

Guide to fall adventures in the Upper Valley

Fall in New England means foliage on the trails, crisp air on the water, and the best hiking of the year. No experience necessary, just show up with your Dartmouth ID. Here's what to grab from DOR.

Featured trails:

Short jaunt - Gile Mountain in Norwich, Vermont. This Upper Valley classic is popular for a reason. Take the Firetower trail less than 1 mile from parking up to the firetower which offers stunning 360 degree views of the Upper Valley. [Click here for more information.](#)

Day hike - Mt. Moosilauke in Benton, New Hampshire. Start at the [Moosilauke Ravine Lodge](#) and take the Snapper Trail -> Carriage Road to the South and East Peaks. Return the way you came or make it a longer loop by taking the Beaver Brook Trail -> Ridge Trail back to the lodge. Plan ahead and reserve dinner or an overnight stay at the lodge! [Click here for a trail map.](#)

Overnight - Little Rock Pond in Mt. Tabor, Vermont. A good beginner overnight, this 6.5 mile loop follows stretches of the Appalachian Trail/Long Trail. Begin at the Green Mountain Connector trail -> Green Mountain Trail -> Little Rock Pond Trail/Long Trail/Appalachian Trail -> Little Rock Pond Tenting Area. Stay the night by the pond before taking a 1.9 mile hike along the Long Trail/Appalachian trail back to your car. [Click here for more information.](#)

HIKING & DAY TRIPS

Day pack — 20–30L

40–50L Backpack — for fuller day trips

Hiking boots — leaves hide wet rocks — ankle support matters

Trekking poles — collapsible, great for muddy or uneven terrain

Rain jacket — fall weather can turn quickly

Rain pants — waterproof with side zipper

Midlayer top — insulating layer for cool mornings

Insulated jacket - good to have in case the temperatures drop

Hat — midweight, great for fall temps

Headlamp — days get shorter fast in October

Compass — for navigation off-trail

Ankle gaiters — keeps wet leaves and mud out

OVERNIGHT & CAMPING

1 person tent — for solo trips

4 person tent — for group outings

50–60L Backpack — 2–3 night trips

0 degree sleeping bag — fall nights can dip below freezing at elevation

Sleeping pad — closed-cell foam for warmth and comfort

Sleeping bag liner — extra warmth buffer

Rain tarp — shelter in case of rain, ask for parachute cord

Ground tarp — all-purpose waterproof base layer

BearVault — required in many backcountry areas

Emergency bivvy — always worth packing

Portable charger — 10,000 mAh battery pack

COOKING

Trangia stove kit — includes nesting pots and fuel, great for small groups and lightweight

Coleman 2-burner stove — for car camping or base camping

8/12L Nesting pot — set of two pots for large groups

12" frying pan — for large groups

Chef knife — lightweight all-purpose backcountry knife

Cutting board — small folding

Cooking utensils — spatulas, ladles, serving spoons

Bowl

Spork

Water filter — summer streams need filtering

Aquamira — lightweight backup water treatment

PADDLING

Dry bag

Water bottle 1L

Water bottle insulator — keeps drinks warm on cold mornings

Thermos — insulated cap doubles as a cup

TIPS FOR FALL

- *Peak foliage in the Upper Valley is typically mid-October — plan ahead, spots fill fast.*
- *Temperatures at elevation can be 15–20°F colder than in Hanover. Always bring an extra layer.*
- *Wet leaves on the trail are slippery — waterproof boots with good grip make a big difference.*
- *Sunset comes early by late October. Always have a headlamp even for afternoon hikes.*
- *Fall paddling is stunning but the water is cold — dress for immersion.*