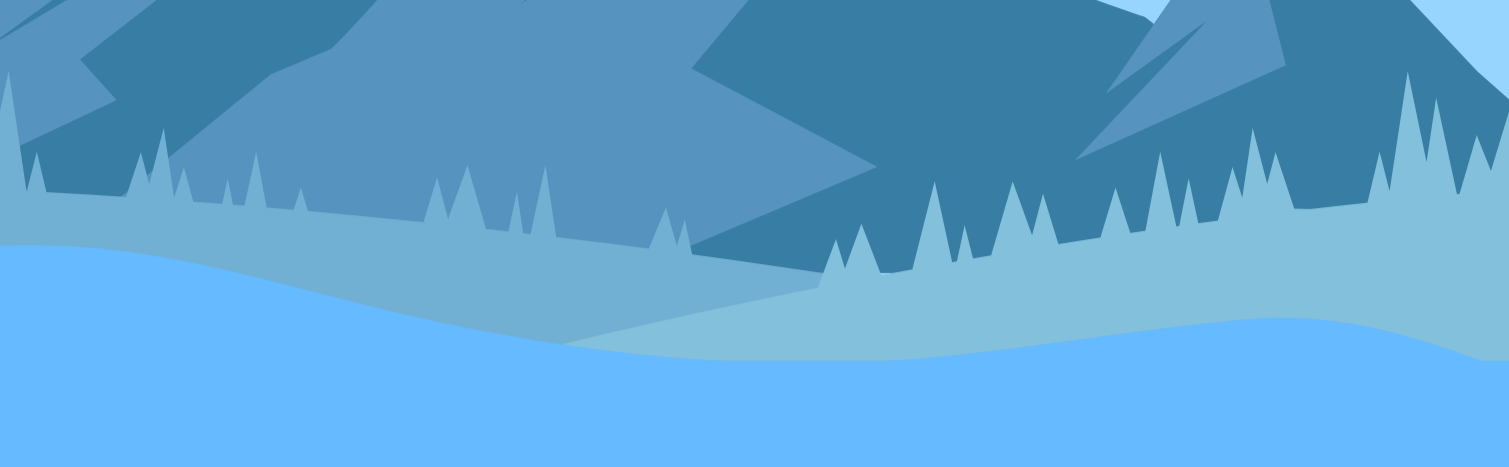




Lake Essentials to Bring on Your Vacation



Life at the lake is just better. It's ideal for a romantic getaway for two, a small family vacation, or a blowout family reunion. From fishing to boating to swimming, lake life has it all. If you're planning a lake vacation this year, make sure you bring all the lake essentials to make your stay amazing. Read on to learn what you should include on your packing list.

1 Fishing Gear

Fishing is the perfect activity for kids and adults alike. It's also an activity that can be enjoyed in a group or alone, for some quiet time to decompress. You can do it from a boat, a dock, the shore, or even an inflatable kayak. Fishing doesn't require a lot of skill either. Grab a pole, hooks, bait, and head out to catch your dinner! Check with local bait shops on the best bait options and be sure to follow the rules for fishing licenses. Many states sell visitor passes for tourists who will be fishing for just a few days or youth licenses, for the younger members of your group.



2 Bug Spray and Sunscreen

Many bugs, especially mosquitoes, are attracted to water and the lake is no exception. Don't let swarms of mosquitoes or other bugs ruin your time on the lake. **Be sure you bring bug spray appropriate for the bugs in that area.** Sunscreen is another must-have item, as sunburn will quickly ruin your day at the lake as well. Sunscreen needs to be reapplied throughout the day. Use it as directed and be sure you reapply after swimming or otherwise getting wet.



