



DMAT Personal Equipment List/Gear Guide
By: Jonathan Malloch, TN-1 DMAT
V7.6

Greetings Motivated and Prepared Team Mates. Hopefully here you will find some assistance in putting together your deployment kit. **Section 1** is the basic kit and includes a checklist of the minimum gear you will need for a deployment. **Section 2** is a general discussion of luggage requirements and the rationale for such. **Section 3** is a comprehensive list, essentially a compendium of extensive feedback and personal experience. While it is lengthy, and perhaps excessive, it is only a guideline for the development of your personal deployment kit. **Section 4** is a discussion of particular items on the list in an effort to help you select the best product for the conditions and the best value for your money.

When deployment orders are issued, simply print out the checklist and check it off as you pack. As always, take from the knowledge of your teammates and leadership. Never hesitate to ask questions. As well, share your knowledge. This list is dynamic and always improving and your feedback is welcomed.

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TN-1 DMAT: Answering The Call



Section 1:4

FAST PACK LIST V7.6

Minimum required gear checklist

Main Bag

Clothing:

- Uniforms – 3 sets: (3 BDU blouses, 3 BDU pants, 3 TN-1 orange team shirts)
(Depending on travel orders, you may be wearing one full set of uniform clothing)
- Hats, Boonie type/Team Ball Cap – (Both are preferred).
- Underwear – 3 *
- Socks - 3
- Belt, Black – 1 (2 preferred)
- Boots*
- Civilian Clothing: 1 set (pants, shirt, and socks)

Toiletries:

- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Razor w/ blades
- Shave cream
- Soap
- Shampoo
- Deodorant: (unscented attracts less bugs)

Sleep Gear:

- Sleeping bag *

Miscellaneous:

- Water: 4 quarts. (Nalgene bottles are nearly indestructible and leak resistant)
- Rations/Food: at least 2 MRE's (Meals Ready to Eat) or similar "heater meals".
- Flashlight: (it doesn't have to be big, just reliable and water tight)
- Batteries: (don't buy "Heavy Duty" they last ½ the time of regular batteries)
- Plastic Mug and Spoon

Jump Bag:

- Rain Jacket and Pants
- Work gloves
- Eye Protection/safety glasses
- Hearing protection: (soft ear plugs for work in and around aircraft and day sleeping)
- Headlamp * with a spare bulb
- Spare Batteries
- Medical Equipment, Personal: (Stethoscope/EMT Scissors/hemostat/gloves etc.)
- Water: 2 quarts (two Nalgene water bottles or hydration system)
- Snacks: High energy, Snickers, Peanut M&M's,

On Your Person:

- Federal I.D., Federal Credit Card, Yellow Immunization card and Drivers License/Wallet
- TN-1 DMAT Emergency Contact card
- Dog tags (Some military pilots will not allow you aboard without dog tags)
- Watch
- Critical Medications/Allergy Information-bracelet or allergy dog tag

**OBJECTIVE:**

The objective in developing your personal gear is to enable you and your team is to be self sufficient in nearly any conditions for approximately 3 days or 72 hours. After that time it is generally accepted that additional supplies will become available. To somewhat complicate this is the fact that team members are somewhat limited in how much weight we can carry and how many bags are allowed. **A basic load should include: 2 bags, sufficient for 3 days, including 6 quarts of water.** **Current NTSB restrictions on water may require flexibility when on commercial aircraft.** Also, we assume and some sort of shelter will be available, hence **personal tents will not be discussed here.**

Equipment Bags/Luggage:

You will need **one main bag** (large 6,000-10,000 cubic inch or a bag with dimensions of approx. 15x30x15 inches to 16x36x16 inch or a similar sized suitcase) **WITH WHEELS** and **one smaller “ready bag/jump bag”** that you will carry with you on your flight or in your vehicle. **The main bag will be checked** for air travel and/or may be palletized for transport via military air or ground convoy; hence, it may not always be readily available to you. **The Jump Bag will stay with you.**

Main Bag Considerations:

Many times I have watched teammates literally carrying 90+ pounds of gear through huge airports wishing they had a bag with wheels. With a minimum Fast Pack your main bag can run 25-35 lbs. For the Comprehensive Pack out, your bag may weigh 50-70 pounds fully loaded depending on how you outfit yourself. Likewise, I have seen team bags come off the luggage belt in shreds, with straps broken, seams burst, or simply abraded through not due to abuse, rather it was simply not the quality needed for this type of travel and weight. Standing in an abandoned airport with no power for 300 miles with your gear in a pile is the wrong time to figure out the \$50 dollars you saved buying a “bargain” bag was a bad idea. It may be impossible to get a replacement for some time.

