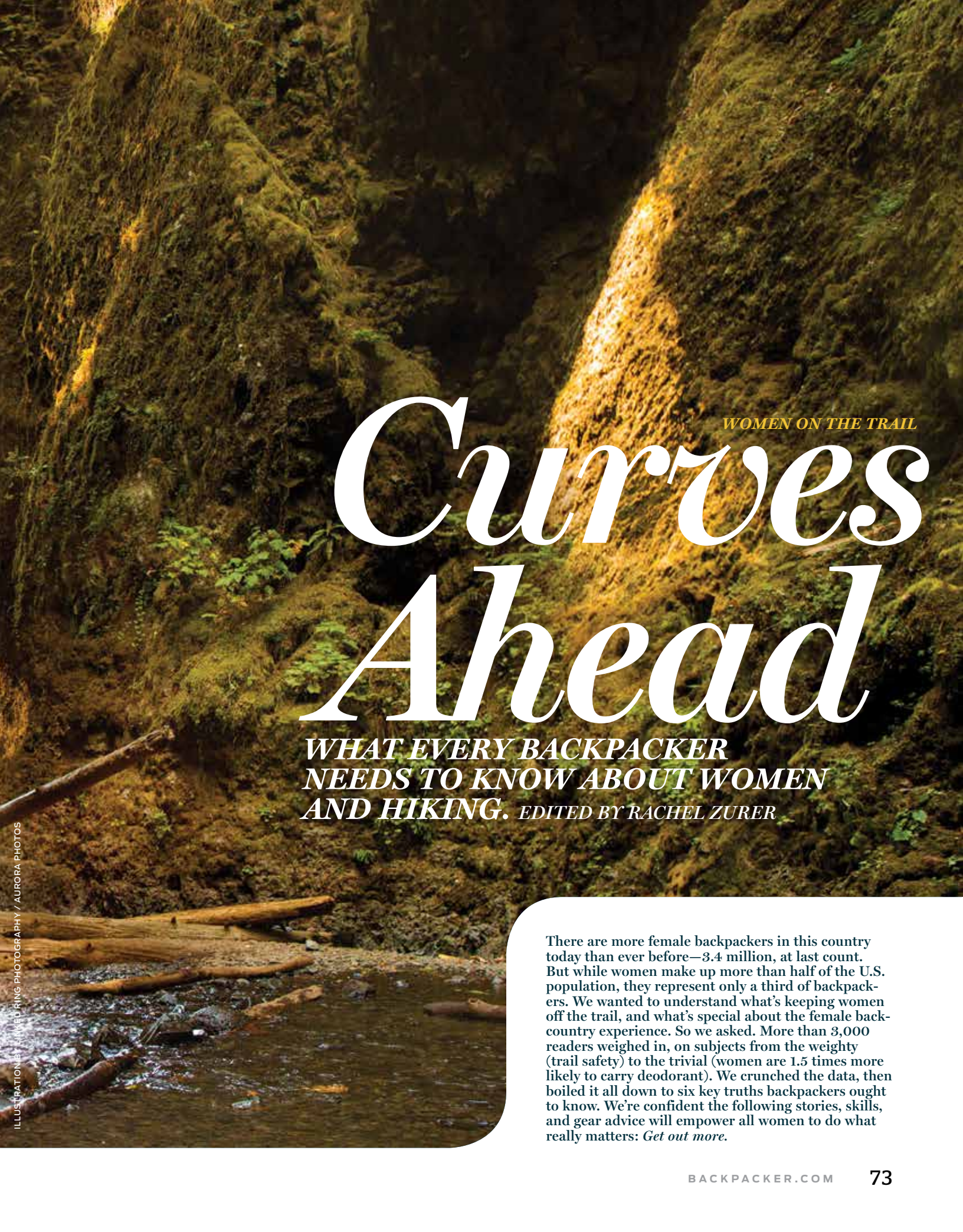




You'll see everything in this composite image on a hike in Oneonta River Gorge, Oregon, but not all at once.



