

Packing Lists for Burningman

You need a lot of stuff to be safe and comfy on the playa. But if you bring too much, you can get lost in all of it and spend half your burn looking for stuff. Figuring out just how much to bring is an art form—one you'll spend years perfecting if you get bitten by the BM bug.

Here are the Barest Minimum Essentials you need to bring with you. I don't care how poor, how busy or how scattered you are. Don't be a Sparkle Pony. Be radically self reliant and provide these Barest Minimum Essentials for yourself.

Barest Minimum Essentials

Water—1.5 gallons per person per day	Five gallon bucket—for use in Alpha Conditions, as a stool, chair, container for stinky trash, etc
Cup or water bottle	First aid kit
Food	Prescription meds
Tent	Emergency blankets
Bedding or sleeping bag	Compass—securely attached to your Survival Pack
Pad or air mattress	Duct tape
Rebar bent into candy cane shape	Zip ties
Rebar covers	Multi tool
Tickets	Vinegar or baby wipes
Dust mask	Lotion
Goggles—Buy them for function, not fashion	Lip balm
Sun block	Blinky flashy lights for night
Warm clothes for night	Survival pack, back pack, camel back—something to carry essential supplies with you as you roam the playa
Heavy duty, closed toe shoes	
Socks	

The Barest Minimum Essentials will keep you alive and somewhat comfy on the playa.

But you probably want to survive in comfort and style. Here's how to go about doing that:

Make Your List

1. Think in terms of kits and modules. This keeps your gear organized and accessible. Visualize what you'll need for each example. Every. Little. Teeny. Tiny. Thing. There are no stores and you're not at home. What do you need to bring? For example:

There and Back—Travel Bag	What clothes, toiletries, TICKETS, directions, electronics, chargers, etc do you need on the trip up? Make a big envelope with TICKETS, printed directions (you could lose your phone), copies of your ID (in case you lose your wallet but still want to pick up will call tix), notebook, pen, etc.
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There and Back—Exodus Bag	<p>When your brain is fried, your body destroyed and you've got a perma grin plastered to your sleep deprived face—you can look around at dust covered stuff and say, “Crap! Where's my wallet? Do I have any clean clothes for the ride back? Where's my toothpaste?!?”</p> <p>Or you can pack an Exodus Bag and reenter the Default World in ease and comfort. After you unload, put your Exodus bag in the front seat of your car. Lock the door and go play!</p>
Food—dry, cold, cooking	What food are you bringing? How will you store it? What do you need to cook and eat it? Money for ice?
Shelter	Tent? Shade? Rebar? Rebar covers? Trailer? Power?
Camp Tools	What tools do you need to set up and tear down? MOOP before leaving? Emergency repairs to tents, shade, vehicles?
Hygiene- personal	How will you keep clean? Shower and gray water disposal? Wipes?
Hygiene-camp	How will you collect trash? Wash your hands? Keep your shelter clean? Dry your trash? Get rid of gray water? Keep stuff from blowing away?
Costumes-Day	What are you wearing during the day? How will you pack it? Goggles, dust mask, silk scarves? Sun hat, sun block? Sturdy, comfortable boots or shoes?
Costumes-Night	What are you wearing at night? How will you pack it? Goggles with clear lenses, dust mask, silk scarves, headlamp?
Costumes-Special Events	Are you going on a Unicorn Stampede, Santa Rampage or to the White Party? Etc. Goggles, dust mask, silk scarves? Are you spinning fire?
Medical Kit for Camp	What can you take care of without going to the medical tent? Splinters, cuts, scrapes, mild burns, allergies, diarrhea etc. Yoga mat?
Medical Kit for Your Bike	What meds do you need need with you? Srips, etc? What would be handy? Bandages, OTC meds, etc.