I have personally purchased and test packed no less than 10 Main Bags before some great ones emerged. They have ranged from \$60-\$300. You **DO NOT** have to spend \$300 for a good bag. I have below linked a few excellent bags. **THESE ARE ONLY SUGGESTIONS** to get you pointed in the right direction and provide visual examples of what we are discussing. The final decision is yours. I’ve tried a lot of bags that failed to support the weight or volumes loaded in them. I’m sure there are many more excellent bags that I have yet to try.

Additionally, I’ve tried many bags that have excellent zippers, good wheels and tough nylon that failed at the frame due to weight. As in, the bottom simply bends under the weight of the load. Avoid bags that don’t have very rigid bottoms or internal frames or rails that run the length of the bag to the wheel end. Some very excellent examples of good bags are listed below.



Main Bag Examples:

High Sierra 36" Drop Bottom Rolling Duffel: This can usually be seen at Sierra Trading Post and Campmor. The High Sierra 36" Drop Bottom Rolling Duffel is a very nice bag with a Lifetime Warranty. This bag normally retails for near \$200, but can sometimes found for under \$70 here. I have one with several deployments on it as do several team members and it's a great bag for the money.

<http://www.sierratradingpost.com>

<http://www.campmor.com>

BlackHawk Enhanced Diver's Travel Bag: Several of the team members have these and are very happy with them. I've seen them for less than \$150. This is an outstanding bag w/ a lifetime warranty. (See Chief Security Officer Greg Smith for current pricing)

<http://www.blackhawk.com/product1.asp?P=21DT>

Cabelas Extreme Wheeled Duffel: This bag is utterly bombproof, has a lifetime warranty and is worth the price but it is expensive. You will likely never need another one in your life.

www.cabelas.com

L.L. Bean and Land End also have some higher quality very rugged rolling duffels starting around \$120. These have lifetime warranties.

www.llbean.com

www.landsend.com

The North Face, MountainSmith, Mountain Hardware and Eagle Creek are some of the finest bags available. They tend to be expensive and come with lifetime warranties.

www.thenorthface.com

www.mountainsmith.com

www.mountainhardware.com

www.eaglecreek.com



Ready Bag/Jump bag

This can be a simple backpack/daypack (preferred) or medium size duffel. Experience proves that having your hands free makes the backpack a better choice. It should be approx. 1200-3500 cubic inches. You may carry it aboard the plane and will check at the aircraft door, put it under your seat or in the overhead bin. It should be able to hold at least 1 quart of your water supply (many bags now incorporate internal hydration systems, which are great for field work in conditions where you may be at risk for dehydration). It will also need to be able to accommodate sufficient gear for you to remain fairly comfortable and operational should your main bag be lost or delayed. Contents should include: stethoscope, medic scissors, medical gloves etc., Energy food/snacks, water and reasonable comfort essentials such as a zip lock w/ dry socks, dry underwear, and baby wipes etc. It should contain basic protective essentials such as a rain poncho/parka, gloves, eye protection, hearing protection, sun block, and a few other things that will be specifically outlined later.

Jump Bag Examples:

Mountain Smith Approach II: This is about 2500 cubic inches and very comfortable. I have one that is so far, quite durable. Can be found for around \$60 if you look, it normally retails for about \$100.

