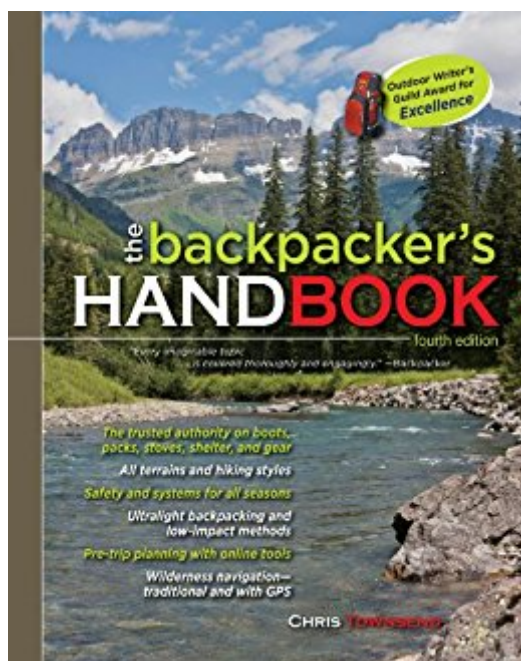


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# The Backpacker's Handbook, 4th Edition



## Synopsis

What you need to know before you hit the trails Whether you are backpacking for the first time or a veteran follower of the trails, this enormously practical guide includes everything you need to know, from essential techniques such as map and compass work to the skills needed for more remote wilderness journeys. The Backpacker's Handbook also gives you the latest information on gear. You'll find the last word on: How to choose packs and footwear "and make sure they fit What clothing to take on the trail Tents, tarps, stoves, water purifiers, and other gear GPS, cell phones, and other electronic devices And much more Reviews from previous editions" The most up-to-date and comprehensive guide to equipment and technique available anywhere." --Backpack (UK) "A clear and comprehensive primer on backpacking gear. Townsend's knowledge is immense." --Sierra "Belongs in every bookcase dealing with outdoor topics. . . . Chockablock full of useful, practical, commonsense info. . . . If you tramp the outdoors, get this book." â "Maine Sportsman" For those thinking of taking a backpack journey, The Backpacker's Handbook is required reading." â "Daily Local News (West Chester, PA)

## Book Information

File Size: 21328 KB

Print Length: 480 pages

Simultaneous Device Usage: Up to 4 simultaneous devices, per publisher limits

Publisher: International Marine/Ragged Mountain Press; 4 edition (October 14, 2011)

Publication Date: October 14, 2011

Sold by:Â Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B006M9FZUI

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #50,745 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #11 inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Sports > Outdoors & Nature > Hiking & Camping > Camping #14 inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Sports > Outdoors & Nature > Hiking & Camping > Excursion Guides #32 inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Travel >

## Customer Reviews

It's been about 9 months since I read through the book so it's no longer fresh, but I did make some notes as I read it on things that stuck out or that I questioned. Overall, it's well written and the author is quite well-known and experienced. However, his experience is mainly with long trips with a fair bit of off-trail work, which corresponds to maybe 1% of the backpackers out there. Unlike Andrew Skurka, another accomplished long distance, off-trail backpacker, Chris Townsend has unfortunately not fully embraced going lighter so he's carrying more weight than necessary. For example, on his 75-day trip on the Pacific Northwest Trail (runs near the border with Canada) his base pack weight (everything carried in or on the pack including it) was about 20 pounds, which is pretty light compared to 20 years ago. However, Skurka's base weight never reached 20 pounds during his 6-month Yukon-Alaska trek and included almost 7 pounds of packrafting gear in some seasons. While I did enjoy and appreciate Townsend's anecdotes, he had this annoying habit of saying he preferred various gear items that have long been discontinued. While I understand any "gear" book would quickly become outdated anyway, I didn't find it at all helpful to know about all this great stuff I can never get. He did at least give a fairly comprehensive overview of the various options available and provide some pros and cons. Unfortunately, he passed over or dismissed a few important things. One example is Frogg Toggs (or more commonly the even lighter DriDucks), which are very good rainwear for the average backpacker that won't be doing off-trail bushwhacking. The only disadvantage is they snag easily which is enough for Townsend to essentially dismiss them.

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