

Mt. Olympus

Details below provided by AAI

Elevation: 7,962 feet

Guide Service: Alpine Ascents International (AAI)

Minimum Fundraising Total: \$3,500.00

Overview

Mt. Olympus is the highest peak of the Olympic Mountain Range in Washington State. For any Northwest climber, this peak is considered a rite of passage. For everyone this is an adventure through the beautiful and diverse terrain of Olympic National Park, which has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The team will embark along the Hoh River Trail through one of the few remaining temperate rainforests in the world, passing towering old growth trees and alpine lakes, and over glaciers on this five-day climb to the summit.

Climbing skill level

This climb is open to any physically fit, enthusiastic novice, beginner or advanced beginner. One day of training is included in the climb so team members can safely evaluate conditions and proceed with a successful summit attempt. Prior experience with backpacking is helpful.

Physical conditioning: 50-pound pack

In the best interest of personal safety, success and team compatibility, adequate training and excellent physical condition are required. Climbers must be able to carry an average of 50 pounds or more.

Climbers need to be in excellent physical condition for both personal enjoyment and team safety. We encourage you to contact AAI so that they can assist you in developing a training program that meets your particular needs.

Tents Equipment and Meals

Provided: All group climbing equipment: climbing ropes and technical hardware; meals and tents.

Not provided: Personal equipment. You are responsible for all items on the gear list.

Note: *If you are a beginning climber, we strongly advise renting as much gear as possible. Specialty outdoor equipment can be quite expensive. AAI and other local retailers provide quality rental equipment at reasonable prices. Other personal items are available through local outdoor stores.*



Mt. Olympus Climb Itinerary

Details below provided by AAI

Climbers are required to arrive in Seattle the afternoon before our trip begins. A mandatory gear check is performed on this day. A thorough gear check ensures everyone is fully equipped and prepared to depart the next morning. Rental gear is fitted and packed at this time.

Location: AAI Office, Seattle

Duration: Approximately 2 hours

A guide and our gear manager will give you an overview of the climb, answer all your questions and make sure you have all the necessary equipment or rental gear.

What to bring: Please bring your pack fully loaded with all required items from the gear list.

Day 1: Depart Seattle in the early morning, and cross Puget Sound by ferry and drive on Hwy 101 past Crescent Lake to the Olympic National Park Visitor Center in Port Angeles. Drive to the Hoh River Ranger Station (600 feet) just past the town of Forks & begin the 17.4-mile approach hike. Hike nine miles along the Hoh River trail through old growth timber in this rainforest to the Olympus Guard Station camp. This camp is situated next to the river surrounded by forest and meadows.

Day 2: Continue hiking up the Hoh River valley and the forest turns to a temperate forest. At Elk Lake, the team will begin to gain elevation as the trail steepens to reach our camp for the evening at Glacier Meadows (4200'). Team will have a quick snow climbing school covering crampons, ice axe and rope travel before going to bed.

Day 3: Awake early and hike through the meadow and up the moraine for about an hour before descending the moraine onto the Blue Glacier. After roping up, cross the Blue Glacier and ascend to the top of "Snow Dome" (6600 feet), where there is a great view of the East, Middle, and West peaks of Olympus. After reaching the summit, the team will descend back to camp at Glacier Meadows and spend the night.

Day 4: A relaxing start to the day and an opportunity to look for and photograph the black bears that frequent the area around Glacier Meadows. Pack up camp and begin the hike down to the river valley to establish camp along the river.

Day 5: Hike the final distance along the river and through the old-growth forest, reach the trailhead in early afternoon, and then drive back to Seattle.



Mt. Olympus Climb Gear List

Details below provided by AAI

Climbing Equipment

- **Ice Axe w/Leash.** General mountaineering tool. Sizing is important: under 5'7" use a 60cm tool; 5'7"- 6'1" use a 65cm tool; over 6'1" use a 70cm tool. (Too short is preferable to too long). No rubberized grips-they are heavy and do not plunge well into the snow. Make sure that you have a leash that is designed for use on a glacier axe. Please no technical leashes designed for ice climbing-they are too short, heavy, and not versatile.
- **Crampons.** With flat rather than "cookie cutter" frame rails. Anti-balling plates are useful only in very specific snow conditions. A combination heel bail/toe strap is better than a heel and toe bail system.
- **Alpine Climbing Harness.** Harness should fit over all clothing, have gear loops, adjustable leg loops and be reasonably comfortable to hang suspended in. Make sure you can get into the harness without having to step through any part of it.
- **Carabiners.** 2 Locking.
- **Climbing helmet.** Must be adjustable to fit, with or without hat or balaclava on.
- **Trekking poles. Snow baskets required.** Collapsible three section preferred. Helpful for balance when carrying a heavy pack or if you have knee problems.

