

# Required gear for NatureYear

In addition to basic play clothes that can get dirty, here is a list of gear your child will need to be comfortable outside in all weather. You can find examples of all of this gear on our Amazon Store page: <https://www.amazon.com/shop/commonground>. You do NOT need to shop through Amazon or purchase these specific products on the page, the Amazon page is just for your convenience. It is set-up as an "Amazon Store" for Common Ground, so a small percentage of sales via the page go back to Common Ground, but there is no additional cost to you to purchase through the Amazon Store.

Following this page are season-specific guides that explain how to use/layer each of these items.

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## Wool socks

- Needed for any days under 50 degrees
- At least 50% wool (check the product description)
- Thick cotton socks or fuzzy novelty socks will not work!
- You'll want a pair to wear and a pair to send as extras for wet days

## Sneakers or Hiking Boots

- When it is not cold/snowy, and sort of comfortable, closed toed shoes are fine for hiking and playing
- Fancy footwear is fine, but basic sneakers will also work
- Shoes will get DIRTY, please make sure they are not your only sneakers for school the next day!

## Mittens

- Mittens are much warmer than gloves
- We like mittens that have long cuffs that come to the elbow to keep snow out of sleeves
- Mittens (or gloves if your child is very anti-mitten) are typically used when there is snow on the ground

## Cheap stretchy liner gloves

- The stretchy, one-size-fits-all kind you can get at the dollar store work fine! Look for the acrylic/polyester ones instead of the cotton ones.
- Can be worn under the mittens when it is very cold out, and used by themselves in fall and spring.
- Buy a multi-pack, these tend to run away!

## Rain pants

- Required for all kids and could be needed as soon as our first week!
- Rain pants are needed whenever the ground is wet, which is often in the fall through spring.

## Rain coat

- Any sort of waterproof rain coat or poncho will work as long as it keeps the wet out.

## Base layer

- A wool, silk, or polyester base layer (pants and a shirt) is needed for days under 50 degrees.
- The majority of our students wear a polyester base layer. Polyester base layers are smooth and easy to layer over.
- Make sure you do not buy "thermal" long underwear that is 100% cotton - check the label!
- Fleece base layers are not recommended - they get too hot and are hard to layer over (bunchy).

**Rain boots AND insulated snow boots**

--OR, just get INSULATED neoprene boots (like Bogs brand) to use from fall through spring as both rain and snow boots, just make sure you get the insulated version, not the rain boot only version.  
--Boots that are too small (consider that you are adding thick wool socks) restrict blood circulation and lead to cold toes

**Warm winter hat** (fleece or wool) that covers the ears and **fleece neck gaiter**

**Snow pants**

--or, you might choose a full body, one piece snow suit. If you get a full body snowsuit, you likely do not also need a very big heavy coat

**Fleece pants**

--Polyester fleece, not fleecy cotton! Label should say 100% polyester  
--On very cold days, children wear their base layer, then fleece pants, then snow pants (or, base layer, fleece pants, rain pants for wet late fall days)

**Fleece jacket or sweatshirt layer**

--Polyester fleece, not fleecy cotton! Label should say 100% polyester

**Insulated, waterproof or water resistant winter coat.**

--Some children preferred a base layer shirt, a warm fleece jacket, and a waterproof shell (see raincoats above) instead of one bulky coat, and that is fine!  
--DOWN coats are NOT recommended. Down does not stay warm when it gets wet, and kids like to roll in the snow! Synthetic fill coats are much better for NatureYear.  
--For kids who get cold easily, a down VEST works well under their coat/waterproof shell as an additional warm layer.

A **backpack** that can fit a lunch box and water bottle in it.

--This will probably get dirty and ideally is not the same bag as your child's school backpack.

A **duffel bag (gear bag)** that is closed with a zipper or drawstring (to prevent spilled bags and lost items).

--This stays on the front porch of the farmhouse during your child's NatureYear day and holds a change of clothes and extra layers.

**Name label stickers**

--or you can write names in with a permanent marker  
--Please label everything - every glove! If it has a name, we will make every effort to get it back to you. A stray black mitten with no name in it will probably be lost forever...

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Warm feet, head, and hands are the most important parts! Wool socks, rain pants, and base layer are probably the most frequently worn gear. The kids are moving so much that big heavy coats are quickly taken off, so focusing on layers, being waterproof, and keeping extremities warm are the biggest factors in having happy, comfortable kids.

# NatureYear: What to bring and wear in the FALL and SPRING

Please LABEL all clothes (especially gloves and hats) with your child's name!  
We know gear can be expensive and we want to help make sure it does not get lost.

## What to WEAR:

When temperatures are above 50 degrees, children should be prepared as follows:

- Long pants (not shorts) are recommended to prevent insect bites, poison ivy, and other minor injury.
- Short or long sleeved shirt
- Closed toed shoes (sneakers or hiking boots)

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## What to BRING:

**Backpack :** *This is our day bag that we keep with us as we move around campus each day*

- Lunch
- Waterbottle

**Gear Bag:** *This is the bag of extra things that we leave in the farmhouse – it is helpful to separate the day bag from the gear bag so that children are not carrying extra weight around campus or on hikes.*

- Waterproof pants and coat (*even if it is not raining! The ground and the things we climb and play on are often wet, so all children must bring or wear rain pants unless it is clearly very warm and very dry*)
- Rain boots (or closed toed sandals in very warm weather) in case we are doing water activities
- A fleece jacket (*polyester fleece, not fleecy cotton. Cotton does not stay warm if it gets wet*).
- A full change of clothes (pants, shirt, underwear, socks)

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# NatureYear: What to bring and wear in the WINTER

Please LABEL all clothes (especially gloves and hats) with your child's name!  
We know gear can be expensive and we want to help make sure it does not get lost.

## What to WEAR:

When temperatures are below 50 degrees, children need to wear **three layers** as follows:

1. Base layer next to skin:
  - wool socks
  - silk, polyester, or wool long underwear.
  - *No cotton socks or cotton long underwear in cold weather, not even thick, fuzzy cotton socks – they will cause cold feet!*
2. Middle layer:
  - Fleece pants (*polyester fleece, not fleecy cotton sweatpants!*)
  - wool sweater or fleece shirt/jacket.
  - A down vest might be added in very cold weather
3. Outer layer:
  - Waterproof pants and coat (*even if it is not raining or snowing! The ground and the things we climb and play on are often wet, so all children should arrive with rain pants or snow pants on if it is under 50 degrees out*)
  - The coat and pants may or may not also be insulated (*So, rain pants and a raincoat vs snow pants and a warm winter coat, for example*), depending on what layers are worn under it.
  - A warm, wool or fleece hat that covers the ears. A hooded balaclava also works well.
  - Waterproof mittens. A thin glove (like those cheap, stretchy ones) with a waterproof, insulated mitten on top works well.
  - Insulated, waterproof boots (like Bogs insulated boots or snow boots). Non-insulated rain boots are not warm enough once it is below 50 degrees.
  - A fleece neck gaiter or scarf

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## What to BRING:

**Backpack :** *This is our day bag that we keep with us as we move around campus each day*

- Lunch
- Waterbottle
- Optional thermos of warm milk, tea, hot chocolate, or other warm drink
- Extra pair of mittens (in addition to the pair your child is wearing)

**Gear Bag:** *This is the bag of extra things that we leave in the greenhouse – it is helpful to separate the day bag from the gear bag so that children are not carrying extra weight around campus or on hikes.*

- extra shirt
- extra pair of pants
- additional pair of wool socks
- rain pants or snow pants (whichever one your child is not already wearing)
- one more pair of mittens or gloves if you have them!