WOMEN ON THE TRAIL

Curves Ahead

**WHAT EVERY BACKPACKER
NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT WOMEN
AND HIKING.** *EDITED BY RACHEL ZURER*

There are more female backpackers in this country today than ever before—3.4 million, at last count. But while women make up more than half of the U.S. population, they represent only a third of backpackers. We wanted to understand what's keeping women off the trail, and what's special about the female backcountry experience. So we asked. More than 3,000 readers weighed in, on subjects from the weighty (trail safety) to the trivial (women are 1.5 times more likely to carry deodorant). We crunched the data, then boiled it all down to six key truths backpackers ought to know. We're confident the following stories, skills, and gear advice will empower all women to do what really matters: *Get out more.*

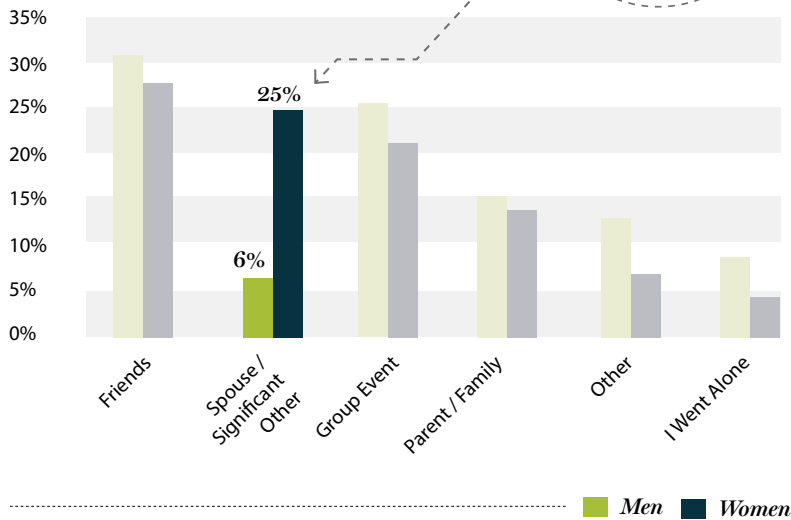
ILLUSTRATION BY JENNIFER RING PHOTOGRAPHY / AURORA PHOTOS

1. We get started differently.

MEN AND WOMEN HAVE THE SAME MOTIVATIONS FOR GETTING INTO BACKPACKING: LOVE OF THE OUTDOORS, APPRECIATING NATURE, AND HAVING FUN. BUT WE FOUND SOME IMPORTANT DIFFERENCES IN THEIR JOURNEYS TO THAT FIRST TRAILHEAD.

Survey Says

Who did you first backpack with?



Women are about four times as likely to have started backpacking with a spouse or significant other.

Make Sure the First Trip Isn't the Last

Introducing your honey to backpacking? Follow these tips. Getting introduced? Hand this advice over.

Be on your best, super-considerate behavior to make sure she has a good time. But curb your instinct to do everything for her, lest you deny her the satisfaction of learning new skills and building confidence.

HELP HER PACK and find gear she can borrow as needed. This also screens out random extras; nothing ruins a first trip like a too-heavy load.

CHOOSE A SATISFYING DESTINATION (lake, waterfall, flower-filled meadow, viewpoint, etc.) with a relatively easy hike in. This is not the time to bag an epic peak. Aim for about half as far as she can confidently dayhike. About 5 miles in is a good rule of thumb.

