

My COLD WEATHER Packing List

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #217 —

When packing for a cold-weather hunting trip, my first requirement is to be warm, dry and comfortable, and prepared for the unexpected — most especially in northwest Canada or Alaska. Here are a few suggestions, from the things I've learned:

#1 – Make a written list, well in advance – and review it many times; begin the packing process by staging everything in a corner or on an extra bed, before the actual packing. Plan for the coldest, wettest possible weather; and for things not going according to plan. Items can be lost or stolen, you might take a wrong fork in the trail or there could be a horse wreck or an injury.

#2 – Never presume that you will spend every night in a tent or cabin. On a sheep hunt in the Yukon in 2000, Russell's guide got lost and they spent a cold, rainy night in the wilderness. Russell, an Eagle Scout, had a small tarp and some 511 cord that made the night much more comfortable. Yes, they built a fire.

#3 – Take a pillow case; you can make a nice pillow by stuffing it with your heavy jacket for a better night's sleep. In remote areas, I always take a satellite phone, with extra battery and a solar powered flashlight that will also recharge my cell phone (camera). Of course, a sharp, heavy-duty knife is a requirement. Fire starters are a must, to light up wet tinder that waterproof matches or even a good lighter won't. These days I take my own drinking cup and eating utensils.



Take the largest carry-on allowable. Fill it with your first hunting day wearables, including boots – in case your checked luggage is delayed. Wear your backpack, as your personal item – and fill it up also – Binoculars, computer, books, clothes, etc.

#4 – Include a 2-quart plastic bowl, shampoo, soap, drinking cup to pour water, washcloth and towel. A good wash every two or three days will help you maintain a positive attitude.

#5 – Make maximum use of your carry-on luggage; carry your hunting boots, one set of hunting clothing, rain gear and anything you

must have for your first day of hunting; **"binoculars always go in my carry-on."** in my carry-on. You

can borrow a gun and ammo, if yours are lost. On a moose hunt in the Yukon in 2010, Brenda and Sara waited several days in Whitehorse, because their luggage was delayed in Vancouver. Also, it's a good idea not to use the outfitters' luggage tags, as I believe the opportunists in luggage handling look for them.

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These simple things could save your life, if you have to spend a cold, wet night away from camp. Be sure to carry them in your backpack every day.



Hand and body size "cleaning wipes," will keep you reasonably clean, but there's nothing like soap, shampoo and hot water to get you really clean – and feeling your best.