

Packing Your Back Pack

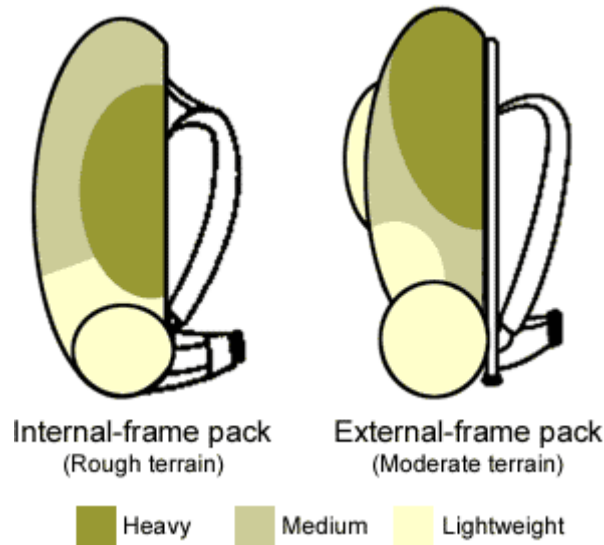
PRE-TRAIL PLANNING

Before you start packing, it is probably a very good idea to review your **GEAR LIST** and then assemble those items on the floor before you start to pack. Make sure that you have all essential items and eliminate those things that may not be appropriate or necessary for your trip. Then practice packing everything you need to take.

INTERNAL FRAME PACKS VS. EXTERNAL FRAME PACKS

- Your sleeping bag should be packed at the bottom of both **Internal** and **External** Frame packs. **Internals** will usually have a zipped compartment at the bottom and with **Externals** you will have to strap your stuff sack to the bottom of the pack or to your frame. If there is a chance of rain, you may want to put your bag in a plastic garbage bag first before stuffing it into its stuff sack.
- For **both** packs, your heaviest items should also be packed as close to your back as possible.
- In general, you will want to pack the heavy items higher in the pack with an **External** and towards the middle with an **Internal**.
- Tent Poles & Sleeping Pads can be strapped under the compression straps on the side on an **Internal**. On an **External** these items can be carried at the top, strapped to the frame, or under the compartment flap on an **External**. Otherwise, try to keep as much gear as possible inside your pack.

Distributing Pack Weight



MORE TIPS

- If you plan on hiking off-trail or over difficult terrain, you may want to place heavy items lower in your pack to give you a more stable center of gravity.
- Break down items such as tents and tent fly's and stuff them in to available spaces.
- Use every available space, packing small items inside pots.
- If you are carrying liquid fuel for your stove, make sure that it is carried lower in a lower pack in your pack than your food in case of spills.
- Items that you may need to get to on the trail should be packed in accessible places. These may include **Snacks, Compass, Maps, Raingear, Pack Cover, First-Aid Kit** and **Water**. Make sure you don't have to conduct a major excavation of your pack to dig for these types of things.
- Make sure your load is balanced from left to right
- Use your compression straps to bring the load closer to your back.
- You can make your own "compression" storage by placing clothing items in gallon-sized Zip-Loc bags and using a straw to suck out the air.
- Leave the Kitchen Sink at home.