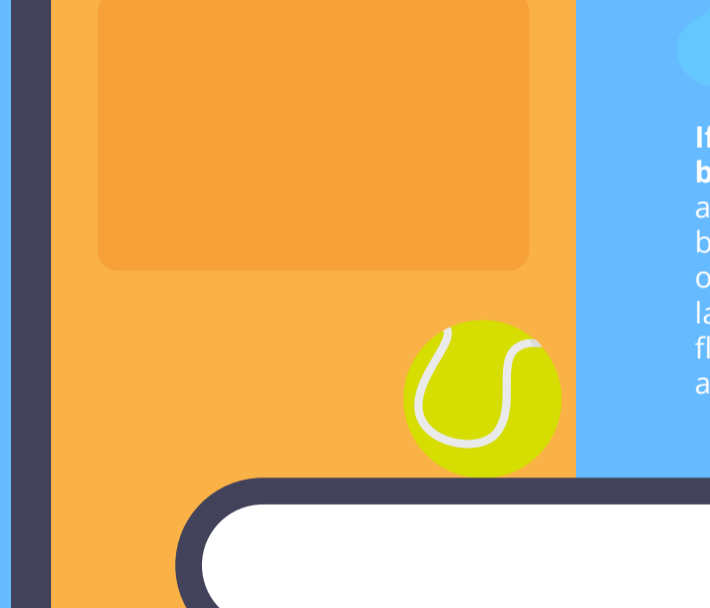
3 A Hat and Other Sun Protection

Don't just stop at sunscreen either. **A hat is a smart way to keep the sun out of your eyes and off your face.** It also protects your head and scalp, which is especially important if you have thin (or little) hair. Make a statement with a wide-brimmed sun hat or keep it sporty with a baseball cap. Rash guards, sunglasses, umbrellas, and other items to provide shade are also useful. If you are prone to sunburn and have sensitive skin, you might want to cover as much of your body as possible to protect it from the sun.



4 Books, Games, and Other Items for Fun

If you're looking to relax, pack your favorite book and kick back for some leisure reading. If active fun is more of your thing, throw some sport balls, tennis rackets, a floating volleyball net, or other items in your suitcase and organize some lake games. You can even invest in a sturdy lake float to tow behind a boat or tie to a dock to enjoy a nap on the lake or reading a book.



5 Water Shoes

Water shoes might not be the most stylish footwear out there, but they are necessary for lake life. If you are anchoring a boat and walking in to the shore, walking along a rocky beach, or wading into shallow lake water, you'll want something to protect your feet. Not only do water shoes keep your feet from getting cuts, but they also protect you from hot surfaces and any creepy crawly things in the lake water.



6 Portable Grill

A day at the lake calls for a grilled feast. Hot dogs, hamburgers, and the fish you caught all taste that much more delicious when they are grilled lakeside after a day on the water. **Bring a portable grill with you to grill up your lunch or dinner.** Make sure to bring charcoal and a lighter and don't forget the tongs and spatula.



7 Cooler

Once you've decided where you are going to fish and your kayak is well-balanced, start paddling. Keep your speed and strokes even. After reaching your destination, slowly drop your anchor into the water until it reaches the bottom. Tie off the nylon rope to your kayak so that it is taut to prevent drifting. When casting, you can stand or sit depending on your comfort level. **Make sure to stay as balanced as possible while casting so you don't capsize the boat or fall in.**



8 First Aid Kit

A first aid kit should be on your packing list for any trip that you take. Accidents are likely to happen and when you're outdoors, you might not have as much access to first aid items. Don't get caught unprepared.

- ✓ Bandages
- ✓ Cold packs
- ✓ Tweezers
- ✓ Gauze and tape
- ✓ Hydrogen peroxide
- ✓ Antibiotic ointment
- ✓ Rubber gloves
- ✓ Cotton pads and cotton swabs
- ✓ Alcohol wipes for sterilizing and cleaning



9 Swimsuit and Towels

These are no-brainers for a trip to the lake! **Make sure you pack plenty of swimsuits, rashguards for any water sports (and for sun protection), and towels.** At least two swimsuits will ensure you always have a dry one available to you. Pack plenty of towels as well. Some lakes probably aren't the time for your nicest suits and towels, either, so throw the old ones in your suitcase and you won't have to worry about ruining anything.



Put These Lake Essentials on Your Packing List

Be sure these lake essentials are on your list of things to pack. While it might feel like you're spending a ton of time packing and bringing boatloads of stuff, you'll appreciate having everything you need once you get there!