

Official 2014 Packing List

Are you ready to ride? Wondering what you should pack? The 2014 Packing List reflects what staff and riders have learned during the first four years of Climate Summer. Of course, you may think that you will need some things that are not

listed here in order to get you through the summer, but past riders have worked with us to perfect this list, and we suggest that you follow their sage advice. **Please note: items in the “Required” section are actually required in order to participate. No exceptions.**



Remember that video game Oregon Trail? When your wagon got stuck in the mud, you had to ditch extra weight to continue. You will find yourself Oregon Trailing your stuff this summer if you over-pack. If you are wondering whether you need something that is not on the list, you probably don't.

– Advice from a 2010 Climate Summer rider

NOTE: The “Gear Guide,” which starts on page three of this document, is required reading! It includes gear descriptions, tips and ideas about lower cost alternatives. Feel free to contact Marla Marcum, the Director of Programs at Better Future Project, with any questions.

Required Gear

- Bicycle, with rear rack and a bags that attach to the rack (see the Gear Guide)
- Bicycle helmet
- Bike lock (cable lock is most versatile, u-lock is most secure)
- Backpack or messenger bag (book/school pack size)
- Rain Jacket
- Sunglasses
- Camp towel or lightweight bath towel
- Small, compressible sleeping bag
- Cell phone (and charger)
- Bike lights – front and rear
- Laptop and power cord (if it's a Mac and you have an adapter for projector connection, bring the adapter)
- 2 water bottles (or 1 bottle and 1 hydration pack)
- Notebook/pens/pencils
- Eating utensil (a fork and spoon – or a spork)
- A bowl or plate (one that travels well without breaking – bowl is most versatile)
- Toiletries/personal care items (go as limited as you can; deodorant appreciated!)
- Sunscreen
- Any prescription medication you need.

Required Documents/Information

- Photo ID
- Health Insurance Card
- If you wear glasses or contacts, bring a copy of your prescription (just in case)
- Health Form, Liability Waiver, Gear Form, and Emergency Contact Form (these are included in the Welcome Packet and should be returned to Climate Summer via mail or pdf by the date on the forms)

Required Clothing

- 2 comfortable shirts (tanks are ok; we will give you 2 short sleeve t-shirts at training)
- 1-2 pairs of non-spandex shorts or capris (**do NOT bring** anything shorter than 3 inch inseam)
- 1 pair of cycling gloves
- 1 nice outfit (appropriate for summer business meeting/house of worship/meeting government officials; no jacket needed; bare shoulders are **NOT** appropriate for this outfit; shorts/skirts should be close to knee-length or longer; no denim for this outfit)
- Swimsuit
- 1 lightweight sweatshirt or sweater
- 7 pairs of underwear
- 5 pairs of socks (one WARM pair)
- One set of clothes to sleep in (we recommend lightweight long pants)
- 2 pairs of shoes (best choice: 1 pair of sneakers/other closed toe active shoes + 1 pair of sandals or other casual shoes that can be worn w/your nice outfit and for walking/riding). If you like to clip in to your pedals, please do NOT plan to ride with clip-in shoes that do not allow for normal walking mechanics. If you really want to be able to clip in, at least 3 companies offer recessed cleats in a variety of walkable shoes (and the pedals to match). See <http://sheldonbrown.com/shoe-pedal.html>
- Bring one extra outfit of warm clothing for the training (it can be COLD in early June in NH! Marla will store these clothes in her attic for the summer. Please take this seriously. Include a warm hat.)

Recommended Gear and Clothing

(if you already own it, bring it)

- Flash Drive (USB)
- Portable battery charger for AA/AAA batteries – to keep bike lights running (let us know if you have one on the Gear Form)
- 1-2 pairs of biking shorts (spandex)
- Riding gloves
- 1 pair lightweight jeans or other long pants
- A sleeping pad (you'll be sleeping on lots of floors; we consider this "almost required")
- Fenders (on your bike)
- Spare bike tubes that fit your rims (No idea what this means? Read the explainer at <http://www.pedalqueens.com/tubes.html>)
- A bicycle bell (for your handlebars)
- Digital camera and/or digital video camera
- Hands-free device for your cell phone
- iPod or other music player/headphones

Recommended Gear and Clothing

continued

- 1 set of lightweight long underwear or similar items – top and bottom for layering. **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.** (It will be cold sometimes in New England in the summer. If you chill easily, consider bringing two sets.)
- Spare bike tubes (we bring extra bike tubes, but if you have a strange size, we will not have any spares to send with you after training. Our bike pumps will work with Schrader and Presta valves.)
- Travel guitar or other portable musical instrument
- Dry bag (to keep your stuff dry; we will give you some trash bags for this purpose, too; your electronics can ride in the trailers, which are watertight)
- Small speaker to amplify sound from your computer or music player (for parties and presentations)
- Frisbee or other portable fun-maker!
- Bungee cords (we provide some, but bring your own if you really need them to keep your stuff on the bike)

