



Across Continents equipment list

Introduction

The kit list is organised into themed sections e.g. clothing, sleeping kit, camping and cooking equipment. Inevitably, the divisions are sometimes arbitrary, some considering, for example, the stove to be an integral part of the camping equipment. A series of field kits – for washing, maintenance and repair and administration – have been devised, and comprehensive details included. Inevitably, the equipment actually carried day-to-day undergoes regular refinement, reflecting both changes in the environmental conditions, as well as practical experience.



Stowage arrangements

Stowage arrangements within the panniers are outlined, and the contents of the handlebar bag covered in some depth. The aim is only to ever open the latter whilst riding, except for occasional access to one of the rear panniers for the cameras or wet weather clothing. All panniers contain waterproof liners, and a strict policy of never placing wet or unclean items within them adopted. So, for example, soiled clothing would be placed *inside* the appropriate front pannier, but *outside* the liner.

Philosophy

The philosophy adopted has been investment in the best possible affordable equipment, aiming to maximise reliability. Details of the expedition bicycle, cycle maintenance kit and spares outfit carried, together with a comprehensive expedition medical kit, are published separately.

Endorsement

Carriage or use of an item does not imply endorsement. However, if it survives four years on the road, that's probably a good sign.

Feedback

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure that the equipment list is as comprehensive as possible, accurately reflecting the kit actually carried, errors or omissions are entirely possible. Comments, queries, or suggestions for additional photographs, via the Contact page at www.acrosscontinents.org, are always welcome. Especially ideas as to further reduce the large quantity of AC adaptors and cables carried....

Luggage



Ortlieb Ultimate5 Classic bar bag [7 litres, 0.68 kg] – red - with GB sticker attached to the front

Ortlieb Front-Roller¹ Classic 2007 with QL1 system – red with black side panels x 2 [12.5 x 2 litres = 25 litres, 1.59 kg total]

Ortlieb Back-Roller Classic year circa 2004 with QL1 system – red with black side panels x 2 [20 x 2 litres = 40 litres, 1.90 kg total]

¹ Lined with heavy duty plastic rucksack liner – spare carried inside internal zip pocket

Custom made heavy duty waterproof bag to contain tent² and tarpaulin, with webbing straps to secure it longitudinally to top of rear pannier frame



Custom made heavy duty waterproof bottle bags – see overleaf - secured to tent bag using latter's integral webbing straps – one contains Primus 1.5 litre fuel bottle, the other a LIFESAVER bottle.

² Also suitable for stowage of limited quantities of suitably packaged rations



30 litre waterproof day sack liner x 2 – black - for rear panniers

Ortlieb Drybag PD350³ 35 litres – red - carried to provide additional capacity in less populated regions

³ When not in use, secured inside plastic bag and then taped tightly together to minimise volume occupied inside panniers

Clothing⁴

Specialized cycle helmet⁵Mountain Equipment Gore-Tex® Pro Shell Changabang jacket⁶ [M]Altura Night Vision waterproof / breathable cycling over-trousers⁷ [M]

Nike® fingerless yellow cycling mitts [L]

icebreaker thin Merino wool gloves [L]

extremities thick Windstopper® gloves [L]

extremities Gore-Tex© mitt outers [L]

Bridgedale thick wool socks x 2 pairs [10-11]

Jack Wolfskin thin fleece hat – can be worn under cycle helmet [One size]

⁴ UK sizes shown in square brackets: L = large, M = medium, S = small

⁵ Attached to the handlebars if not being worn

⁶ Cleaned approximately 3 monthly with appropriate Gore-Tex® cleaning and outer re-proofing agents; ingrained dirt removed most effectively when the jacket is gently scrubbed clean by hand

⁷ Cleaned as for Changabang jacket

PHD Extreme Balaclava [One size]
Columbia unisex sun hat [One size]
Polartec® Buff [One size]
Rohan Superfine Merino Crew LS long-sleeved top [Men's S]
Paramo men's briefs x 2 [M]
Rohan Superfine Merino Leggings [Men's M]
dhh padded Lycra cycle shorts [M]
Endura full length padded Lycra cycle leggings [M]
Jack Wolfskin Polartec® lightweight pullover style fleece [36-38" chest]
PHD Ultra Pullover⁸ filled with 900 loft down, plus stuff sack [M]
Rohan Ultra T t-shirt x2 [Men's M]
Craghoppers polyester/cotton lightweight shirt – with full length sleeves⁹ [M]
Rohan Goa's x 2 [MS to fit waist 27-30"]
The North Face® lightweight shorts¹⁰ [M]
Shimano Gore-Tex® SH-MT90L SPD cycling boots¹¹ [EU 44]
Teva® sandals – carried secured to top of rear panniers [UK 10]
Cascade Designs Ltd PackTowl® travel towel x 2

