

Alaska Packing List

Fly Fishing Equipment	Clothing	Personal Items
Fly Rods and Reels	→ Rain coat	→ Toiletries
→ 5, 7 and 9 wt	→ Fleece jacket	→ Camera
Fly Lines	→ Fleece vest	→ Film - 200 to 400 speed
→ 5 wt fwd floating → 7 wt fwd floating → 7 wt fwd sink tip → 9 wt fwd floating → 9 wt fwd sink tip	→ Fleece pants or other warm, quick drying material → Long-underwear - polypropylene	→ Books → Journal → Pen → Video equipment → Binoculars
→ Waders	→ Tee-shirts	→ Head lamp or flashlight
→ Wading boots - Felt bottoms only	→ Long-sleeve quick drying shirts	→ Extra batteries for your equipment
→ Polarized sunglasses for bright and gray light	→ Socks - 4 to 6 pairs - quick drying and high quality	→ Pocket knife or Leatherman tool
→ Wading belt	→ Hat for sun	→ Prescription glasses
→ Pliers/forceps	→ Stocking cap for cold	→ Any prescription medication
→ Nips	→ Fingerless gloves	
→ Gravel guards	→ Clothes for sleeping	
→ Other fishing gadgets	→ Small towel	
	→ Shoes for camp	
	→ Underwear (it's up to you)	

These are minimum items that should be included.

Weight Counts! Please pack efficiently by trying to keep the total weight of your gear to 50 pounds. Your gear will be repacked in dry bags once in Alaska.

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Gear you should bring on the adventure

Jackets - Expect rain. A good quality Gortex jacket or a ventilated raincoat made from PVC material works best. Layering clothes underneath the outer jacket shell will help keep a person warm. Select quick drying materials such as fleece, polypropylene or other nylon synthetics for layering. I like to wear a long-sleeve polypropylene shirt with a fleece vest and have a fleece jacket and raincoat handy in the boat.

Pants and Socks - More time will be spent in waders rather than out of waders. Two good pairs of light-weight fleece or synthetic material pants that dry quickly are needed. Several pairs of heavy socks made from wool-blends, polypropylene or fleece can help keep the feet comfortable.

Chest Waders - Spare no expense on a good pair of chest waders. Breathable Gortex material waders are recommended, but 3 mm neoprene waders are also good. The Gortex material waders are lighter, dry quicker and pack into a smaller space than the neoprene.

Wading Shoes - A good pair of felt bottom shoes that are sturdy and provide sure-footing while wading the river is a must. However, don't break the bank on an expensive pair of shoes. Your money is better spent on chest waders or a good jacket. The float does not require walking great distances. Most fishing will be from rafts or smooth gravel bars. Make sure your shoes are comfortable because you will spend a lot of time in them. The wading shoes without bold heels tend to provide better footing because of more surface area and are comfortable.

Polarized Sun Glasses - A good pair of polarized sun glasses will help spot fish. I like to have a pair with grey lenses for bright conditions and a pair with amber/yellow lenses for dark conditions.

Hats - Pack two hats. One hat that keeps the sun and rain out and another that keeps the cold out. A ball-cap style hat that is comfortable enough to wear all day, dries quickly and has a nice bill to block the sun is best for fishing. A stocking cap is good to keep the head warm when sleeping.

Camping Clothes - Bring a separate set of comfortable clothes for sleeping. These should be different from the clothes that you wear when fishing. Sleeping clothes will provide you comfort while avoiding strong odors that you pick-up during the day. This is a safety precaution while camping in bear country. Choose warm, soft, quick drying materials such as fleece. A light pair of camp shoes is also nice. Clog-type shoes such as the Mocs from Merrell are light weight, repel water and slip on and off easily. They are also extremely comfortable.

Other Clothing - Another item to throw in your bag that you may or may not use is a pair of fingerless gloves. It is also recommended that you have a complete change of clothes that can be left in Dillingham. Change into these clothes after returning from the river. You will be comfortable on your flight home and the people next to you on the plane will appreciate it.

Toiletries - Bring your personal grooming items such as toothbrush, toothpaste, lotion, chap-stick, sunscreen, dental floss, etc. We provide the "mountain money" (toilet paper).

Camera - And/or video equipment, binoculars, journals, books, etc (remember the weight limit when packing these items).

Fly Fishing Equipment

Fly Rods - I recommend three different rod weights when in Alaska. These are the odd weight rods: 5 weights, 7 weights, and 9 weights. The 5 weights are great for Graylings, Dollies, Char and Rainbow. Use the 7 weights for Silvers, Chum, Pinks and Sockeye. King salmon require a rod with a little more backbone. Use the 9 weights for these monsters. If a person is fairly new to fly fishing, a 10 weight might be a little better for Kings.

I prefer four-piece fly rods because of the ease of traveling with several rods that are 30 inches or less. The quality of four-piece rods has improved greatly over the years. I have found very little performance differences compared to a two-piece fly rod. Two-piece rods are great, but the convenience of a four-piece does it for me.

Fly Reels - Reliability and a good drag are two of the most important characteristics of a good fly reel. Adequate reel space for line and backing, and a well-balanced rod/reel combination are also important.

Reliability means that the reel will function for many years in many conditions. It may be a no-brainer, but one of the easiest ways to determine if a reel will be reliable is by looking at the number of parts it contains. If the reel contains lots of little springs, tension bars or even screws, question the reliability. These small pieces can break or fallout leaving the reel useless. A reel that has a uniformed housing and reel seat without screws is, by design, more reliable. The housing and spool should be one piece machined from solid blocks of quality aluminum without plastic.

When a 30-pound King salmon decides to make a run down stream, let's say, for about a quarter of a mile, the reel's drag has to work. The drag should not have plastic components as these can wear and break over time. It should primarily consist of high quality cork. Most large reels (above a 7 weight) typically have a version of a disc drag. These are great as long as they are not plastic. Being able to adjust the drag tension easily is also important. Adjusting the drag after a hook-up helps play the fish on the reel and where the appropriate amount of drag can be applied to prevent losing the fish.

Make sure the spool has adequate capacity for the fly line and backing. The reel spool should be able to handle about 100 feet of fly line and at least 200 yards of 30 pound backing. Large arbor reels are great because they have a high line capacity and they can quickly take up large amounts of line.

A reel that closely matches the weight of the fly rod is better balanced, easier to cast and prevents the arm from tiring out. It feels good to cast a well-balanced rig.

Fly Lines - Getting wet is key to fishing the streams of Southwest Alaska. Without a doubt, an intermediate sink tip line is effective. The salmon don't actively feed but rather aggressively strike flies because they are interesting or in the salmon's territory. The Rainbows are beneath the salmon feeding on eggs, tissue, minnows and other sub-surface prey. The key is getting your fly at the same level as the fish. Lines designed to get your fly down quickly, such as 6 to 8

inches per second are great. The length of the sink tip should be about 15 to 20 feet.

It's a thrill having an eight-pound Rainbow hit a dry. However, having a 15-pound Silver show no mercy on a surface popper can really propel a person towards a self-soiling incident. Whether fishing a dry or popper, a weight forward line is good. A delicate presentation is not an issue as the dries are typically big (sizes 6 to 12).

Leaders and Tippet - Leaders and tippet material are provided on the trip. But in case you are curious, nine-foot leaders that are 10 to 12 pounds test are typically used. We use fluorocarbon tippet because of the elasticity and strength. A wide selection of leaders and tippet material are available on the trip.

Flies - Feel free to bring any flies that you would like to use. Your guide will have several well stocked fly boxes.