Gear Guide

Bicycle Glossary If you run across any bike jargon that is confusing or if you just want links to more information about the basics (like brakes or fenders), check out the glossary created by the late Sheldon Brown (and maintained by others after his passing) at <http://sheldonbrown.com/glossary-t.html>

A sleeping bag is an absolutely essential piece of gear for Climate Summer riders. **June at our training site is COLD at night, and we stay in unheated cabins (it's a summer camp).** In addition, each team will travel to places that regularly get quite chilly at night in the summer (mountains and coastal areas). In 2009, the whole summer was rainy and chilly. Particularly in



early summer, expect cold nights in the mountains and on the coast (every team will have significant exposure to one or both of these areas). If you already have a lightweight fleece bag (usually rated to 55°), think about bringing it, plus a packable blanket or thermal liner to boost the warmth. A summer-weight sleeping bag is probably best. Marla found the two-tone blue one above (rated to 40°, which is our recommendation) for \$38 online using these search terms: summer sleeping bag.

A rear rack helps you to carry extra stuff on your bike. It should be rated to carry at least 35 pounds (50 pounds is better). We require that you have one. You can get a good one for as little as \$15 (maybe less on sale). Here's what they look like:





A pannier is a basket, bag, box, or similar container, carried in pairs either slung over the back of a beast of burden, or attached to a bicycle or motorcycle. The term derives from the Old French, from Classical Latin, word for *bread basket*. (This is the *Oxford English Dictionary* definition.) Panniers make it easier to carry your stuff on your bike. **It's nice to balance the load, so two are better than one** (and two bags allow you to carry more stuff). There's Margaret (on the left) with her panniers, and a team trailer.



Here is a picture (right) of the back of Caroline's bike with her panniers hanging off the rear rack and her sleeping bag and sleeping pad strapped to the top of the rack.

(Notice, it was her turn to pull one of the team trailers. She strapped her backpack *and her travel guitar* to the top of the bin on the trailer while she was pulling it. There may be a few teammates' laptops and cameras in her trailer, but everyone else on the team is still carrying their own belongings on their bikes.)

Here are some other pannier styles:

Shopping bag style



Basket style



Waterproof



But, you do NOT have to buy expensive/new gear!

Search for "bucket panniers" on <http://www.Instructables.com> for a large range of instructions for building easy DIY very low-cost alternatives to panniers. In 2013 Amanda rode all summer with a homemade set of bucket panniers. She loved them! Of course, if you are using power tools, be careful (and never use them alone).



In 2010, Climate Summer rider Bliss found a milk crate, strapped it to her rear rack, and hung some bags off the side. Eric rode with just a backpack, a milk crate, & some bungee cords.

Front racks/Panniers are also useful, but not necessary. These tend to be smaller versions of the rear rack and panniers.

A camp towel (or pack towel) is perfect for traveling light because it absorbs several times more water than regular bath towels, is easy to wring out, dries fast, and folds up small. Many come with a hanging loop (for hanging it up to dry out). You can also wear it like a cape or a sarong, and it makes a good picnic blanket (if you get a big one). It's made of microfiber, so you could also just get a piece of microfiber that's the size you want.

Tip: The quality (absorbency) of these towels varies (and is not always indicated by the relative price). We suggest you get online and read the reviews of different types of towels (even if you plan to purchase one in a brick and mortar store). A quick online search for both "camp towel" and "pack towel" suggests that a wide variety of choices are available and range in price from \$2 to \$30. Some of our favorites come in around \$15 for a medium size.



Lights are required safety gear on your bike. There are many types of lights from which to choose. You can find a new pair of lights for as little as \$30. Headlights should be white and offer a solid beam; a flashing mode is desirable, but not required. Taillights should be red and have both a solid beam and a flashing mode.

The minimum requirement for your headlight is that it makes you visible to cars, but you will be safer after dark and find it easier to travel in unlit areas if you purchase a light that actually helps you to see the road ahead of you. Marla suggests a headlight with a minimum output of 150 lumens if you want to be able to see well on a dark road. For a light that bright, you can expect to spend at least \$40.

When you are comparing lights, it is a good idea to read customer reviews, to consider how many hours the light will run on one full charge, and to think about the cost of keeping it lit (if the light takes AA or AAA batteries, you may want to purchase rechargeable batteries). Some lights can be charged using an adapter plugged into a wall outlet, and some offer USB charging options. We provide each team with one charger for AA/AAA batteries. Check out <http://www.bikelightdatabase.com/> to compare lights across a variety of factors. Just click on "Headlight Database" or "Taillight Database" at the top of the page. NOTE: for some reason, this site does not review the ubiquitous CatEye brand of lights.