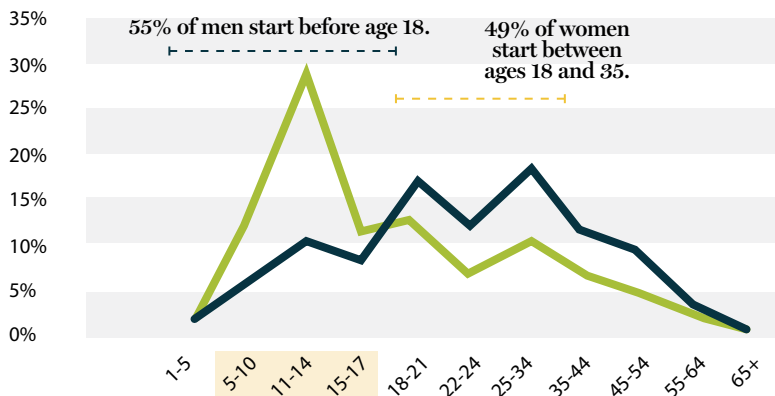
DON'T HOG THE MAP AND COMPASS. Our survey shows that women are six times more likely than men to *never* take on this chore. But this essential safety skill can be really fun and empowering. Take the time to explain how topo maps work, show her your route ahead of time, then let her carry the map.

PLAN A MOUTH-WATERING MENU. Pull out your best backcountry cooking skills, buy the fancy snacks, maybe pack in some wine. Also smart: Encourage her to drink plenty of water and snack often.

TEACH HER TO LIGHT THE CAMP STOVE, and have her help you hang the bear bag (42 percent of women never take on that chore in their first year).

DON'T TAKE ANY OF IT TOO SERIOUSLY. Remember, you love each other. Everything else is just scenery.

When: At what age did you take your first backpacking trip?



Would women benefit from starting younger? We think so, and here's one way to help.

Girls Just Wanna Have Fun

How the Girl Scouts failed me—and why there's still hope for the Brownies of the future.

By Rachel Zurer

◆ **My mother takes Xanax** before getting on a bicycle. When hiking, she holds my father's hand on the "scrambly" bits, meaning any spot without a railing that requires a step down. Though in daily life she's an intelligent, confident woman, when it comes to athletics and the outdoors, she's a knot of nerves. Yet this is the woman who, as my Girl Scout leader in the 1980s and '90s, was tasked with teaching me to enjoy camping. Her training included a single overnight, after which she was supposed to take girls out on her own and instill in them a love of all things wild. It didn't work.

My memories of our troop camping trips contain none of the boisterous joy and sense of adventure I find outdoors now or that I imagine most Boy Scouts experience. I remember chore charts, three-basin dishwashing, and rules, rules, rules. On our earliest outings, we weren't allowed to roast marshmallows because that was an advanced cooking skill, officially out of reach for us 7-year-olds. Even enthusiastic, relevantly skilled leaders might have had trouble convincing me that the experience was more fun than an indoor slumber party. But my leaders weren't convinced themselves. Their anxiety and discomfort tinged the very air. After only a few trips, I learned I didn't care for camping. It took another decade—and a way more laid-back group—to teach me otherwise.

I am not the only one with this story. While some Girl Scout troops take treks that inspire a love of nature and backpacking, others end up like mine, constrained by the limits and fears of their leaders. "There's been a risk management obsession," explains Barbara Norris Duerk, a volunteer hiking and backpacking instructor from Roanoke, Virginia, who's been involved in scouting for 53 years. "We all want to provide a safe, supportive environment for girls to try, fail, and try again, but in providing that, we've overprotected them. We need to teach them how to be prepared, not scared, for life's challenges. How not to cancel a hike when it's raining—which they have a tendency to do."

The good news: A 2012 study found that 56 percent of scouts hike and 76 percent camp with their troops at least once per year, and that 72 percent enjoyed their camping "a lot." Even better: The Girl Scouts are aware of the challenges Duerk points out, and are working to tame overbearing safety rules and improve leader resources as part of a larger turn toward getting girls outside. In 2014, the group's national body, GSUSA, launched an Outdoor Initiative. "We were responding to research showing kids don't spend time outdoors as much as they used to," says Vicki Wright, the program's head. "Girls aren't going to go backpacking on their first experience, but it's a progression. Our goal is to get girls comfortable outdoors, and ultimately wanting to do wilderness kinds of activities."

So far, GSUSA has introduced five new outdoor badges (girls got to vote on the topics) and revised some of the more onerous safety rules (loosening



"We need to teach them how to be prepared, not scared, for life's challenges."

