



South Africa Adventures

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Our advice on trekking equipment for the Drakensberg Mountains

Making sure you have packed the correct *trekking equipment for the Drakensberg Mountains* can sometimes be a bit of a challenge. How much weight should I carry? What size backpack do I need? Do I really need my hairdryer? Most hikers have these questions leading up to a [Drakensberg hiking adventure](#). We have been guiding hiking *tours into the Drakensberg* for over 10 years and not only that, in all types of weather conditions. And yes we have seen it all? We love our pre climb backpack inspection as we are amazed at what comes out of the bags sometimes. I mean we are heading into the mountains to brave the elements and endure whatever nature throws at us- right? Well yes right. Or so we thought. But discovering what comes out of our clients bags sometimes makes us think we have got our itineraries messed up and were maybe supposed to be taking them on a tropical spa day experience. Okay, so maybe we are exaggerating a little bit for dramatic effect. To alleviate any undue pre hiking stress and ensure our clients are adequately prepared and know exactly what the best *trekking equipment for the Drakensberg Mountains* are, we have compiled a comprehensive list and description of what is needed on the tour.

[Environmental requirements](#)

Hiking in the Drakensberg is South Africa's premiere trekking vacation destination by far. These incredible mountain formations and spires of basalt and sandstone have been the source of many dreams and magical hiking experiences over the years. And like all mountains they are not to be underestimated. Volatile weather conditions including severe cold as well as severe heat need to be taken into account. Are you looking at hiking in the summer? Or do you prefer the colder winter months. Factors such as the [best time to climb](#) play a massive role in what *trekking equipment is needed in the Drakensberg*. Not only do you need to take into account the weather but the duration and elevation of your hike. Obviously equipment needed for a 5 day hike is way different from say a 2 day hike. This will in turn affect the weight of your bag. And Of course the elevation also plays a role. The escarpment, especially in the winter months can get pretty hectic with snowstorms and temperatures below -10 Degrees Celsius are not uncommon.



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Nutritional requirements

Weight of your backpack is always going to be an issue when *hiking in the Drakensberg*. Not only are some of the passes pretty steep with gradients sometimes 40 degrees with an elevation gain of over 1000m in places, it's the compounding effect of fatigue that you need to also consider. So maybe look at leaving the heavy tins of baked beans behind and substitute them with high energy snacks like trail mix, dried meat and protein bars.

Layering

The system known as 'layering' is vital for your survival on [Kilimanjaro](#). The reason for this is that there are so many temperature variations on the mountain that hikers will be required to either add or remove items of clothing as the need arises. During the day and at lower altitudes the temperatures can be warm and sunny but quickly change to freezing in the night and the higher up you climb.

The layering system consists of:

Base Layer – Moisture wicking properties that fit close to the body and are quick drying

Mid Layer – a combination of 100 and 300 series fleece jackets.

Outer layer – breathable waterproof and windproof jacket and trousers usually consisting of Gore-tex

Extra Warm Layer – Although not essential, a down jacket can help with the cold

Accessories: The layering system is then supplemented with gloves, beanies and buffs that you can take on and off quickly to regulate body temperature

Trekking equipment list for winter months

Below is our suggestion for packing when embarking on a winter *trek in the Drakensberg* based on a typical 3 day/2 night hike).

- 1x 75L backpack
- Waterproof cover
- 1x sleeping bag that can handle at least -5 degrees Celsius
- 1 waterproof bag for your sleeping bag
- 1 pair of hiking boots
- 1 pair of Gaitors (to keep snow or rain or moisture from grass out of your boots)
- 3 pairs of liner socks (keeps your feet dry by wicking moisture away from the skin)
- 3 pairs of trekking socks
- 1 pair of trekking pants (you can take 2 if you are worried about dirty pants)
- 1 pair of outer waterproof pants (can be worn as second pair of pants I need be)
- 1 x windproof Jacket
- 1x raincoat or poncho



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- 3 hiking shirts (no cotton as they will not dry)
- 1x balaclava for the wind and sun
- 1 pair of inner gloves
- 1 pair of outer gloves (waterproof and windproof)
- 1 thick polar fleece
- 1 thinner polar fleece.
- 1x beanie
- 1x water proof bag for your clothing, (also helps as an awesome pillow)
- 1x headlight with spare batteries
- 2x 1 liter water bottles
- Sunglasses
- Sun screen
- Toiletries
- Flip flops/sandals for walking around camp (give your feet rest)
- Walking poles

Trekking equipment list for summer months

Below is our suggestion for packing when embarking on a winter trek in the *Drakensberg* based on a typical 3 day/2 night hike). When hiking always follow the principles of layering.

- 1x 75L backpack
- Waterproof cover
- 1x sleeping bag rated from +5 degrees Celsius
- 1 waterproof bag for your sleeping bag
- 1 pair of hiking boots
- 1 x windproof Jacket
- 1x raincoat or poncho
- 1 pair of Gaitors (to keep snow or rain or moisture from grass out of your boots)
- 3 pairs of liner socks (keeps your feet dry by wicking moisture away from the skin)
- 3 pairs of trekking socks
- 1 pair of trekking pants (you can take 2 if you are worried about dirty pants)
- 1 pair of outer waterproof pants (can be worn as second pair of pants I need be)
- 3 hiking shirts (no cotton as they will not dry)
- 1x balaclava for the wind and sun
- 1 thin polar fleece.
- 1x water proof bag for your clothing, (also helps as an awesome pillow)
- 1x headlight with spare batteries
- 2x 1 liter water bottles
- Sunglasses
- Sun screen
- Toiletries
- Flip flops/sandals for walking around camp (give your feet rest)
- Walking poles



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