

Better Homes and Gardens®

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FAMILY ISSUE
THE NEW
LIVING
ROOM

Summer COLOR

PRETTY PORCHES,
GARDENS,
AND PARTIES

We Love
National
Parks
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Grill
the Perfect
Burger
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Our
Favorite
New
Hydrangeas
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GEAR UP

As the head guide for hiking retreat Mountain Trek, former park ranger Cathy Grierson knows exactly what will keep you comfortable and safe on the trail for moderate summer day hikes. Follow these guidelines.

1 DRESS IN LAYERS

The temperature can change drastically depending on elevation and time of day, so check the weather and be ready with three layers.

THE FIRST: a short-sleeve inner layer (backpack straps can chafe if you wear a tank top). Opt for silk, a synthetic (like nylon, polypropylene, spandex, or rayon), or merino wool, which will wick sweat away from your body.

NEXT: a long-sleeve middle layer of wool or fleece for warmth if needed.

THIRD: a waterproof, breathable jacket with a hood (can double as a windbreaker). For your bottom half, pants that can convert to shorts are best, and don't forget a hat and sunglasses.

2 TRAVEL LIGHT

For a day hike, you'll want a daypack, which holds only what you need for the hike, instead of a full-on backpack. It should have a hip belt so the weight isn't only on your shoulders. To put the pack on so the weight is distributed evenly, loosen all straps, then tighten the waist belt and shoulder straps.

3 WEAR THE RIGHT SHOES—AND SOCKS

For day hikes, lightweight and flexible "light hiker" shoes are best. They should have Gore-Tex or another waterproof material to keep your feet dry. Look for a midsole cushioned for support and stability so you don't feel every tree root or rock, and an outer sole textured for traction. Choose an over-the-ankle shoe if you're a first-time hiker or have weak ankles. Socks should be merino wool or a synthetic that wicks away sweat: no blister-causing friction between your feet and the shoe!

4 CARRY ENOUGH WATER

A water bladder holds more than a bottle (up to 3 liters), and it nestles in your pack so you can hydrate hands-free. Use the calculator at camelbak.com to figure how much you need to take; it depends on the heat (check the high temp forecast), your weight, how much you sweat, and the intensity of your hike.

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CUSHIONED STRAPS = COMFORTABLE TO HOLD

DO I NEED TREKKING POLES?

If you plan to hike only once or twice, probably not. But if you hike monthly or plan to hit the trails daily on a vacation, Grierson says go for the poles. "They give you better balance and footing, reduce stress on your joints, and can help you feel like you're not working so hard," she says. Another plus: Using poles can increase your calorie burn by up to 20 percent.

POLES

Black Diamond Trail poles, \$99.95; backcountry.com

SHOES

Great for trail runs or hikes. Cascadia 11, \$120; brooksrunning.com

HOODIE

BugsAway fabric repels mosquitoes and other bugs. \$60; exofficio.com

PACK

Comes with a built-in 3-liter water bladder. \$98.95; backcountry.com

CONVERTIBLE PANTS

Saturday Trail 11 pant, \$65; columbia.com

VEST

Lightweight layer with a mesh lining for ventilation. Shape active wear, \$78; amazonfashion.com

SOCKS

Merino wool-nylon blend, cushioned for hiking. \$17; darntough.com



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DURABLE UPF 50 FABRIC AND ZIP-OFF LEGS!

DON'T FORGET

Whether you buy a ready-made first aid kit or put together your own in a heavy-duty zip-top bag, make sure it includes moleskin, nonstretch cloth tape for blisters or ankle sprains, compound tincture of benzoin (helps bandages stay on), an elastic bandage to secure splints or apply pressure, Band-Aids, alcohol swabs, and antibiotic ointment. "This is what I call group equipment, so just one person needs to carry it," Grierson says. That means someone else can pack duct tape, a flashlight, a tarp (in case you need shelter or extra warmth), and a Swiss Army Knife. Also remember sunscreen and bug spray. ■