⁸ Routinely removed from stuff sack and aired even when not normally being used

⁹ Intended for cycling in very hot climates when greater protection required from the sun than could be afforded by a t-shirt

¹⁰ Intended for cycling in very hot climates as alternative to Lycra shorts

¹¹ SPD cleats removed approximately 3 monthly – cleaned, inspected for wear, greased (especially Allen bolts) and re-fitted

Sleeping kit



PHD Hispar 500 sleeping bag¹² filled with 900 loft down and fitted with a full length zip, plus stuff sack

Therm-a-Rest® Prolite 3 Regular sleeping mat, plus stuff sack

ajungilak Mammut Air Pillow, plus stuff sack

ajungilak Micro Lite-Tex® Lakenpose Mummy sleeping bag liner

¹² Routinely removed from stuff sack and aired even when not normally being used

Camping



Hilleberg Staika tent, including tent bag, 3 poles in separate bag, pole repair section, and 16 tent pegs (plus one spare Hilleberg titanium peg – can also be used as a peg extractor)



Hilleberg Tarp UL 10 tarpaulin – for covering bicycle when camping, or use over hammock in tropical conditions

Cooking arrangements



Primus Omnifuel multi-fuel¹³ stove-¹⁴ burner, fuel pump, fuel specific jets, multi-tool, windshield¹⁵, storage bag

Primus fuel bottles:

Fuel Bottle 0.6 (530 ml) – for use with stove as smaller volume to pressurise

Fuel Bottle 1.5 (1335 ml) – contents decanted into small bottle for use

Primus field service kit – contains replacement jets, consumable parts such as priming pad, silicon grease etc

Primus EtaPower cooking pot – 1 litre – with lid and net stowage bag; inside used for storing tea bags etc

¹³ Can accommodate propane/butane mix gas canisters with screw-on fittings, without need for separate adaptor

¹⁴ Instructions for use carried in supplied paper form, and as PDF downloaded from www.primus.se

¹⁵ Contained in plastic freezer box to avoid sharp edges damaging panniers or other items of kit



'Sea to Summit' plastic bowl – for food, and, when kit stowed, to cover cooking pot base so it does not cause damage to other items of kit

'Light my fire' striker

Weatherproof matches and striker, in small water resistant container

Cigarette lighters x 2 (different colours so one always used before the other)

Blue plastic mug

Lifeventure 'Spork'

Plastic freezer box – used to hold the smaller items of cooking equipment



60 ml Nalgene screw top bottle – contains washing up liquid¹⁶

Primus waterbottles¹⁷ x 2 – one with drinking cap, one with stopper

Freeze dried rations – emergency use only - Expedition Foods –
www.expeditionfoods.com – Beef & potato casserole (810 kcal) and pudding

¹⁶ Double wrapped in plastic bags – relatively low viscosity of washing up liquid and vibration on the road can result in leaks occurring through the screw thread – always ensure latter is wiped clean before securing top

¹⁷ Carried in bottle holders on bicycle frame

Field wash kit



The kit is carried in an Outdoor Designs (Size S) fabric stuff sack

Shaving kit – Gillette Mach 3 Turbo razor¹⁸, shaving oil¹⁹, plastic mirror²⁰

Travel toothbrush²¹, small tube of toothpaste, dental floss and dental brush²²

¹⁸ Spare blades carried in the Field Spares Kit

¹⁹ Miniature aerosols of shaving gel or foam – typically 50 ml - very difficult to source outside of Western Europe.
Shaving oil kept securely wrapped in plastic to avoid leakage

²⁰ Can also be used for signalling

²¹ Item shown subsequently replaced by a folding design – marked Banat – obtained in Istanbul, Turkey.
Considered more hygienic as easier to clean

60 ml Nalgene screw top bottle – contains shower gel²³

35 ml mini deodorant²⁴

Cotton buds²⁵

Nail clippers, with integral nail file

Small bar of soap²⁶

Small zip up wash bag²⁷

Bungees and straps

The kit is carried in an Outdoor Designs (Size S) fabric stuff sack

3²⁸ x thin (5mm diameter approx) black bungee straps – 1 x 1m, 2 x 0.5m

2 x webbing straps with securing plastic ‘Stealth’ buckles

²² Provided by dental hygienist in Malta – marked Butler Proxabrush Trav-Ler® - not shown – for use as alternative to floss. Retained for use when floss exhausted