<http://store.yahoo.com/fulfillmentadventures/backpacks.html>

Kelty's "Redwing" is a very popular backpack and has year after year proved to be an excellent pack for both deployment and personal travel. These are also available at Dicks and REI and other outdoor equipment stores.

www.kelty.com

www.REI.com

Spec Ops makes very good equipment, and is U.S. made. The "T.H.E. Pack" (The Holds Everything Pack) is a very tough bag. You can view and try on this pack at GT distributors in Rossville Georgia (about 10 minutes from Erlanger Hospital in Chattanooga and it can be had for just over \$100.) Some team members carry this bag and are very happy with it.

www.specopsbrand.com/main.html

Camelbak BFM, HAWG and the Motherlode: These are excellent choices and have extensive field use. They are worth the price and hold up very well. They can also be seen at GT Distributors in Rossville Georgia. Several team members use the Motherlode and the comfort, versatility and value is exceptional. Best price on Motherlode is around \$140 if you look.

www.camelbak.com

BlackHawk: Several styles available and offers excellent quality. (See at GT Distributors or contact Chief Security Officer Greg Smith)

www.blackhawk.com



Section 3:4

Personal Equipment Checklist – Comprehensive: V7.6

CHECKLIST: BOLD is required gear (The Fast Pack list). The rest is highly recommended but optional. (* see reference notes for discussion of certain items)

Main Bag:

Clothing:

- Uniforms – 3 sets: (3 BDU blouses, 3 BDU pants, 3 TN-1 orange team shirts)**
(Depending on travel orders, you may be wearing one full set of uniform clothing)
- Hats, Boonie type AND Team Ball Cap – (Both are preferred).**
- Underwear – 3 ***
- Socks - 3**
- Belt, Black – 1 (2 preferred)**
- Boots***
- Sock Liners 3 *
- Compression Bag, Clothing type: (Coleman 3 pack at Wal-Mart for < \$10 or Eagle Creek)*
- Shower shoes / Flip-flops / Tevas etc. 1
- Civilian Clothing: 1 set (pants, shorts, shirt, socks etc.)
- Sleepwear (scrubs, shorts, t-shirt etc.)
- Swimwear
- Tennis Shoes
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Cold Weather Clothing: (optional and weather dependent)

- Field Jacket/ Parka, Polarguard or similar, NOT DOWN (weather dependent)
- Jacket, synthetic fleece
- Pants, synthetic fleece
- Gloves, synthetic fleece
- Socks, Synthetic: winter weight NOT COTTON
- Thermal underwear, synthetic NOT COTTON
- Hat/cap, wool or synthetic
- _____
- _____



Main Bag Continued:

Toiletries:

- Toothbrush**
- Toothpaste**
- Razor w/ blades**
- Shave cream**
- Soap**
- Shampoo**
- Deodorant: (unscented attracts less bugs)**
- Hand wipes
- Floss: (can double as high strength sewing thread)
- Foot powder
- Moleskin
- Toilet Paper/paper towels: (several yards inside a zip lock to keep it dry)
- Insect repellent: (3M Ultrathon available at Wal-Mart)
- Sun block
- Chapstick
- Tums/antacids
- Comb/brush
- Washcloth *
- Towel *
- Safety pins (3 large)
- Small Mirror: (unbreakable travel type)
- Meds: Prescription and Non prescription pain relievers; Tylenol, Advil, etc
- Spare Glasses in hard case
- Spare Contact Lenses
- Contact Lens Solution
- Hearing protection: soft earplugs (essential for day sleepers during shift work)

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Sleep Gear:

- Sleeping bag ***
- Compression Bag*
- Mattress Pad, Foam or Air *
- Pillow *
- Ground Cloth (A military poncho doubles as an excellent ground cloth and shelter)

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Main Bag Continued:

Miscellaneous:

- Water: 4 quarts.** (Nalgene bottles are nearly indestructible and leak resistant)
- Rations/Food: at least 2 MRE's (Meals Ready to Eat) or similar "heater meals".**
- Flashlight: (it doesn't have to be big, just reliable and water tight)**
- Batteries: (don't buy "Heavy Duty" they last ½ the time of regular batteries)**
- Plastic Mug and Spoon**
- Rope: 50 ft.** ("550 Paracord" is a great multi-use rope)
- Laundry Bag**
- Laundry Detergent: ***
- Sewing repair kit: small kit with 2-3 large safety pins**
- Duct Tape/gaffers tape: (Wal-Mart sells 10 yard rolls about the size of a deck of cards)**
- Garbage Bags:*** (3, Large, 45-55 gallon type)
- Zip lock Bags:*** (3, one gallon freezer bags. 3, one-quart freezer bags.)
- Fire: (Lighter, Waterproof Matches, magnesium starter and striker, etc.)**
- Knife: (Folding pocket type)**
- Leatherman type tool (optional)**
- Strip plug* (optional) (Wal-Mart \$5 or less)**

