



Hunting with Swan Mountain Outfitters Gear Checklist – Spring Bear Hunt

Please read carefully, the following information could make the difference between a good hunt and a great hunt!

When packing clothing for this hunt think of quality materials and layers. Springtime in Montana can be sunny and 75 degrees, pouring rain and 50 degrees, or snowing and dropping into the teens at night; all within the same week. Clothing should be made of wool or some synthetic blend that breathes well and will keep you warm even if it gets wet. Pants and jackets should be made of a material that allows you to move quietly while hunting and does not snag on undergrowth. Clothes made of cotton should be avoided. Due to the extreme variability in the weather and the various hunting styles that may be used (hiking vs glassing) layering is essential. Make sure to try your layers on at home to ensure they fit well and allow for free movement.

This is a guided hunt and your guide will carry everything needed for the processing of game should it be harvested. No need to worry about knives or game bags. You will need to bring a sturdy pack to carry your personal gear though. This will include your extra layers, lunch, water, and any personal items you would like to bring along. We can not stress enough that having at least one large water bottle is extremely important. The gear list below will go into more detail as to what to bring

If you are in need of any of the gear on this list or would like to compare what you have, head over to [Gear Fool](#). This site has great clothing and gear options for hunting in Northwestern Montana.

Shipping Gear: If you would like to ship items to us in advance, please use UPS and ship to 26356 Soup Creek Road Swan Lake, MT 59911. Please prepay for a return label and have return shipping containers ready to use. You must arrange all this on your end, as we live in a very remote area and cannot take items into town on your behalf without charging you.

Clothing:

- Rain Gear: Coat and pants, these should be waterproof but breathable (not P.V.C.), and ideally quiet to walk in.
- A warm coat: A packable down jacket is great to have for cold days or glassing in the evenings.

- Medium layers: A comfortable lightweight fleece is a good option, having a hood or zipper options for customization is nice.
- Several pants: Material should be synthetic; comfortable and durable.
- Several shirts: Lightweight wool or synthetic is ideal, make sure to bring a mixture of long sleeve and short sleeve shirts.
- Several long johns: These are extremely important and should be a wicking material that will keep you warm and dry even if you sweat. Wool or wool blends are popular options for base layer pants and shirts. An extra pair for sleeping in is nice to have.
- Socks: At least a pair a day, wool socks are best. Some hunters prefer a silk liner under wool socks.
- Underwear
- Neck gator or scarf: Helps to protect against the sun and be another warm layer if needed.
- 2 pair of boots: Boots need to be comfortable, waterproof, and broken in before starting the hunt. Having several pairs to change according to the weather or if one starts to cause hot spots is ideal.
- Camp shoes: a comfortable pair of tennis shoes (or if there is rain in the forecast rain boots) for walking around camp in, sandals for the shower.
- Gators: Look for ones that fit the boot and leg closely to help with any loud rubbing, keep moisture out, and help prevent ticks.
- Hats: Bring a baseball cap to keep sun off your face and a wool hat or beanie in case it's cold.
- Gloves: Can be a life saver in the rain or while glassing on a cold day, look for ones that are waterproof and warm.
- Orange vest that will fit and stay over your outermost layer. Montana requires 400sq inches of orange (a vest), please do not use a construction vest with reflective fabric.

Camp Necessities:

- Sleeping Bag: It can get down into the teens even at the end of May. Bring a colder weather bag and a sheet in case it is warm. A 20-degree bag is a good choice, however if you sleep cold you may want an even warmer bag. Foam pads for sleeping on are provided.
- Personal toiletries and towel: There is a shower with a small space heater and ample hot water, two pit toilet latrines, and a hydrant with drinkable water by the tents.
 - Charging cords for phone and camera: There is an outlet in each tent.
- Reading material for the evenings.
- Cash for tipping guide and cook. Industry standard is 10-15% of trip cost for the guide, and \$15-\$30 per person per day for the cook
- 2 water bottles: Each 1 quart minimum.
- Sealing coffee cup for hot drinks.
- Sunglasses and an extra pair of prescription glasses if you wear them.
- Sunscreen and Chapstick
- Medications: If you take medications please ensure you bring enough for your entire trip.

Hunting Gear:

- Backpack: a framed pack will put less stress on your back. Must be large enough to carry your lunch, water, and clothing layers.

- 2 headlamps with extra batteries.
- Bug spray: Be aware of TSA regulations when flying with aerosols. Tick repellent can be handy as well.
- Binoculars and Bino Harness: Don't skimp here, you'll need good glasses! 10x 42 is good.
- Rifle, scope, scope cover, sling, and hunting bullets:
 - We suggest sighting your gun in at 200 yards. The farther you are comfortable shooting the better! 400 yards is a great distance to be comfortable at. Bring at least one box of the hunting bullets that you sighted your gun in at along with you. Having a comfortable sling on your rifle is a lifesaver.
- Trekking poles: these are an underrated item as they greatly help take stress off your body when going up or down steep terrain.
- Optional items:
 - Range finder
 - Lightweight spotter
 - Shooting sticks
 - Wind direction indicator
 - GPS
 - Sitting pad: some thick material to sit on while glassing
 - Gun cleaning kit and tools to make adjustments if needed