Bike Kit for Camp	What tools do you need if your bike breaks down? What do you need to keep it in good running order?
Bike Kit to Carry	What do you need if you have a flat, gunked up chain, etc while you're out and about?
Potty Kit	Ladies, what supplies do you need? Everyone, what happens when the porta potty is out of TP, hand sanitizer etc?
Toiletries--Camp	What do you need to take care of your skin, hair and body? Sunblock, sunblock, sunblock!
Toiletries--Bike	What do you need to take care of yourself while roaming? Sunblock, sunblock, sunblock!
Gifts	You've got the cutest things to give out, but where did you put them? How are you going to carry them on your bike?
Furniture	What are you going to sit on, cook on, put your coolers on?
Camp Lights	How are you going to see at night? Outside and inside? Extra batteries?
Personal Lights	How are you going to light your bike and your body so you can be seen--front and back? Do NOT be a darktard. I will find you and yell at you! And don't use glow sticks. They don't last and they turn into moop. Bad idea.
Sleeping	Bed? Extra sheets? Cover sheet to keep dust out? Ear plugs? Sleep mask? Pump for air mattress? Repair kit for air mattress? Battery op fan for daytime naps?
Communications	Radios? Calling cards? Message board at camp? Notebook and pens? Laminated Playa Map so you can find your friends?
Survival Pack	What kits go in your pack? Hint: Potty, Meds, Toiletries, Sex. What else? Snacks, water, compass, emergency blanket, extra contacts and solution, Playa Map, ziplocks for moop you find, camera, batteries, memory card etc. Always pack as if you aren't coming back for a full day and night. Cuz it's possible that you won't. Woot! Woot!

Sex Kit—Camp and Bike	Lube, condoms, edible undies, etc.
Transportation—Bike, Art Car, Walking	Bike trailer, basket or box? Art car gas? Metal magnetic case to hold extra set of car keys? Walking shoes, orthos, padding, extra laces?
Trailer/RV	Sheets to cover furniture? Plastic on floor? Bath mats on top of plastic? (Remove screens before playa. Tape windows with painters tape.) Generator? Gas? Batteries? Septic service arranged?
Alpha Conditions	<p>Extra food and water? Emergency blankets? Compass? Goggles, dust mask, silk scarves? Two filter gas mask style respirators, heavy duty eye protection, bull horn, rope? Cards and games to pass the hours? Five gallon, sealable bucket for human waste?</p> <p>READ THIS—REQUIRED! http://www.damer.com/pictures/events/burningman2002/blowout/alphaguide.html</p> <p>The link is on the Newbie Orientation Page as well. Read the back of your ticket. You. Could. Die. Or be SERIOUSLY injured. I like my eyes. I don't want them sandblasted to a bloody pulp. How about you? Those goggles aren't just for show.</p>
Rain	Thin trash bags to make into rain ponchos? Rain ponchos? Five gallon, sealable bucket for human waste.
Skin Repair Kit	Cerave lotion, lip balm, cotton gloves, shea butter, coconut oil, Dr. Bronner's soap. Etc?
Duct Tape	It's your friend.
Fire Spinning Kit	Dump bucket, fuel, toys, spin off bucket, intergalactic towel, etc. How will you carry this on your bike?

2. Keep a notepad out on your kitchen table. Use it for reminders from now thru packing time. Use a spreadsheet, word processing program or Asana software to make your packing list. Yellow legal pads work if a computer isn't handy. Prioritize your list with the most important stuff on top and not so important stuff on the bottom. Pare your list as needed. Ask a veteran for advice. No matter what, be sure the Barest Minimum Essentials are packed and ready to go.

3. Google Packing Lists for Burningman and check out the Tucson Newbie Orientation files on FB. Look them over for ideas.
4. The more time you spend carefully preparing your packing list, the less time you'll spend sweating in the sun and searching for stuff that you forgot to bring.

Get Your Stuff

5. Shop for things you need. Post online for used gear. Ask to borrow stuff if necessary.
6. Get prescription meds refilled now. Make a separate, emergency kit with your essential meds in case the primary kit gets lost. Pack it in a completely different bag, box or bin. Pack extra contacts and solution the same way.
7. Important Lady Advice—Get a scrip for yeast infections, (The Fluconazole pill is great and easy to pack) and UTI's before you go. Even if you don't get them usually. There's something about the playa that makes them much more common. Be prepared!

Organize It!