²³ Usually purchased for use during non-riding days – residual decanted into 60 ml bottle for immediate use, or larger 125 ml Nalgene screw top bottle, itself wrapped securely in a re-sealable plastic bag to avoid leakage

²⁴ Very difficult to source outside of Western Europe. For special occasions only

²⁵ Approximately 20 carried, contained in small re-sealable plastic bag

²⁶ For use only if all other soap products exhausted. Pre-packed in plastic. Obtained from a hotel

²⁷ Purchased as part of a small travel wash kit. Provides rigidity and helps protect contents

²⁸ Further two bungees used to secure bottled water to top of rear pannier frame

Field maintenance and repair kit



The kit is carried in an Outdoor Designs (Size XS) fabric stuff sack

Gerber fold-up survival knife²⁹

Leatherman Blast multi-tool – pliers, scissors and bottle opener very useful

Toothbrush head – only for cleaning tent and sleeping bag zips

Sewing kit – mostly high strength black thread – with 3 needles

Thin cord – approximately 2 m

Spinnaker tape – 5 cm x 1 m x 2 – green³⁰ and black³¹

Small squares of sleeping bag inner material

Spectacles repair kit – selection of small screws, nose pads, miniature screwdriver, in plastic box

Loctite Super Glue – small tube

²⁹ More robust blade than the ones in the Leatherman Blast

³⁰ Primarily for tent or tarpaulin

³¹ Ideal for repairing small holes and worn patches of the black waterproof day sack liners used in the rear panniers

ThermaRest repair instructions

Ortlieb pannier repair kit³²

³² Also suitable for use with ThermaRest mattress, and Hilleberg tent and tarpaulin

Field spares kit



The kit is carried in an Outdoor Designs (Size S) fabric stuff sack

0.5mm 2H leads – for propelling pencil³³ - in small plastic tube

Toothpaste – typically 25 – 50 ml tubes³⁴

Dental floss

Butler Proxabrush Trav-Ler® dental brush

Clear sticky tape – small roll

Razor blades – normally 4 or 5³⁵

³³ Pencil normally used for notes as it does not run if it gets wet

³⁴ Considered sufficiently robust not to warrant additional packaging in plastic bag

Batteries³⁶ AAA x 3 x 2 for cycle lights

AA x 2 for Garmin GPS 60

DL2430 3V for Suunto X-Lander watch / altimeter

Suunto X-Lander watch / altimeter battery cover and waterproof seal

Lens for Petzl Tikka Plus head torch x 2 – one clear, one red³⁷

Pencil erasers

String – approximately 2 m

Combination padlock³⁸

Toothpaste head – for use as zip cleaner, or spare for scrubbing bicycle chain

Inflatable plastic globe³⁹

Alcohol free wet wipes for glasses, cameras etc..⁴⁰ – typically x 3

Selection of small, re-sealable clear plastic bags⁴¹

³⁵ Based on each one lasting for approximately one month. Carried in small re-sealable plastic bag

³⁶ All wrapped securely in plastic

³⁷ Useful for protecting night vision

³⁸ For securing belongings in hostel lockers etc..

³⁹ Not suitable for navigation. Carried in a small re-sealable plastic bag

⁴⁰ Carried primarily for occasional cleaning of netbook screen

⁴¹ Ideal for organising items, and for ensuring liquids such as suntan lotion do not leak onto other kit

Field administration kit

The kit is divided between a waterproof Exped Fold Drybag (Size XXS) and an Outdoor Designs (Size M) fabric stuff sack:

Dry bag contents

Moleskin notebook⁴² – small – approximately 14 cm x 7 cm – for expedition record keeping

Accounts notebook⁴³ – for expenditure tracking

Passport photographs x 25 – for visa applications⁴⁴

Across Continents business cards⁴⁵ – shows website address

International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis ('Yellow fever card') – contains details of blood group, and of all vaccinations received, including expiry dates

Youth Hotels Association (England and Wales) life membership⁴⁶ card

Cycle Touring Club (CTC) membership⁴⁷ card

European Health Insurance Card

US Dollar currency recognition guide⁴⁸

LIFESAVER® bottle Quick User Guide and Instruction Manual⁴⁹

Colour copy of passport - photograph and personal details page – and any current or future visas

Small notebook containing password prompts⁵⁰ for various websites, addresses for sending postcards and speaking notes about The Outward Bound Trust