Footwear

- **Double plastic climbing boots.** Good quality plastic shells with inner boots. Avoid tight fit with heavy socks. Comfort is key in buying plastic boots. Spend a little extra time walking around in the store or take them home and wear them around your house to make sure the fit is right. A little big is always better than a little small.
- **Gaiters.** Please make sure your gaiters fit around the plastic boots without being too tight around the boot. No lightweight hiking gaiters.
- **Wool or Synthetic Socks. 3 pair** heavyweight wool or synthetic socks (wool is warmer) to be worn over the liner socks. When layering socks, check fit over feet and inside boots. It is very important to buy new socks regularly as they lose their cushioning over time. Socks with padded shins are especially nice with plastic boots.

- **Liner Socks. 3 pair** of smooth thin wool, nylon or Capilene to be worn next to the skin. This reduces the incidence of blisters and hot-spots and helps the outer sock last longer before needing to be changed. They should fit well with your heavyweight socks.

Technical Clothing

- **Lightweight Long Underwear. 2 pair** tops & bottoms, **No Cotton**. Lightweight and off white is more versatile. Zip-T-neck allows for better ventilation. May thru June - two long sleeve shirts. July thru Sept - one long sleeve and one short sleeve. Recommend one light weight and one medium weight bottoms for variable conditions.
- **Heavyweight Long Underwear top**. For extra warmth.
- **Soft Shell Jacket**. We **highly** recommend full zip as it is easier to put on and ventilate than pullovers.
- **Soft Shell Pants**. You will most likely wear these everyday during the course as they are very versatile and durable.
- **Hard Shell Jacket w/ hood**. We recommend a waterproof breathable shell material with full front zipper, underarm zips, and no insulation. This outer layer protects against wind and rain.
- **Hard Shell Pants**. Waterproof, breathable. Full length side zippers preferred because it allows easy removal of pants, 7/8th zippers allowed but is more difficult to remove pants, no short lower leg zippers allowed.
- **Synthetic shorts**. (Optional) Can be worn during approach hike in July and August.
- **Insulated Hooded Synthetic Jacket**. Needs to fit over all other layers. Worn during breaks or climbing in cold weather used throughout the season.
- **Insulated Synthetic Pants**. (Optional for July and August Courses) Full separating side zippers (This is very important for ventilation. Full side zips
- also allow pants to be taken off without having to remove boots). Fleece pants are also acceptable.

Headwear

- **Lightweight synthetic/wool hat**. Both the hat and the balaclava should be able to fit under the helmet. Hat should cover ears.
- **Balaclava**. Look for a simple lightweight model.
- **Baseball cap/sun hat**. One with a good visor to shade the nose and eyes. Synthetic is nice as it dries quickly.



- **Glacier glasses (w/ side covers or wrap around).** Regular sunglasses are usually not sufficient. 100% UV, IR, high quality optical lenses designed for mountain use, must have side covers, leashes, and a nose guard is particularly helpful. No more than 8% light transmission. If you wear contact lenses we recommend packing a spare pair of glasses—it is a good idea to have these with “photo-gray” or equivalent light-sensitive material so they can double as emergency sunglasses. If you wear glasses we recommend prescription glacier glasses (gray or amber).
- **Bandana.** Used to shade your neck.

Handwear

- **Lightweight Synthetic Liner Gloves.** 1 Pair. To wear alone on very sunny days for hand protection or as a layering piece with your Shell mitts.
- **Soft Shell Gloves.** 1 Pair. This glove is usually worn alone and during times when the shell mitts would be too warm. This glove can have a light shell exterior.
- **Shell Mitts w/ insulated removable liners.** Waterproof, breathable shell material. We recommend that the insulation in your mitts can be removed in order to dry faster. Make sure that you can wear your Lightweight Synthetic Liner gloves inside the mitts. Shell gloves “ski gloves” can substitute for mitts during the later part of the climbing season.