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Jump Bag:

- Rain Jacket and Pants**
- Work gloves**
- Eye Protection/safety glasses**
- Hearing protection: (soft ear plugs for work in and around aircraft and day sleeping)**
- Headlamp * with a spare bulb**
- Spare Batteries**
- Medical Equipment, Personal: (Stethoscope/EMT Scissors/hemostat/gloves etc.)**
- Water: 2 quarts (two Nalgene water bottles or hydration system)**
- Snacks: High energy, Snickers, Peanut M&M's,**
- Notepad w/ pen or pencil
- Sharpie / Waterproof marker
- Team Ball cap
- ZIP LOCK with the following:
 - Dry Socks
 - Sock Liners
 - Dry underwear
- Rations/Food: Food for 24 hours. (1-2 MRE's, hot chocolate packs...)
- ZIP LOCK with the following:
 - Medications: Prescription and Non-Prescription
 - Extra Contact lenses/glasses
 - Sun block
 - Chapstick
 - Hand wipes
 - Band-Aids: Fabric type
 - Matches, Waterproof.
 - Water Purification tabs
- Sunglasses
- Sleep Mask / Bandana (for night shift day sleepers)
- Camera
- Reading material
- Playing cards/travel games
- Cell phone charger (car and wall or converter)
- Trash Bag, large 1: (use as a bag cover, emergency rain gear or bivy)
- Duct Tape/gaffers tape: (Wal-Mart sells 10 yard rolls about the size of a deck of cards)
- Rope: Paracord, 50 ft
- Chemlights/Chemsticks, 3
- Helmet (optional)
- Knee Pads (optional)

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On Your Person:

- Federal I.D., Federal Credit Card, Yellow Immunization card
- Drivers License.
- TN-1 DMAT Emergency Contact card
- Dog tags (Some military pilots will not allow you aboard without dog tags)
- Watch
- Critical Medications / Allergy Information-bracelet or allergy dog tag
- Money/Credit cards
- Pocket size notebook / log book
- Pen/ Sharpie / Waterproof marker
- Cell Phone
- Cell Phone Carrier:* (Soft, unbreakable type. NOT PLASTIC)
- Compass (optional)
- Whistle (optional)

BEFORE YOU TRAVEL:

Make a photocopy of all important documents and cards: Lay the contents of your wallet on a photocopier and copy front and back. Leave a copy at your home in a secure place and a copy with someone you trust who you can contact if your wallet is lost or stolen.



Section 3:4 ***Personal Equipment Issues and considerations***

Given the very nature of our mission, we are often working in less than ideal conditions. Plan on high heat, high humidity and long hours. As well, laundry service or facilities may be unavailable. Clothes washed in a trash bag or buckets and hung to air dry may be the norm. At times uniforms may be worn for 2-3 days, depending on how dirty it gets, how stinky one's teammates think they are and/or the lack of facilities. As well, these conditions wear out the body. Moisture and heat can break down the healthiest team mate. With this in mind, it is important to have equipment that takes care of you and can be easily cared for in the field if necessary.

Cotton Sucks. Literally: Cotton sucks up moisture and holds it. Once it's damp or wet, it tends to stay that way a long time. It doesn't efficiently wick moisture away from the skin. With the exception of our B.D.U.'s, we have options in selecting high performance synthetics that are easily washed and dried. Synthetics air dry relatively quickly, even in high humidity. I have been able to bucket wash good synthetics and line dry and wear within a few hours. Further, if things get really pushed, one can very comfortably put on damp synthetics and they will dry within minutes while wearing them.

Skin Breakdown: Experience on this team and others have shown serious skin breakdown related to retained heat and moisture that could have been avoided by selecting better undergarments. Obviously, this is a very personal choice but almost without exception, particularly in men, there have been significant issues related to this. Some were severe enough to render these individuals nearly immobile and essentially non-functional in the field. A quality synthetic undershirt can be very effective at controlling heat and moisture. In addition, it can quickly and easily be bucket or sink washed and air dried. It will keep the 'funk factor' down in your team shirt and BDU blouse and may extend the days between uniform washings.