—Barbara Norris Duerk,
Girl Scout instructor

the certifications required for some fishing trips, for example; Brownies have been OK to toast s'mores for a while now). The Outdoor Initiative's focus for the coming year will be helping adult volunteers. "We hear from them that they don't have the time or the expertise to get girls outside in the way we might like," explains Wright. "But we have 112 regional councils each doing their own type of trainings, some very successfully. We're figuring out best practices to share."

I'm hopeful that someday all Girl Scouts can access true wilderness experiences. But it'll be a long journey. For Boy Scouts, a troop trip to the rugged backcountry of Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico is a near-universal rite of passage, but there's no equivalent capstone for Girl Scouts. Not all regional councils offer all the trainings necessary to take girls on a backpacking trip. Some of those new badges are about frontcountry activities like archery and horseback riding.

Yet as more moms get comfortable in the wilderness themselves, there are more and more potential leaders. And you don't actually need to be a mom—or even a woman—to help your local troop (girlscouts.org/join). "My ideal," says Wright, "is that parents will be knocking on our door because they want to make sure their daughters get the outdoor experiences we offer." We can all raise a s'more to that—even my mother.

2. We have a lot of myths to bust.

LET'S SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT ON SOME OF THE HIKING WORLD'S WORST MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT WOMEN. FIRST ONE: IT'S NOT JUST MEN WHO BELIEVE THESE THINGS.

MYTH
Women can't carry as much.

In a 2014 paper, Kansas State University physics professor and Outward Bound instructor Michael O'Shea points out that strength does not increase proportionally to size. Think of tiny insects like rhinoceros beetles, which can carry 850 times their weight. According to O'Shea's simplified, idealized model, a 110-pound hiker could carry up to 50 pounds, while a 240-pound hiker with identical body fat would be limited to 35 pounds. Clearly, real hiker loads don't conform to a physics equation (and just because you could doesn't mean you should; avoid carrying more than 30 percent of your body weight). But next time you're divvying group gear, remember that a smaller person has less body mass to drag around, leaving more residual strength for fuel and tent poles. Tip: Keep reappportioning until everyone's hiking pace is fairly equal.

MYTH
Menstruation attracts bears.

Repeated experiments, including one involving real women on their periods and another involving tampons

dangled on fishing line, have shown that grizzlies and black bears tend to be as uninterested in sniffing feminine hygiene products as the rest of us are.

MYTH
Crying means we want to turn around.

Percent who report they've ever cried on a backpacking trip:



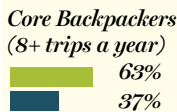
Modern psychology and our survey agree: Ladies cry more than guys do. But recent research suggests that's more related to anatomy than emotional weakness. Women have smaller tear ducts, which are more likely to overflow. Women's bodies also produce more of the hormone prolactin, which stimulates tear production. Testosterone, on the other hand, helps raise the crying threshold. So, a woman may experience the same amount of frustration as a man, but, because of her biology, is more likely to express it through tears. Advice for all: If your trail partner starts crying, just ask calm, gentle questions and listen without jumping in.

MYTH
Women don't play as hard.

Our survey found no significant gender difference in the length of people's longest trips, and men and women were equally likely to have taken more than 10 backpacking trips in the past year.

Survey Says

According to the Outdoor Foundation 2015 Backpacking Activity Report, a higher percentage of women represent "core" backpackers than "all backpackers."



46% of men and 54% of women agree with this statement

MYTH It's riskier for women to hike and backpack alone than for men.

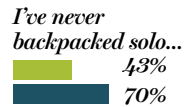
By Elisabeth Kvak-Hefferan

Many people fear that women are particularly vulnerable to getting lost, hurt, assaulted, or raped in the wilderness. We combed through crime statistics, consulted experts, and talked to veteran solo hikers to find out if there's anything to that fear.*

Crimes

While there isn't good data about crime against female solo hikers, the few stats we have do tell us one story: Public lands are overwhelmingly safer places than the rest of the country—for men and women. Your risk of being a victim of a violent crime (murder, rape, or assault) is thousands of times lower in a national park than in the country as a whole.

