

DRAGONFLIES FOREST DAYS GEAR LIST



BACKPACKS

- Please make it part of your routine that children participate in packing and unpacking their backpacks. This builds important skills in executive functioning, independence and responsibility
- Backpacks need to be high quality packs intended for day hikes.
 - Ideally, they should have chest and hip belts, with an external water bottle pocket, and a whistle.
 - They must be properly sized for your child. Measure the length of your child's back. This measurement should be within 1 inch of the length of the backpack you choose
 - Factor in your best guess about how your child will grow, when trying to choose the best size so they can use the pack for several years.
 - NO MEDIA CHARACTERS on backpacks. If your child already owns a backpack that meets the above requirements AND has media characters on it, you may look into an inexpensive rain cover such as [this](#).
 - Here are some options for hiking backpacks:
 - [This REI backpack](#) is the one we recommend for our preschoolers, so we can speak from years of experience as to their good quality and longevity. However, we also understand you may wish to consider options with a lower price point (but for which we cannot make a recommendation.) Below are some of those options.
 - https://www.decathlon.com/products/kids-hiking-backpack-18-l-mh500?variant=19068575383614¤cy=USD&utm_medium=product_sync&utm_source=google&utm_content=sag_organic&utm_campaign=sag_organic&gclid=EAlaQobChMilli23vGi7AIVD4nICh10ywsWEAQYAyABEgLjEvD_BwE
 - https://smile.amazon.com/s?k=hiking+backpack+kids&ref=nb_sb_noss_2

WATER BOTTLES

- A good water bottle that does not leak and has a sports top. 12-18 oz. size or more at your discretion. Please be aware that due to COVID currently there is no access to water refills at Wolf Trap.
 - [This Klean Kanteen](#) with sports top is what we recommend for our preschoolers
 - Any brand will do as long as it does not leak and your child is able to open and close it independently in order to drink from it.

HATS

- Children are required to wear a hat at all times
 - Cold weather hats:
 - A knit hat that covers your child's ears (ski caps and beanies are best; trapper hats inhibit hearing), stays on well, and is free of excessive decorations that may get snagged or be a hindrance during hiking and forest play
 - On very cold days, some do well with a balaclava
 - All other days (any time it is too warm for a knit hat):
 - Any light weight, wide brimmed hat in a quick drying material
 - Many prefer [this hat](#), but there are many other appropriate options

RAIN GEAR

- Rain Suits:
 - [A one piece rain suit](#) is ideal. We are familiar with the Muddy Buddy brand for toddlers, but this one looks perfect for bigger kids. There are other options to explore as well. In general we find the one piece rain suits to be more conducive to easy movement and unrestricted play on wet days, but a rain jacket and rain pants with good coverage can also be used if your child finds them preferable. Make sure to buy a large enough size to allow warm layers, and even the winter jacket, to fit underneath.

FOOTWEAR

- Comfortable, well-fitting hiking shoes for most days
- If hiking shoes are not water-proof, then well-fitting rain boots for wet days
- Well-fitting warm boots for snowy or cold days.
- Wool socks are key
- **If shoes have laces, please double check that they are securely tied and double knotted before departure**

WINTER WEAR

- Dressing in layers is recommended
- Depending on temperatures and your child's constitution, layers to consider include:
 - Base layer (long johns, top and/or bottom)
 - Shirt and pants (designed for ease of movement, such as sweat pants or leggings)
 - Fleece jacket
 - Winter jacket

- Snow pants