Bottom Line: Synthetics Dry quickly, maintain support, help control heat and moisture in the skin.

Underwear suggestions: UnderArmor brand is incredible stuff. They make an extensive line of under uniform clothing for military, police as well as sport equipment for men and women. It's not cheap. **UnderArmor Heat Gear** and **5.11** underwear run \$16-20 a pair. I personally don't care for synthetic underwear but I would not deploy without these. There are many manufactures of this type of clothing such as 5.11, Duofold, Starter, etc. Dicks Sporting Goods, RockCreek outfitters, REI, or any good hunting/outdoor/police/military supplier should carry what you need. Look for good quality stitching, very flat seams and **NO COTTON CONTENT**. Additionally, when in a crunch, you can hand wash this stuff in the shower, ring it out, put in on and wear it. It will dry in 15 minutes and retain its shape, support and comfort.

www.underarmor.com

www.duofold.com

www.REI.com



Sock Liners: These are optional, but again, heat and moisture control are issues here. Field experience has had NDMS personnel with rapidly developing, and at times severe foot breakdown to the point of needing wound care. Heat, moisture and friction even in good fitting boots were the problem. A thin synthetic liner sock reduces all of these issues; most significantly it reduces skin maceration and friction. They are cheap insurance against issues that can render you immobile or at least cause a lot of discomfort while deployed. Fox River makes some of the best sock liners available. UnderArmor, Thorlo, Smartwool, etc are some of the other many producers of excellent socks and liners. Any good sporting goods store should have some to choose from.

www.foxrivermills.com

www.underarmor.com

www.thorlo.com

www.smartwool.com

Boots: Your first deployment is **NOT** the time to break in your new boots or discover friction or discomfort issues. Wear them around the house and in the yard before you deploy.

Clothing Compression bag: Eagle Creek Pack-It Compressor - 2 Pack clothing bag will allow you to pack your cloths in ½ the space. Very durable bag with a lifetime warranty. Item # 40119 <http://www.eaglecreek.com> or any good outdoor/backpack supplier

Washcloth and Towels: Again, cotton is nice but it's heavy and never dries. MSR makes very nice synthetics in washcloth and personal bath towel size. I don't care for the "Original" or the "Ultralight" as they are 'too synthetic' feeling. The "Personal" however is a very nice soft towel that is light and dries quickly. See it at Dicks, REI, RockCreek and any larger outfitter. I'm sure there are other manufactures of similar products that are just as good.

www.MSRcorp.com

Sleeping Bag: Many team members carry sleeping bags, some carry light weight zip up fleece blankets, some only blankets and sheets. This is again a personal choice, but you need something to sleep in. Cotton is not the best choice for all of the same reasons mentioned above. One thing to consider here is weight and size. This one item has the potential to take up the largest percentage of space in your main bag. There are many good choices out there that will compress to about the size of a loaf of bread or smaller. One option is a Coleman fleece blanket w/ a zipper available for \$20 at target. It gets fairly small and works fine. Some of the finest bags available at any price is made by **Wiggy's**, and you can get them for a bargain. He makes bags for special-ops and military teams all over the world. He will give federal employees 40% off anything he sells making the **desert bag** about \$80. Wiggy's is guaranteed forever. Another good, readily available deployment sleeping bag is the **Kelty Lightyear 3D 45**, a very nice, <2 lb. synthetic bag that gets very small and can be found for around \$90. The below links will often have sales w/ great deals on mid and high end sleeping bags for as little as \$50.

www.wiggys.com 1-866-411-6465

www.Kelty.com

www.Sierratradingpost.com

www.REI.com (go to the outlet section)

www.Campmor.com



Compression Bag: This is what makes your giant sleeping bag small. Essentially, this is a thin nylon or similar bag with straps that compresses your bag into ½ its size and reduces the amount of space it consumes in your main bag.

Granite Gear makes some of the best. RockCreek outfitters, REI and have some great choices as well. It's a good idea to take your bag to one of these places and try out the size you need. If you get the right size, you might get your pillow in there too.