Survey Says

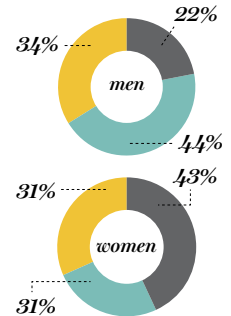


Accidents & Injuries

Hiking alone is riskier—for both sexes. But being female actually seems to offer protection from wilderness disasters. Robert Koester, who maintains a database on search-and-rescue incidents, crunched the numbers: 80 percent of searches are initiated by males, and 12 percent of men who kick off a SAR case end up dead, while only 9 percent of women suffer the same fate. In other words, women who get lost or injured in the backcountry are more likely to make it out alive. "That's very statistically significant," Koester says. "Culturally, females tend not to do as many of the idiotic things that solo males do. Males are more likely to try to pick up a rattlesnake."

Why have you never backpacked solo?

- Safety concerns
- I prefer company for social reasons
- other



Fear

In general, women report much higher levels of fear of violent crime than men do, even though men are much more likely to actually be crime victims—a phenomenon sociologists call the fear-gender paradox. "It's very natural for women to feel afraid because that has been ingrained in our minds from a very young age," says Jennifer K. Wesely, Ph.D., professor of criminology and criminal justice at the University of North Florida. In reality, women are much more likely to be assaulted or raped by someone they know than by a strange man lurking behind a boulder, but people tend to fixate on the latter. "The fear is what's holding women back, not the reality. Women are not in more danger in wild spaces," Wesely says.

GUYS: HOW NOT TO SEEM CREEPY DON'T ask solo women where they're headed or where they're camping. **DON'T** suggest that a woman hiking alone is unsafe. **DON'T** use sexual innuendos. **DO** keep distance between your tents if you end up camping in the same area. **DO** be extremely cautious about flirting. **DON'T** make her feel like she has to change her pace or compromise her hike to escape from you.



*MYTH:
Women
don't like to
get dirty.*

3. We still have trouble finding gear that fits.

DESPITE HUGE ADVANCES IN WOMEN'S EQUIPMENT AND APPAREL, WOMEN ARE ABOUT TWICE AS LIKELY TO HAVE TROUBLE GETTING A GOOD FIT.

► **When I first started testing gear** for this magazine 21 years ago, I didn't know a whole lot about, well, anything. My new job was almost too good to be true. Companies sent me stuff, and, in order to assess it, I had to go backpacking—a lot. It didn't bother me a bit that the size-small men's shells I wore were 2 inches too long in the sleeves, billowy around the shoulders and armpits, and snug across the hips. Testing those ill-fitting jackets was my ticket outside. They kept me dry during torrential storms, and, at the time, it didn't occur to me that they would have performed—and felt—so much better if they actually fit.

A year or so into my job, women's apparel started to trickle onto the scene. Having grown weary of red, black, and forest green, I was stoked about the more-feminine colors and the vastly better fit, but bummed to discover that this girl gear was decidedly less technical. Pockets were low on my hips, so my pack's hipbelt blocked them. Fabrics were softer and drapier, but heavier and less durable. Walk into a gear store today, and it's a different world. Top brands now make full lines of women's apparel that perform as well as the men's versions, and they often look cute, too.

Yet our research—and experience—shows many women still struggle to find gear that fits well. The obvious question: Why? "Fitting women is a greater challenge than men," explains Cassie Tweed, Director of Design at Osprey Packs. "Our bodies have more complex curves than men and a wider variety of shapes."

There's another force at work here, though, too: our own pickiness. "Women in general pay more attention to how a garment looks and not just its feature set for its intended purpose," explains Melanie Sirrirot, the Technical Apparel Product Manager for Outdoor Research. "For example, a slightly oversize rain jacket will actually fit and function fine, but it won't look as flattering as it could if it were sized down a bit. In general men will accept, or even seek out, a looser fit, so this tends to be less of an issue for them."