8. Put all your stuff for a kit or module on the table. How can you shrink your kits? Can you put pills in smaller bottles, remove packaging from stuff, wrap medical tape around a pencil? Consolidate whatever you can.
9. Now, what containers do you need for your kits? Cosmetics bags, ziplock freezer bags, plastic of metal boxes and tins, Camel Back, etc. Do you need to attach this kit to your bike? What will you use? Label everything. Use fabric paint on cloth bags.
10. Use clear plastic bins and a label machine for everything. Group your kits in the logical bin. Keep your stuff in a separate tent or room in your tent to minimize dust spreading to your bed.
11. Label your bike, camera, water bottles and survival pack with your name, number, email and camp address. Make a sign with this info and take a photo of it on your camera in case your label doesn't stick.
12. Put underwear and socks in ziplock bags. Pack in bins. The Very Well Organized Burner will bag individual outfits along with socks, undies, etc. (Small, clear trash bags work well. So do multiple ziplocks.) Then the VWOB will use the same bag to hold dirty costumes. I aspire to this level of organization.
13. Plastic drawers make great playa furniture. They aren't even remotely dust proof. Bag everything in them and label.
14. Set up your tent and other crucial gear two weeks before you go. Take careful notes on every

single, teeny tiny thing you need to make your crucial gear work. Make a list. Check it twice while packing. Got your tent but forgot the poles? You're hosed. Got your camp stove and gas but forgot the hardware for it? Cold food for you. Do your coolers leak? Sorry about all that spoiled food you don't get to eat.

15. Never put food in garbage bags. They are treated with chemicals to keep stuff from rotting. You don't want to be eating that, do you?

Essential Non-Packing Prep

16. Have your car serviced. Get your bike serviced. Do it tomorrow morning, first thing!
17. Ride your bike. Every day if possible. You'll get so much more out of your burn if you can get around to see things.
18. Make arrangements now, for house sitting, pet sitting, plant watering, etc.

Random Playa Tips:

19. Getting ready is more fun in groups. Come to OCD on Sunday Nights to learn how to spin glow or fire., Art Night on Tuesday nights to make playa costumes and decorate your bike and Church Night on Wednesday nights to socialize and have fun with other burners! For an invite, hit me up on Facebook.
20. Stay hydrated. Bring a big round drink cooler. Put some ice in it. Add a little water. Mmmm! Ice cold water all day long. Add some strong brewed tea to make a weak iced tea. It cuts playa dust and hides the plastic taste from Camel Backs.
21. Remove packaging that takes up space and makes up trash. Have a small trash can instead of a big one. Fold your trash and pack it tightly in the small trash can, then put it into a contractor's bag and smoosh down. It's possible for a camp of four people to end up with half a bag of trash.
22. If you leave a trash can out in plain sight, burners will cheerfully fill it for you.
23. Don't change your diet at BM. Spending half your burn in a porta potty is no fun!
24. Pee bottles. Make one. Use it. Ladies, make or buy a pee funnel. The less time you spend in the porta potty, the better. Never drink out of another person's lemon Gatorade bottle. Just saying.
25. Water trucks use non-potable, nasty water. Still, it's kinda fun to strip down and run after them for a quick shower.

26. Your skin will get irritated on the playa. Be sure your costumes are soft and comfy or you won't wear them. You'll prolly wear half the stuff you bring. Honest.
27. Most people don't eat all the fresh fruit and melons they bring. They make for very smelly trash!
28. Make a place to hang your goggles, dust mask and headlamp and use it—every single time! Also, pack extras. Headlamps especially seem to disappear at an alarming rate.
29. Take care of your hands and feet. Lotion, vinegar wipes and more lotion. Every night, before bed. Every morning, first thing. Cracked, bleeding hands and feet are no fun.
30. Pack a pair of slides to wear around camp with socks on. Before going out, clean and lotion feet, then put boots on. Leave the slides outside your tent or trailer so you track less dust in.
31. Make your bed up with three or four fitted sheets. As each sheet gets too manky for use, remove it to reveal the fresh sheet beneath. NEVER leave camp without making your bed and putting a dust cover sheet on it. You've been warned.
32. Instead of baby wipes, consider vinegar wipes. To make, buy a pack of microfiber cloths from Costco. Fill a large bowl with a one to one vinegar and water solution. Wet towels, wring out thoroughly, fold and put three to a ziplock bag. Tada! Playa wipes that neutralize the alkaline dust, are reusable for years and won't irritate sensitive skin. These will keep for months so make them as soon as you can.
33. Silk scarves from thrift stores are your best friend. Cool and sun blocking during the day, warm at night. They are colorful and they take up next to no room. Wrap around your neck to stay warm, around your face as a dust mask, around your shoulders to stop sun burn.
34. If you need help, most vets are happy to help. Just ask! Have a great burn!! We'll see you in the dust.