This is a purchase where quality counts. Blowing out a lesser quality compression bag mid deployment leaves you with a sleeping bag that you now have to figure out how to pack in its uncompressed state.

www.Granitegear.com

www.rockcreek.com

www.REI.com

Mattress, Foam/Air: this will make that unexpected night on a gym floor or fire hall floor more bearable or can add an extra measure of comfort to your military cot. You don't have to spend a lot of money here unless you want to. There are many "Closed Cell" foam choices out there but one of the best is **Therm-a-rest Z-lite**. It is reasonably compact when folded, will not puncture and go flat. It weighs about a pound. It's minimalist to be sure, but it's better than cement or the ground. High end would be the **Therm-a-rest Prolight 3 or 4**. This inflatable is premium and goes for around \$100. It gets very small, weighs about a pound, and is very comfortable and so far very durable. Though I've never punctured one, I know the possibility exists. There is a long list of other choices between to two listed above as well as quality manufactures such as REI.

www.Thermarest.com

www.REI.com

Pillow: Personal choice here again. I like the Therm-a-rest compressible pillow. Compresses very small, is not an air pillow, rather a soft foam filled pillow that's very comfy. Sizes range from ½ size to full size pillows and work great. It has a soft flannel cover. I can compress my ½ size pillow down to the size of a grapefruit and it goes in my compression bag with my sleeping bag. Campmor.com has them on sale from time to time for around \$12. Retail is about \$25 for the large.

www.thermarest.com

Laundry Detergent: Some don't carry detergent. I do, and have used it every time. There are liquids and powders now available in concentrate that take up less space and weight in your pack. I pack mine in an 8oz Nalgene bottle placed in a Freezer Zip lock bag. Nalgene bottles are nearly indestructible and I've never heard of one leaking yet. Can be purchased nearly anywhere camping supplies are sold.

www.nalgene-outdoor.com

Garbage Bags: Choose large trash can size, 40 to 55 gallon size. These are useful for a lot of things: Emergency rain poncho/bivy sack, Protect your gear from rain, Do laundry in it, emergency shelter, window covers for day sleepers, suffocating a snoring bunkmate, etc...



Zip lock Bags: The 1 gallon size are useful for storing damp clothes/damp towels in when traveling, smaller bags are handy for holding small loose items, like batteries, matches/lighters/coins/powder detergents/important documents you want to keep dry, etc.

Strip Plug: On many occasions we have been assigned sleeping quarters that may have ONE outlet. The team will need to charge equipment/radios/sat-phones etc., and you may not be able to get a slot to plug your cell phone into. A strip plug may get you a spot and you can share outlets with your lucky friends! The tents we quarter in have limited outlets near the ceiling. A cord w/ strip will get some power down where you need it and give you more options for charging electronics as well.

Headlamp: The choices are nearly unlimited. For \$20-\$30 you can purchase an utterly reliable, lightweight and waterproof light that will allow you to work hands free. It's a good idea to try to keep its battery type similar to your other gear if possible.

PrincetonTec, Black Diamond, Pelican and many more make great lights.

Rock Creek, REI, or any good camping supplier should have what you need. Also, G.T.

Distributors Police supplies and Walter A. Wood Industrial Supply in Rossville GA. all carry a large selection of quality headlamps.

This is a purchase where quality counts: This is one of those items that you must be able to rely on. Quality is important. Your safety and your life could at some point depend on it.

Cell Phone belt holster/carrier: Countless times I have seen hard plastic cell phone belt clips fail in the field. During loading and unloading trucks, climbing in and out of aircraft and in and out of vehicles, carrying heavy gear through airports, etc., are all places to break your cell phone carrier. A nylon or canvas type carrier is far less likely to break. The choices are nearly unlimited and can be found at Lowes, Home Depot, many sporting goods stores, police/military and camping suppliers.

www.timbuk2.com www.mountainsmith.com (see accessories section for example)

SUMMARY: Effective gear does not have to be expensive but it does have to be carefully selected and functional. Let's learn from each other and be ready and able to "Answer The Call".



TN-1 DMAT: Answering The Call

