloves are also frequently sufficient when engaged in cardiovascular activities such as cross country skiing and snow shoeing. For active dog chores including harnessing and hooking up dogs, musher mom, Catherine, likes Head running gloves with “smart fingers” (excellent for those iPhone photos you’ll want to take) technology. We’ve had luck finding these gloves at [Costco](#) in late Fall and early Winter. For inactive hands, we have found that using heavier down or synthetic mittens that you can stick your gloved hands into work wonderfully for a quick warm up.

Hat: Make sure your ears are fully covered and that the hat will stay on your head while being active.

Face Warmer: A neck warmer that expands up to cover your mouth and nose works well. Scarves can be dangerous while dog sledding as they can get caught on trees, under sled runners, etc. A balaclava or neoprene, fleece lined face guard works best.

Chemical foot and hand warmers: These are quite popular at our regular dog sledding programs and have saved our feet and hands on occasion.

Headlamp or flash light: We prefer headlamps. There are many things including dog chores that are necessary to do in the dark that require the use of both hands. Most good headlamps use LED lamps, which are more battery efficient. Head lamps are available from any of the above listed outfitters and come in a variety of shapes, sizes, styles, and prices. We also like you to wear a headlamp when out with the team to make you and the team more visible to snow machines. Check out this [picture](#) of one of the previous participants dog sledding with the team.

Sunglasses: If it’s bright and sunny, snow blindness can occur if not properly protected from the sun.

Goggles: Very important if it’s snowing or very windy.

Slippers for inside the cabin: We do not wear shoes or boots inside the cabin and the tile floors do get chilly.

Optional Gear

Snowshoes: If you would like to go snowshoeing, you will need to purchase or rent snowshoes prior to arriving. Be sure your winter boots fit in your snowshoe bindings.

Cross country skis, boots, and poles: If you would like to cross country ski, you will need to purchase or rent cross country skis, poles and boots prior to arriving. If you wish to purchase cross country ski equipment, equipment suppliers include: [REI](#), [LL Bean](#), [EMS](#), [Hudson Trail](#), [Sierra Trading Post](#), and [Campmor](#).

Water Bottle: You may wish to carry water while cross country skiing or while snowshoeing.

Thermos for out on the trail: Sometimes it's nice to stop and warm up with a hot beverage such as tea or cocoa.

Travel mug

Sun screen

Camera: You may want pictures to go with your memories. You will want to bring extra batteries for your camera since the cold can be hard on batteries or battery packs. If it's a film camera, bring extra film. If it is rechargeable, be sure to bring your charger.

Spare batteries: The cold dramatically decreases battery life. You will want to be sure that all battery operated electronics are kept warm (in an inner pocket when outside; not left in your vehicle).

Yaktrax: Very helpful if we have icy conditions. Be sure they will fit over whatever boots you plan on wearing.

A good book or ebook downloaded onto your phone or tablet: Please note, the cabin has limited, sporadic and slow cell coverage. Generally it is insufficient to download books.

Games: There are some games available at the cabin, but feel free to bring your own.

Hand held GPS: If you have a hand held GPS, you can bring it and use it to track your position and your mileage

Day pack: Very handy for carrying your thermos, water bottle, and other necessities on the trail. Also handy for stashing any removed layers of clothing.

Your imagination

Fun stories

If you have any questions on gear, please email Catherine at catherine@marylanddogsledding.com.