That said, the fit problem is clearly not just a matter of taste. Even though we women now have more no-compromise options than ever before, we still have some common gripes. So we turned to our regular female contributors to learn more about their chronic fit issues—from head to toe—and how they've learned to solve them. Did we miss your personal complaint? If so, let me know at backpacker.com/askkristin, and I'll try to help.

—Kristin Hostetter, Gear Editor

PROBLEM OVERSIZED CAPS

Petite women sometimes feel dwarfed by standard baseball or trucker caps. The bill is often way too big, blocking vision. Discovering Pistil caps was an "aha" moment for one pint-size tester, who loves the Dara (\$28; pistildesigns.com), with its short, contoured brim, adjustability, and quick-dry polyester fabric.

PROBLEM UNCOMFORTABLE PACK STRAPS

Especially if you're on the curvier side, check out women's-specific packs. Two of our favorites: Gregory's Deva 60 (\$299; gregorypacks.com) and Osprey's Aura AG 65 (\$260; ospreypacks.com), both of which have super-curvaceous shoulder straps that don't chafe on the outside of the breasts, sternum straps that you can adjust to above the breasts, and conical hipbelts that adapt to shapely hips.

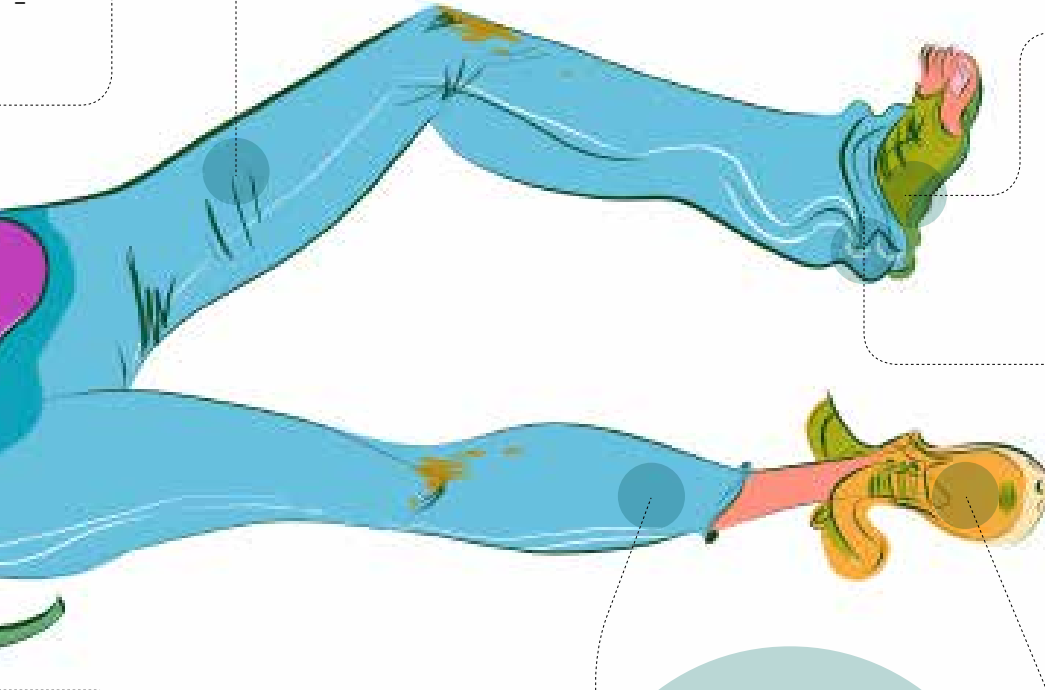
PROBLEM UNIBOOB

After 21 years, Gear Editor Kristin Hostetter has yet to find the perfect backpacking bra. "Manufacturers: Want to clinch an Editors' Choice Award? Make a bra in a technical fabric that supports and separates, dries quickly, and has clean, seam-free shoulder straps," she pleads.

