

Maloti-Drakensberg Hiking Checklist

This hiking checklist highlights the ten essential items that every hiker should carry. Before you go on any hike, no matter how easy or short make sure your backpack has these ten essentials. When hiking you are responsible for your own safety and any one of these ten items may help to save your life. The total weight of your backpack will vary but should not be more than 20% of your bodyweight, 15% for children.

The items in **Blue** are the ten essentials.

1. Navigation

- Always carry a detailed map of the area and a compass, even if you use a GPS or smartphone.

2. Hydration

- A minimum of 2 litres water per person per day. A water bottle and a 2 or 3 litre hydration pack which fits snugly into your backpack is suggested. In areas like the Tugela Falls it is a good idea to purify the water with a water filter or purifier, chemical tablets or boiling before drinking.

3. Nutrition

- Always carry at least one extra day's worth of food. It should be something that stores for a long time, requires no preparation and is high in energy. If you're hiking with kids, a few more snacks than usual are recommended.

The ideas below are our personal favourites, you may vary the items to your personal preference.

Breakfast:

- Bacon, eggs and rolls (our favourite and worth the extra weight)
- Future Life or Oat-so-Easy
- Rusks
- Coffee sachets / Milo for children or Tea
- Coconut oil, salt (if having bacon and eggs)

Lunch:

- Crackers or rolls
- Cheese triangles
- Tuna or shredded chicken in the small tins (pull open tab and yes you carry the tin back)
- Cup-a-soup
- Apple or orange (any fruit)

Dinner:

- Coffee sachets / Milo for children or Tea
- Tuna or shredded chicken in the small tins (pull open tab yes you carry the tin back)
- Pasta packet sauce or sachets
- Gnocchi, tagliatelle pasta, egg noodles



- Onion
- Smash
- Couscous
- Smoked chicken, salami or chorizo
- Slab of chocolate
- Salt and pepper

While hiking:

- Peanuts and raisins
- Game sachets
- Nougat
- Biltong
- Ener-Jelly
- Energy/breakfast bars (future life crunch, etc...)
- Super C
- Jelly tots

4. Clothing

Rain jacket and waterproof pants, a spare pair of socks and a warm jacket (preferably a down jacket which can go under the rain jacket.) Avoid cotton clothing.

- Boots or walking shoes (boots offer protection to your ankles and are recommended if hiking up or down the passes)
- Spare boot laces
- 3 Pairs of socks (some people like to hike with a thin pair of socks under their thick pair of socks)
- 3 pairs of underwear
- 1 quick drying shirt
- 1 long sleeve shirt
- 2 quick drying trousers
- 1 shorts
- Fleece (a thick fleece if hiking in winter)
- Down jacket
- Beanie
- Lightweight full brim hat with chin strap (offers much more sun protection than a normal peak and the chin strap is essential in the wind)
- Gloves (even in summer)
- Tracksuit pants and t-shirt for night time
- Sandals or lightweight flat shoes.
- Thermals (top and bottom)
- Bandana (you will be thankful you can cover your ears and face in the wind)
- Gaiters (for wet grass in summer and snow in winter)

Toiletries:

- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Toilet paper (store in a zip lock bag) and a lightweight trowel
- Biodegradable body/facewash
- Quick drying towel or Microfibre towel



5. Firestarter

- Waterproof matches in a water-tight container.** Open fires may not be made in the Maloti-Drakensberg Park but in an emergency to survive a cold winters night it may be necessary.

6. First Aid Kit

- Make sure you have the supplies to deal with major injuries, and make sure you have the knowledge.** You can purchase a hiking first aid kit at outdoor stores or put together your own. A scratch can be a tough obstacle to kids, pack some fun plasters.
 - Painkillers/anti-inflammatories
 - Plasters, strapping tape and gauze
 - Antiseptic cream
 - Burn Shield
 - Rehydrate
 - Insect repellent
 - Blister dressing
 - Burn dressing
 - Scissors and tweezers
 - Safety pins
 - Rubber bands
 - Anti-histamines
 - Anti-diarrhoea
 - Eye drops
 - Deep Heat rub

7. Tools and Equipment

- A pocket knife or multitool is indispensable as well as duct tape which can fix everything from tent poles to ripped boots and backpacks.**
 - Backpack with rain cover (65l will fit everything and prevent you from over packing)
 - Camera
 - Power bank to charge your phone and camera.
 - Trekking poles (they are very helpful downhill, you won't regret it)
 - 20l collapsible water cannister (useful when camping to be used by everyone, especially when water is far from your campsite/cave)
 - 6m of rope (useful if a large boulder section on a pass)
 - Whistle
 - 2 or 3 Ziplock bags
 - Cash (R100 is enough)
 - Passport (if hiking to the escarpment top)



Cooking:

- 2 x gas stove (a spare is always recommended)
- 3 x gas canister (one being spare)
- 2 x pots or 1 pot and a small kettle (2 pots so you can make coffee or sauce, etc while cooking the pasta) and a small frying pan is great for the eggs and bacon.
- Plate and Mug
- Dishcloth
- Biodegradable dish soap
- Cutlery
- Washing sponge
- Wooden spoon and spatula
- Rubbish bags

8. Illumination

- A headlamp with spare batteries, it's dark if you get stuck overnight on a day hike.

9. Sun Protection

- Sunscreen (SPF 30+ or more), lip balm and sunglasses.

10. Shelter

- An emergency bivy bag and space blanket can help protect you in a sudden storm or shelter you through an unexpected night outdoors.
 - Tent with built in groundsheet and tent pegs
 - Sleeping bag (recommend rated at least -5 Celsius)
 - Sleeping bag liner (if hiking in winter for the extra warmth)
 - Self-inflating mattress
 - Pillow (stuff your down jacket into your sleeping bag cover)