⁴² Cheaper options exist, but Moleskin notebooks favoured for their durability, helping to provide a lasting record of the expedition

⁴³ Purchased in Istanbul – very compact ring-bound accounts book – approximately 10 cm x 5 cm

⁴⁴ Also useful for getting your haircut – useful to show the hairdresser what you want, without handing over your passport

⁴⁵ Very well received as a gift, sufficiently lightweight for a reasonable number to be carried. Small stock for day-to-day use carried in my wallet

⁴⁶ Organisation affiliated to Hostelling International

⁴⁷ Provides cycling third party liability cover worldwide, excluding North America

⁴⁸ To help recognise counterfeit notes or those no longer legal tender

⁴⁹ For use with LIFESAVER bottle water filtration system

⁵⁰ Semi-encrypted form – loss of the notebook would not enable anyone to be able to access the relevant websites

Small plastic sleeve containing small mementoes – typically business cards, receipts and tickets – for occasional dispatch back to the UK

Spare wallet

Fabric stuff sack contents

Laminated letter of introduction⁵¹ – provides simple explanation of who I am and what I am doing – translated into French, German, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Arabic, together with English version to remind me what it says

Paper copy of the Across Continents timeline – the four year programme in outline

Paper copy of the Thorn Bicycle and Tandem owners guide⁵², Thorn eXp cycle specification, Rohloff SPEEDHUB sprocket reversing/replacement notes⁵³

Small plastic ring-bound notebook – 5 cm x 10 cm – less paper contents, used as a ruler

Automatic pencil – 0.5mm

Small rubber eraser

A5 clear plastic sleeves x 6 – for organising paperwork, immigration and visa regulations etc

Spare automatic pencil – 0.5 mm - and pen

⁵¹ Relevant copy for day-to-day use carried in the handlebar bag

⁵² Relevant pages only

⁵³ Extracted from the Rohloff SPEEDHUB owners manual

Netbook and associated communications and recording equipment



Acer Aspire One netbook – Model ZG5 15GB with Windows XP – equipped with Office 2007, Skype, iTunes, Google Earth, Firefox web browser, Thunderbird e-mail client (inc MozBackup tool), Post2Blog blogging client, Onsatmail e-mail client (for use with Iridium 9555 satellite telephone), Movavi video editing suite, and McAfee security software

Carried in padded bag, together with small headset for use with Skype, and enclosed in a waterproof Exped Fold Drybag (Size S). HIPRO HP-A0301R3 AC adaptor and mains cable carried separately.

Netbook support kit

The kit is carried in a small Outdoor Designs (Size XS) fabric stuff sack

T-Mobile Mobile Broadband USB stick 120 – for use with GSM network

Overboard water resistant memory sticks (1GB) x3:

Applications software back-ups – for use with Garmin GPS receiver, Iridium 9555 satellite phone and video editing tools – stick tagged with a red tie-wrap for ease of identification

File back-ups; documents, blog posts, e-mail and Firefox back-ups – duplicated on 2 memory sticks

4GB memory stick – photographs, iTunes, and medical course notes back-up

Acer netbook System CD and XP recovery files – carried on a 2GB and 4GB memory stick respectively

Garmin GPS 60 GPS receiver⁵⁴ – with Garmin MapSource Version 6.13.7 (Trip and Waypoint Manager v5) software installed on netbook for data transfer to website.

Panasonic SDR-SW20 video camera – waterproof to 1.5m – with SanDisk Ultra II 15 MB/s 8GB memory cards x 2 (one fitted – approximately one hour recording time, although this very dependent on format), Panasonic VSK0695 AC adaptor and mains cable, and Lowepro Apex 60 AW padded case.

Note: Supplied video editing software not compatible with netbook screen resolution, so Movavi Video Converter 8 software installed to change proprietary video format to one suitable for use with Windows Movie Maker, supplied with Windows XP.

Panasonic Lumix DMC-G1 digital stills camera, with 14-45mm (Panasonic H-FS014045 0.3m-infinity) lens and sun shield, Hoya Pro1 Digital 52mm polarising filter, SanDisk Extreme III 30 MB/s SDHC 4GB memory card x 2 (one fitted – approximately 600 images @6MB each), USB cable, lens cloth and brush, Panasonic DE-A49C battery charger / AC adaptor and mains cable, and Lowepro TLZ Mini padded case.

GorillaPod – small camera tripod, compatible with both Panasonic SDR-SW20 video camera and Panasonic Lumix DMC-G1 digital stills camera.

