

Rain Gear



Purpose – Rain gear is intended to keep you **dry** and **warm** (provide protection from low temperatures and wind chills) on exposed locations during hikes, near the tops of windy peaks, and throughout the backpacking trip we will take this summer.

Rain gear can consist of : 1.) a simple rain poncho, or 2.) a rain jacket, or 3.) a combination of rain jacket and rain pants (this combination has been preferred by most WFSI students the past few summers).

Several important terms to keep in mind:

- **Water Repellent & Water Resistant** – fabric that is treated with a chemical finish that is resistant to but not impervious to penetration by water.
- **Waterproof** – fabric that is impermeable to water or coated with a chemical finish that is impervious to penetration by water.
- **Breathability** – measure of how well a fabric allows moisture from bodily perspiration to escape.

Selection of Rain Gear – In general, as a jacket’s resistance to water penetration increases, its breathability will decrease. You must determine the proper levels of water resistance and breathability (and price) for you. In general, the jackets and pants described below as “Waterproof Breathable” will be the most expensive items, while 100% Waterproof will be the least expensive.

1. **Low Water Resistance & High Breathability** – these types of jackets and pants are made of microfibers (fabrics that are very tightly woven together to resist water penetration) and are best for highly aerobic activities such as running, mountain biking and rollerblading. They will shed a drizzle and short, light rainfall, and allow a great deal a perspiration to escape. These products do not generally provide enough protection from the elements to be appropriate for the WFSI summer trip.
2. **Water Resistant Breathable** – these jackets and pants are constructed in 2 layers - a microfiber shell (the outer layer) and a water resistant membrane or laminate (such as Gore-Tex®) underneath. Most also have a thin nylon liner or mesh to protect the membrane. These products are also good for highly aerobic activities, and will shed a few downpours before allowing water to penetrate. They will also allow moderate amounts of perspiration to escape.
3. **Waterproof Breathable** – these jackets and pants are constructed in 3 or 4 layers. The shell is treated with a water repellent chemical and may be labeled “WB” for waterproof breathable or “DWR” for durable water repellent finishes. The membrane or laminate (such as Gore-Tex®) lies underneath this outer layer. The next layer may be either the nylon or mesh liner, or a wicking layer to assist in pulling perspiration away from the body. These products sacrifice breathability for water resistance. They will, however, become damp on the inside during a continual downpour.
4. **100% Waterproof Non-Breathable** – these jackets and pants are usually made of plastic or vinyl and are 100% impervious to water penetration. You will remain dry in these fabrics, but perspiration will not be able to escape.

Some jackets and pants will also offer a variety of ventilation-enhancing features, such as mesh-lined pockets, a covered meshed ventilation area on the back of the shoulders, and underarm ventilation areas and/or zippers. Many jackets also offer zippers with water protective covers or flaps to prevent water from entering.

You should also beware of the jacket's hood. Hoods which fold down, roll up, or even zip into the jacket's collar make the collar extremely stiff and hard to close around the neck. The best hoods are constructed as an integral part of the jacket, with a minimal number of seams.

Local Stores – *Outdoor Source* has many of the highest quality items on display, but they are very expensive.

- *Dick's Sporting Goods* at Polaris, 614-985-4729
- *Gander Mountain, Inc.* at Reynoldsburg, 614-856-0066
- *Outdoor Source* at Kingsdale Center in Upper Arlington, 614-457-3620
- *Sports Authority* on Sawmill Road, 614-799-0100
- *Surplus World* on Morse Road, 614-475-1111

Online Sources – The WFSI leaders purchase most of their personal equipment and WFSI equipment from *Campmor*. *Campmor* usually has the best price for each product.

- *Cabela's* at www.cabelas.com
- *Campmor* at www.campmor.com
- *REI* at www.rei.com
- *Sierra Trading Post* at www.sierratradingpost.com