

Lightweight Backpacking Resources

Websites

- Backpacking Light Magazine (www.backpackinglight.com) | The most authoritative and comprehensive resource: in-depth gear reviews, how-to articles, make your own gear, industry trends; hosts very active and informative forum discussions among members. A subscription is required to access some content.
- GoLite's "GoLite Academy" (www.golite.com/howto/howto2.aspx) | Contains a series of articles that range from philosophical to practical, from beginning to advanced; an excellent resource for newbies.
- Trail Journals (www.trailjournals.com) | A popular online journaling site for long-distance hikers (both thru-hikers and section-hikers) who write about their experiences and leave tidbits for those behind them. The journals can be very helpful in getting a sense for the long-distance backpacking experience and for finding the most up-to-date trail conditions and happenings.
- Andrew Skurka (www.andrewskurka.com) | Features photos, video clips, written updates, Podcasts, and trip reports from Skurka's backcountry adventures, as well as advice on gear and backpacking technique, gear lists from all of his trips, and product reviews.

Books

- *Lightweight Backpacking & Camping*, edited by Ryan Jordan. The definitive text on lightweight backpacking – it's insightful, in-depth, comprehensive, scientific, and lengthy.
- *Lighten Up!*, by Don Ladigan. An excellent overview of lightweight backpacking – it's not as in-depth or as insightful as *Lightweight Backpacking & Camping* but it is certainly an easier and faster read.

Lightweight gear manufacturers fall into two categories: wholesalers and cottage. Wholesalers may have product lines that are distinctly different than conventional/heavy manufacturers, but their design philosophy and process, method of distribution, and warranty are essentially the same: they cannot accept custom orders; their products are "dumbed down" to appeal to more customers; most of their sales are done through dealers, but they often sell direct too; and their warranty is L.L. Bean-like (i.e. a literal lifetime warranty). Cottage companies are usually mom-and-pop operations and they are very niche: their products appeal to small group of customers and are suitable for one specific purpose; some are able to accept custom orders; they sell directly to consumers only; and they may or may not offer a warranty, usually not if their products are inherently not durable (a.k.a. "disposable gear").

Wholesale Manufacturers

- GoLite
- Montbell
- Rab
- Western Mountaineering
- Black Diamond, Cascade Designs (MSR, Platypus, Therm-a-rest) Mountain Hardware, Outdoor Research, Patagonia, REI, The North Face, and others make a wide range of products, including some lightweight.

Cottage Manufacturers

- Backpacking Light Magazine
- Gossamer Gear
- Mountain Laurel Designs
- RBH Designs
- Simblissity Ultralight Designs
- Six Moon Designs
- Tarptent Ultralight Shelters
- ULA
- Alcohol stoves: Brasslite, Bush Buddy, MiniBull Designs, Triangia, Vargo, and others

Footwear:

- Forty Below (overboots)
- Inov8
- Kathoola (traction)
- La Sportiva
- GoLite
- Montrail
- Northern Lites (snowshoes)
- Salomon
- The North Face
- Vasque