

## The Gear According to Frank

To stay warm and comfortable, I always like to start from the skin and work out. Often people like to start with a parka and work in; but I think that is the wrong direction.

First, if it's not broken, don't try to fix it. If you have a clothing system that has worked for you in sub-zero temperatures, then you probably will want to stick with it.

Nevertheless, I would like to share my recommendations.

1. Natural fibres work better than synthetics. I prefer Merino wool in layers. A combination of a medium weight, layered with expedition weight gear is super. Merino wool retains its thermal value when damp and does not start to smell the way synthetics do after a few days of camping. A spare heavy-duty sweater is always a good idea for back-up. If you don't want to have wool next to your skin, then use silk for your first layer.
2. Wool socks are essential. You need 6 to 8 pairs for most trips. If your feet are happy, then you will be happy. The more socks you have the better. Expedition weight Merino wool socks work best, but you may want to have a few medium-weight pairs as well.
3. A good thermally-efficient hat: you need a hat that is truly warm, not a fashion statement. It should fold down to cover cheeks, ears and the back of your neck. Most hats are fastened by velcro. The lining can be fleece or wool. The hat should also have a brim for sunny days, to protect your eyes – especially important on lakes and rivers. You may want to have a liner under the hat.
4. A comfortable face protector that fits well with your hat will help minimize skin exposure. There are many different styles and fabrics to choose from – you need to try some of the options to find one that both fits well and feels comfortable. The neoprene models are good, but there are styles that have wind-stop fabric and thin fleece, and these are also effective.
5. In addition to the face protector and hat with a brim, you will also need a good pair of sun glasses. You may already have prescription sunglasses – those are great. If not, you may want to try tinted goggles.
6. A good LED headlamp. There are so many models available now, that you can take your pick. You will want one that has different settings for distance and close-up, high and low beam, for more versatility and greater energy efficiency.



# MUKTUK MUSHING CHECKLIST

*Now is the time to start organizing your gear for your upcoming trip to Muktuk. Here is a checklist of things you may want to bring to make this the best experience possible.*

## **Clothing:**

- Warm hat or toque (wool, polar fleece, fur);
- Balaclava or face mask (essential; neoprene is one option);
- 2 pairs of close fitting gloves (marino wool or thinsulite, for example);
- 2 pairs long underwear (top & bottom – silk and/or marino wool; please avoid synthetics like polypropylene);
- 2 pairs long pants (wool, fleece);
- 1 pair insulated coveralls or ski pants (we can supply if necessary);
- 2 long-sleeved shirts (flannel, wool or synthetic blend);
- 2 warm wool sweaters or polar fleece tops;
- 4 to 6 pairs heavy weight wool socks and 2 pairs capilene, polypropylene or lightweight marino wool socks (note: you can never have too many socks);
- Sweatpants and sweatshirt for sleeping (not cotton); and
- Insulated boots for the yard; we will provide sub-zero boots for trips.

We can provide parkas, pants, boots and mitts if you do not have your own.

## **Personal Equipment**

- Sunglasses and/or goggles (if you wear glasses or contact, goggles are particularly useful in extreme cold conditions);
- Pocket knife;
- Flashlight (small) and headlamp;
- Toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, towel, and medications;
- Sun screen, lip balm, hand and body lotion;
- Camera and film (extra batteries, if kept under your parka will stay warm and keep the camera functional);
- Personal medication and a copy of any prescription you might need filled, along with contact information for your doctor or HMO;
- Copy of travel insurance or other insurance that provides coverage while you travel; and
- **Passport and photo ID** Please ensure that you have an up-to-date machine-readable passport (with a bar code for scanning). All travellers should carry these, including American and Canadian visitors.

One other important thing to consider is health and travel insurance, if you are not already covered. Muktuk has liability insurance, but does not offer individual health insurance.

Lastly, please let us know if you have any special dietary needs or personal limitations, if you have not done so already. We will do our utmost to accommodate you.