PROBLEM CROP TOPS

"My torso is as long as most of the guys I work with," says Senior Content Editor Rachel Zurer. "That means shirts often bare my stomach." And even average-size gals can suffer from ride-up if their top doesn't tuck below a pack belt. Her favorite alternative: Bergans Bloom Wool Lady Tee (\$75; bergans.com), which sits well below the hips and has a flattering v-neck to boot.





PROBLEM
TOWERING PACKS

Women with shorter torsos (less than 16 inches) often turn toward packs with adjustable torso lengths. But as the shoulder straps slide closer to the hip belt, the load grows skyward, creating a Leaning Tower of Pisa overhead. Associate Editor Maren Horjus reaches for Gregory packs instead (see top right), which come in a true extra-small.

PROBLEM
HIGHWATER PANTS

Our Northwest Field Editor, Elisabeth Kwak-Hefferan, falls into the tall (5'9") and lean category. For warm weather hiking, she recommends capris (a great pick: Prana Bliss Capris; \$65; prana.com) because of their two-way stretch and comfy, clean waistband. Another great find: Athleta Palisade Pants (\$89; athleta.gap.com), which come in tall sizes that offer 3 inches of extra length.

PROBLEM
BOOTS LOOSE IN THE HEELS

Tester Nancy Bouchard recommends a professional boot fitter (find one at bootfitters.com) to help you pick insoles, which can reduce slippage and foot fatigue, improve stability, and relieve foot, knee, hip, and lower back pain. She likes EZ-fit (\$40; ezfitsoles.com).

PROBLEM
PANTS THAT DRAG

Contributing Editor Kelly Bastone, at 5 feet zlich, custom-hems pants that fit her up top but billow at the ankles. ("If you know what you're doing, it only takes 15 minutes," she says.) But for shorties who don't know a whip-stitch from whiplash, capris are a good option. Or try these great pants in short sizes: REI's Endeavor (\$79; rei.com), Prana's Halle (\$80; prana.com), and Columbia's Just Right Straight Leg (\$60; columbia.com).

PROBLEM
SHORT LONG SLEEVES

Southwest Field Editor Annette McGivney is tall (6 feet), thin, and long-limbed, so she looks for long-sleeve tops that have thumbholes. "The holes are at my wrists, and I don't use them, but the extra length gives me the wrist coverage I want," she says. Favorite model: Icebreaker Long Sleeve Tech Top Half Zip (\$120; icebreaker.com).

PROBLEM
TIGHT FIT AROUND THE THIGHS

Gear tester Dina Mishev has a slender waist (size 6) but muscular legs and has struggled with finding shorts. Her solution: skirts. "I was skeptical at first, but they let me stay cool in hot weather without feeling constricting." Her favorite: Sierra Designs' Silicone Trail Skirt (\$59; sierradesigns.com), which is made from a stretchy, nylon/spandex blend with a water-resistant silicone treatment in the butt.

Survey Says

53% of women "sometimes have a hard time finding gear that fits well." Only 28% of men feel the same.

PROBLEM
COLD FEET

Tester Arienne Zwartjes has battled this common problem for years with some clever solutions. First, she buys boots a full size too big, so they can accommodate two pairs of socks plus chemical warmer packs. "In cold and wet conditions, I wear neoprene socks (like Sealskinz' Mid Weight Mid-Length; \$50; sealskinz.com), and in camp, I'll put plastic bags over my socks and under my camp shoes," she says.

4. We need to talk about lady business.

OUR SURVEY TURNED UP LOTS OF WOMEN UNCLEAR ABOUT BEST PRACTICES OF BACKCOUNTRY LIVING AND HYGIENE, STUFF A CANDID CONVERSATION COULD FIX. SO WE'RE STARTING ONE HERE.

