

Wilderness Advanced First Aid



Course Overview

Whether you enjoy recreating on rivers or in the mountains, this course is designed for anyone who enjoys spending time in the backcountry and understands there are inherent risks in that setting. The 40-hour Wilderness Advanced First Aid (WAFA) curriculum emphasizes long-term care and includes more practice time than an introductory level Wilderness First Aid course.

The course includes a range of assessment, trauma, environmental, and medical topics. You will receive up-to-date wilderness medicine curriculum delivered in an intensive, hands-on format. Build confidence in making treatment and evacuation decisions for your clients, friends, or family members.

Successful course completion will earn the following NOLS Wilderness Medicine certifications:

- Wilderness Advanced First Aid
- Adult, and Child CPR & Airway Management
- Epinephrine Auto-injector

Class Format

Check-in is between 7:30 am and 7:45 am on the first day. On subsequent days, please plan on arriving by 7:45 AM. Course days run from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM with an hour-long break for lunch at noon.

The class format involves lectures integrated with practical scenarios, case studies, and skills practice sessions. Attendance is required at all classes.

Scenarios and practice sessions will take place both inside and outside. Bring outdoor clothing appropriate for lying on the potentially wet, snowy, or cold ground while playing the role of both rescuer and patient. Stage (moulage) blood and make-up are used to enhance the realism of a scenario. The classroom environment generally lends itself to a pair of indoor comfy shoes.

Course Logistics

For registration, travel, and logistics information specific to a course, please reference the Course Logistics document.

Curriculum

Our curriculum has been developed and has evolved over decades by medical professionals and experts in outdoor education. Our instructors are expert educators with years of medical and wilderness leadership experience. Please see the [WAFA Course Outline](#) for an overview and schedule of topics covered during your course. You can [read more about our curriculum on the NOLS website](#) as well as view [other curriculum resources here](#).

Testing

Along with continuous evaluation and feedback from your instructors throughout the course, each student will be required to pass both a written and practical exam on the last day of the course. The practical exam will require students to demonstrate the skills they have learned throughout the course and the written exam will be multiple choice. Your instructors can provide more info on testing procedures on the first day of your course if needed.

What to Bring

- Notebook and pencil or pen
- A minimum of 2 face masks, these need to be changed and/or cleaned daily
- Outdoor work gloves (gardening, leather, or canvas)
- Personal bottle of hand sanitizer
- Watch with a second hand or digital second
- Sunglasses and/or protective eyewear
- Water bottle
- Light day pack
- Headlamp
- Waterproof outerwear—top and bottom
- Light hiking boots or sturdy shoes
- Clothing layers that allow you to be comfortable in a variety of weather conditions, including a hat

Optional:

- Slippers or comfortable shoes for classroom time
- Camp chair for classroom time
- Clipboard or hard surface to write on

*The text: "NOLS Wilderness Medicine, 6th Edition" will be provided on day one. You **do not** need to read or purchase these ahead of time.

NOLS Wilderness Medicine Student Agreement

Please download the [NOLS Student Agreement](#) and read it carefully as it affects your legal rights.

Bring this two-page signed document to the first day of the course. If you are a minor, a parent or guardian must sign the document as well. Without a signed document, you cannot participate in the course. NOLS Wilderness Medicine participants, including minors, will have unsupervised free time throughout the course. Any activities during the free time are not part of the NOLS Wilderness Medicine program and are at the sole risk of the participant.

COVID-19 in the NOLS Wilderness Medicine Classroom

To help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in our classrooms, NOLS has instituted a set of policies regarding the use of personal protective equipment (masks, gloves, etc) and hygiene practices that all students and staff must follow. [These policies can be read here.](#) Please review this document ahead of your course. Willful failure to comply with these practices could result in dismissal from your course.

Pre-course Planning

Please follow the links below to the NOLS website for an overview of each item:

- [College Credit](#)
- [Continuing Education for Medical Professionals](#)
- [Recertification Policies](#)
- [Alcohol, tobacco, and firearm policies](#)
- [Scholarships and financial aid](#)
- [Pets and service animals](#)
- [Essential Eligibility Criteria](#)
- [Minimum age requirements](#)