Personal Equipment

- **Expedition Backpack.** Internal frame pack expandable to a minimum of 5,500-6,000 cu.in. Keep it simple and light, avoid unnecessary zippers, etc which add weight.
- **Sleeping Bag.** High quality with hood to at least 200 F. A 00 F bag for May courses. If you sleep cold bring a warmer bag. Goose down preferred over synthetic for bulk & weight. If well-cared-for, a down bag will last much longer than a synthetic bag. It should be roomy enough for comfortable sleeping but snug enough for efficient heat retention.
- **Compression stuff sack.** Necessary to reduce volume when packing a sleeping bag.
- **Self Inflating pad.** One 3/4 or full length pad. If you are over 6’ a long is recommended. Make sure to include a valve stem and patch repair kit.
- **Closed-Cell foam pad.** One full length closed cell is recommended.
- **Tent.** Good quality, 2 person, **4-season** mountain tent. Make sure there are guy lines for body and fly. **No 3-season** tents. Include snow stakes.
- **Cooking gear:**

- **Cup:** 12-16oz. plastic **insulated mug** with snap-on lid (retains heat well and is spill-resistant in the tent).
- **Spoon:** Good quality tough plastic (lexan). You do not need a plastic knife and fork.
- **Bowl:** Deep plastic with 2-3 cup capacity. Recommended: Tupperware 3 cup bowl.
- **Cooking pot:** 2qt. minimum, lightweight pot with tight fitting lid and handle. Aluminum or titanium are much lighter and easier to use than stainless steel. Make sure you **include pot grabbers** to hold your pot.
- **Backpacking stove.** Complete liquid fuel stove and repair kit. Make sure fuel pump is included. Gas canister stoves are not recommended as you have to supply your own fuel and they are much heavier and take longer to boil water.
- **Fuel bottle (33oz.).** Alpine Ascents will supply the fuel. We can supply the bottles at no cost due to expanded airline security measures.
- **Headlamp (LED).** Lightweight simple model. Bring an extra set of batteries.
- **Small personal first-aid kit.** (Simple and Light) Aspirin (Extra Strength Excedrin is best), Antibiotic ointment, Moleskin, molefoam, waterproof first-aid tape, athletic tape, Band-Aids, personal prescriptions, etc. The guides will have extensive first-aid kits, so leave anything extra behind. Please let your guide know about any medical issues before the climb.
- **Sunscreen.** SPF 30 or better, 2 small tubes. Make sure that the sun screen is not older than 6 months. Sunscreen older than six months loses half of its SPF rating.
- **Lipscreen.** SPF 30, at least 2 sticks. Not older than 6 months.
- **Water Bottles:** 2 to 3 Wide mouth bottles with minimum 1 Litre capacity per bottle. **No water bag or bladder systems**, they freeze or are hard to fill.
- **Water Purification tablets.** 1 bottle. Water filters are too heavy and clog quickly with silt.
- **Toiletry bag.** Include toilet paper (no more than one roll stored in plastic bag), alcohol hand sanitizer, toothbrush, small toothpaste.
- Do not include soap, shampoo, deodorant, or cosmetics.
- **Insect repellent.** Small bottle. **Not necessary until July.** Do not use repellent that is stronger than 25% DEET. Non-DEET alternative: Green Ban.
- **Compass.** With sighting mirror and declination adjuster.
- **Knife or Multi-Tool.** Medium sized. Keep the knife simple.

- **Lighters (2).** We recommend disposable, adjustable lighters, rather than matches, for lighting stoves. Make sure the lighter is new and full of fuel.
- **Trash Compactor bags (3).** To line stuff sacks to keep gear dry. Trash Compactor bags are made from a heavier plastic.
- **Camera gear.** Optional. We recommend a small instant or point and shoot cameras. Please do not bring large SLR cameras with extra lenses. For the best pictures bring slow speed film, 50, 100, or 200. Simple and light. Disposable and digital cameras also work well.
- **Food for course.** See enclosed menu planning guide. Your lunch bag should weigh as much as your dinner & breakfast bags combined.

Traveling

- **Large duffle bag w/ travel lock.** Used for transporting your gear and for storage of extra gear at Alpine Ascents.