*Marla is happy to discuss bike purchase
and bike upgrade/tune-up/outfitting specifics with you!*

The Bike Your bike is, of course, the most expensive part of the package. If you already have a bike, we highly recommend that you take it in for a tune-up. This will be the best \$40-75 you could spend in advance of the summer. You may even find a bike mechanic who wants to support your commitment to ride your bike all summer. Tell the mechanic what you're doing this summer, and ask for a discount! Some important considerations (for your mechanic and to keep in mind if you're buying a bike): You will ride 900-1400 miles this summer. About half of those miles will be carrying all of your gear, and for about 1/3 of the total miles, you will be pulling a 75 pound trailer with team gear in it (in addition to the weight of your own gear).

Mountain bikes are a terrific option for the summer. Mountain bikes will be slower, but sturdier. If you prefer a more upright posture while you ride, consider a mountain bike or a touring bike made for climbing (using a mountain bike geometry for the frame). If you ride a mountain bike this summer, you should consider investing in slicker, more narrow tires (which will help you go faster on the road).

Likewise, if you have a road bike, consider moving away from slick tires and getting the fattest (widest) tires that your wheels will accommodate (this helps with the prevention of flats). Some people recommend investing in tires with Kevlar belts running under the tread (to protect the tube from puncture). If you want to do your homework on tires and the choices available, we recommend starting here: <http://sheldonbrown.com/tires.html>.

If you are buying a bike, we recommend finding a good used bike. In 2012, Marla bought a really good, barely-used 2008 touring bike for less than 1/3 its original price. Your money will go much farther if you buy used. Many bike shops and campus bike co-ops sell used bikes, and if you go there during the day on a weekday, you will get all the personal service you need (because they will not be busy). Do not be afraid to ask for help with finding the right bike for your frame and for your purpose.

Important Considerations: A steel frame is recommended (instead of aluminum) because it is more durable (especially good for pulling a trailer). For those not familiar with roads in New England: POTHOLE ARE THE NORM! Prioritize durability above fancy looks!

BEFORE YOU TRAVEL TO THE CLIMATE SUMMER TRAINING

It is a very good idea to pack up all of your stuff into the bags, baskets, etc. that you will use this summer. You should be able to carry everything (including your electronics) on your bike.

When you test your ability to ride with all your stuff:

- 🚲 Your sleeping pad/sleeping bag can be strapped to the top of your rack/bags,
- 🚲 You can wear a backpack/messenger bag if you choose – (leave it half empty for the test)
- 🚲 Your helmet will be on your head, one pair of shoes and one change of clothes will be on your body, and you can wear your sunglasses
- 🚲 Your bike lights (and fenders if you have them) should be attached to your bike
- 🚲 One (or both) water bottle(s) can be in a cage attached to your bike
- 🚲 Your bike lock can be attached to your bike or packed in a bag
- 🚲 Otherwise, EVERYTHING should fit into the bags (or other items) you are strapping to your bike and carrying on your back
- 🚲 Your electronics can ride in one of your team's 2 trailers during the summer, but you should be able to transport them on your own (make sure you've packed them for your test ride). The only exception to this rule is a travel-size guitar (which needs a waterproof case). If you bring one, it can always be strapped to the top of a trailer because it becomes part of the team's gear for the summer (since all will enjoy it).
- 🚲 Ride around. If riding with this much gear is new to you, try to do your test ride in a low traffic area. Remember: when you get off your bike, it will fall over pretty easily with all that stuff attached to it (even if you have a kickstand).
- 🚲 If you are tempted to add more stuff to your load at this point, remember that for approximately 1/3 of the road miles you ride this summer, you'll be pulling a trailer filled with the team's gear/food/electronics. This trailer will weigh 40-80 pounds.
- 🚲 DON'T PANIC! The load might feel heavy today, but keep in mind that in the first two years of Climate Summer, none of the participants were avid bikers before they entered the program. You do not have to train in advance, but the more you ride now, the easier it will be to get started this summer. The best way to increase your endurance on a bike is to ride a little every day (3-5 miles), then increase your mileage to 5-10 miles. This approach is much more effective than taking only long rides on the weekends. We encourage you to read the physical training guide carefully.
- 🚲 Other tips: Let your gears help you do the work. Slow and steady wins the race (and we're not even racing)! There is no shame in walking up a hill – each of you will do so at least once this summer. Pay attention to your body. Warm up and cool down. When the terrain is rough, Caroline and Eric, and Tali (from the 2010 Western Massachusetts team) recommend frequent “laughing breaks.”

If you have questions about anything on the packing list (whether it is described in the Gear Guide or not), contact marla@betterfutureproject.

Now, get ready for an amazing summer full of new friends...



...strokes of culinary genius (like using a water bottle to roll out your pizza dough), and building the fossil fuel resistance on your bike!



You will need to work on your



balance, brush up your navigation skills, and get used to wearing your helmet EVERYWHERE...



But most of all, GET ON YOUR BIKE AND RIDE!



Of course, let us know how it's going and what we can do to support you!