Iridium 9555 satellite telephone and data modem, with USB cable⁵⁵, AC Travel Charger ACTC0701 and protective case.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Uses 2 x AA batteries; one set sufficient for approximately 3 months regular fixing – typically 10 times per day, with nightly transfer to the netbook. Receiver switched off between fixes

⁵⁵ For connecting integral satellite modem to netbook

⁵⁶ Handset is additionally stowed in the (unused) Garmin GPS 60 padded case, which is then kept inside a small waterproof dry bag

Apple iPod Shuffle, Sennheiser sport headphones⁵⁷, AC mains charger and USB connecting cable, with iTunes software installed on netbook. Headphone and USB cables secured with small velco fabric strips.

Mains rechargers and connecting cables⁵⁸



Mains rechargers – Iridium AC Travel Charger ACTC0701, Panasonic DE-A49C battery charger / AC adaptor, Panasonic VSK0695 AC adaptor and mains cable, and HIPRO HP-A0301R3 AC adaptor and mains cable - a LifeSystems World Travel Adaptor (Type SWA1.1), and connecting USB cables⁵⁹ are carried in an Outdoor Designs (Size M) fabric stuff sack.

⁵⁷ Not foldable, but more durable than other types

⁵⁸ Despite efforts to reduce contents to a minimum, the various AC adaptors and cables are a relatively bulky part of the communications and imaging equipment carried

⁵⁹ Except the USB cable for the Panasonic SDR-SW20 video camera, which is held inside the Lowepro Apex 60 AW padded case

Pannier organisation

Clothing and sleeping kit is stowed in the front panniers, minimising weight over the wheel, and thus handling difficulties. Cycle maintenance kit – tools and spares – together with medical supplies, field wash kit, field maintenance and repair kit, field spares kit, bungees and straps, rations and cooking equipment are carried in one of the rear panniers. The netbook and other electronics equipment and field administration kit are contained in the remaining rear pannier. A selection of items is carried in the handlebar bag for ease of access at the roadside:

Garmin GPS 60 GPS receiver

Suntan lotion – typically Factor 50+ and water resistant

Insect repellent – typically 50% DEET

Laminated letter(s) of introduction – relevant local languages

Local language phrase book

Notebooks for day-to-day jottings, plus pen

Sun miniature thermometer (with wind chill table)

Petzl Tikka Plus head torch

Cateye front and rear lights – when not fitted to frame

Osiris wrap-around prescription sunglasses, plus case

Spare glasses

Roadside puncture repair kit:

Park Tool TL-1 plastic tyre levers – set of 3

Schwalbe SV13 normal length Presta valve butyl inner tube 26” x 1.5-2.5” (559 x 40-62)

Bontrager Air Support pump x 2⁶⁰

Schwalbe Airmax Presta tyre pressure gauge⁶¹

⁶⁰ Critical item – hence two carried, one for immediate roadside access in handlebar bag, and a spare held inside field kit

⁶¹ Correct tyre pressures key for maximum tyre longevity. Schwalbe advise that above 2 bar it is not possible to judge pressure other than with a gauge

Topeak multi-tool – includes Allen keys, up to 6 mm

Specialized EMT Micro multi-tool⁶² – includes Allen keys, up to 6 mm

Specialized Flat Boy self-adhesive patch kit – set of 6 plus small sandpaper square⁶³

Park Tool TB-2C Emergency Tyre Boot – contains 3 patches

Section of old smooth road tyre – approximately 10 cm in length – for use in support of Emergency Tyre Boot

Miscellaneous

Suunto X-Lander watch / altimeter

Toilet roll⁶⁴, in ‘Sea to Summit’ bright orange waterproof bag

Kryptonite KryptoFlex bicycle lock with Yale 125/50 padlock⁶⁵

60 ml Nalgene screw top bottle⁶⁶ – contains liquid clothes wash

Spectacle Lens Cleaner – 30 ml spray and small cleaning cloth – carried in re-sealable plastic bag

Yellow fabric shopping bag, plus stuff sack⁶⁷

⁶² Second small multi-tool carried to enable removal and refitting of front wheel, not fitted with a quick release mechanism

⁶³ For **temporary** roadside puncture repair if all spare inner tubes have been used

⁶⁴ Emergency use only – locally purchased items used in preference, suitably wrapped in a plastic bag

⁶⁵ Two keys – one retained in cycle field maintenance and repair kit. Cable lock secured around the seat post when not in use

⁶⁶ Carried securely wrapped in re-sealable plastic bags to avoid leakage

⁶⁷ Purchased en route in France, very useful for shops that do not provide carrier bags