

Experience the true spirit of alpinism:  
**Adventure, challenge, and partnership.**

**SKYWARD**  
Mountaineering

by  
**VINCE ANDERSON  
& STEVE HOUSE**  
*since 1996*

# SKI ALPINISM

## GEAR LIST

This list may be adjusted by your guide based on the venue and time of season.

### SKIING EQUIPMENT

- Alpine touring skis, telemark skis, or snowboard (split-board or with short approach skis). Skis should be a minimum of 85mm underfoot and a maximum of 105mm. Wider skis get very heavy and impact your ability to tour uphill. Narrower skis are more appropriate for late season tours and traverses. If you like, you can also bring a second, fatter pair of skis for powder days.
- Alpine Touring (ski) or snowboard boots. Typical downhill ski boots do not work for touring. Must fit well.
- Adjustable ski poles.
- Climbing skins. These must fit your skis well. A good-fitting skin covers all of the p-tex base, but leaves all of the metal edge exposed.
- Ski brakes. Recommended. Retention leashes may be preferred for tours which cross glaciers.
- Ski crampons. (More useful than people think.)
- 2 Ski straps. The typical rubber-based ski strap has many purposes

### SNOW SAFETY EQUIPMENT

- Avalanche transceiver (457 kHz single frequency) with new and spare batteries

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- Avalanche probe 2-3 meters
- Shovel. Flat-backed metal blade is recommended.
- Pack. 25-40 liters depending on tour type.
- Small, personal first aid kit including blister care.
- Avalung, avalung pack, or ABS pack should be considered situationally.

## GLACIER/TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT (ONLY FOR GLACIATED OR TECHNICAL TOURS)

Ice axe. A 50-60cm straight-shafted ice axe is preferred for most situations. A technical ice tool will also work.

Boot crampons. Aluminum crampons with a strap-on system designed for ski boots are preferred.

1 ice screw. 19-22 cm length.

2 lightweight locking carabiners.

2 lightweight non-locking carabiners.

1 60 cm nylon or dyneema sling.

Belay/rappel device. A lightweight device is preferable.

Climbing or ski helmet. Situationally appropriate. (optional)

Small ascender like Rope Man or Ti-bloc (optional)

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## CLOTHING:

- All necessary under, mid, and outer layers appropriate to the area and season. The following is a good example for normal winter conditions:
- Good, storm-proof soft-shell jacket with a hood.
- Lightweight wind/weather shell. Example: Patagonia Houdini.
- Soft-shell (or vent-able hard-shell) pants that fit over boot cuff and have integrated gaiter that works with your boots.
- Mid-weight fleece shirt or jacket. Example: Patagonia Piton Hybrid Hoody.
- Long underwear top with zip-tee/neck coverage; either synthetic or wool.
- Long underwear bottom; either synthetic or wool. (bring two pair, one light and one medium-to-heavy weight)
- Good, packable insulated parka appropriate to temperatures and forecast. If a lot of snow or bad weather is forecast, consider opting for a synthetic parka instead of down. (aka "Puffy")
- Winter gloves, two pair: One light and one medium-weight
- Mittens. Lightweight mittens are important asset, especially in an emergency situation. Very warm gloves may work as well.
- Warm hat.
- Sun hat.
- Balaclava or neck gaiter.
- Ski socks: multiple changes. Typically two pairs for up to one week.

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## OTHER ACCESSORIES

- Headlamp with spare batteries. Lithium batteries are more expensive, but lighter than alkaline batteries.
- Sunglasses.
- Goggles (We prefer light lenses that work well in cloudy conditions.)
- Sun screen. SPF 30 or greater
- Lip balm. SPF 30 or greater
- Butane lighter. (optional)
- Ear plugs. (For overnight tours in huts or tents)
- Personal hygiene articles.
- Small supply of toilet paper or facial tissues.
- One-liter water container. Note that hydration tubes usually freeze while ski touring.
- Vacuum thermos bottle. (Our personal preference over a water bottle.)
- Camera.

## SKI CAMPING/ BIVY EQUIPMENT

*(For overnight tours spent camping NOT in huts):*

- Sleeping bag.
- Sleeping pad.
- Cup and spoon.

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## FOOD

- Snacks or energy food (i.e. bars, gels, sandwiches, etc.)
- Drink mix and/or tea bags for water bottle and thermos.