Ditch the TP

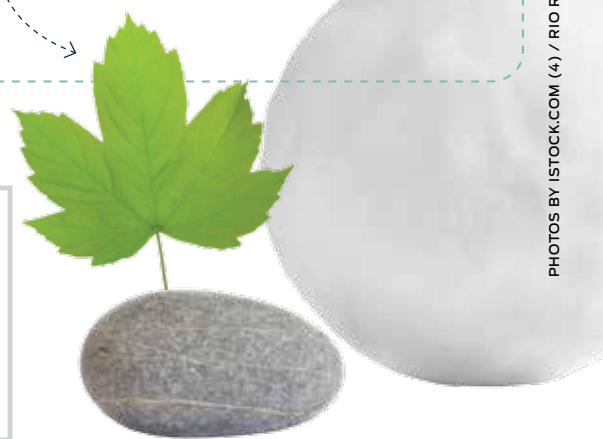
It's not ideal to bury, a pain to pack out, and totally unnecessary, especially after urination. Yet more than half the women in our survey say they use TP after peeing. Try one of these alternatives.

1. *Pee rag* Thru-hikers swear by this trick: Designate a bandanna to use after urinating, and keep it tied to the outside of your pack so it can dry between use: "Many viruses and bacteria [on the rag] can be inactivated by exposure to heat and by drying," explains Paul Auerbach, MD, author of *Wilderness Medicine*. Wash the rag every few days.

2. *Female urination device* How about not needing to wipe at all—or even drop trou? Enter FUDs, which are anatomically designed funnels that let women pee standing up almost as easily as a guy can. There are about a dozen brands out there, but our favorite is the Pibella Travel (\$19; .5 oz.; pibella.com). Its no-frills design means there are no parts to lose, and the boil-proof plastic's ergonomic shape seats securely against your body and gives confidence you've got it positioned correctly. For any FUD, make sure to practice at home in the shower, and know it might take a while to get used to going this way. For more tips on how to use FUDs and the pros and cons of other brands, go to backpacker.com/FUD.

3. *The drippy-shake* 'Nuf said.

4. *Nature's options* Use wide, soft leaves as you would toilet paper (watch out for poison ivy). Sticks (the long way) and smooth stones are great for breaking surface tension. Snow is . . . refreshing.



[Hygiene 101]

Follow these rules to stay clean and healthy.

The Expert Luanne Freer, MD, is the founder and director of Everest ER, a nonprofit medical clinic at Mt. Everest Basecamp.

LET IT FLOW.

Holding your pee could cause a urinary tract infection. Make sure you go whenever you feel the urge. Also not OK: drinking less water in order to avoid peeing.

CHANGE INTO DRY CLOTHES.

You might not mind lingering after hiking in the rain, but your body does. Damp or wet clothes can lead to a yeast infection.

WIPE SMART.

If you're using natural wiping materials (see "Ditch the TP," right), try using two, one for the back and one for the front, to make sure that you don't get fecal matter where it shouldn't be.

WEAR WOOL UNDIES.

Wool is naturally odor-resistant and pulls moisture away from your skin; we like Ibex Balance Briefs (\$30; .1 oz.; ibex.com). It's ideal to have fresh underwear every day. Bring one pair and wash them daily, bring a pair for every day, or somewhere in between—it depends on how you feel about backcountry laundry.

Average pairs of underwear for a weeklong trip **2.9** Men **3.8** Women

NEVER USE ANTIBACTERIAL SOAP ON YOUR BODY.

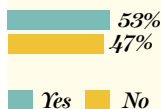
This kills both the good and bad bacteria, which makes it difficult to fight infections. For backcountry bathing, try biodegradable wipes.

PREVENT CHAFING.

Moisture plus friction leads to painful, abraded skin. Try a lubricant like Body Glide (\$6; .5 oz.; bodyglide.com) in problem areas.

Survey Says

Do you use toilet paper when you pee in the woods?



Top downsides to backpacking for females



- Periods 41%
- Peeing 14%
- Safety (from humans) 13%
- None 10%
- Other 22%

MORE TIPS

Join us at backpacker.com/ladybusiness to add your thoughts and see videos of female backcountry pros dishing their hard-won wisdom.

[FLOW CHART]

Should I Go Backpacking While On My Period?

Survey Says

Do you try to plan trips around when you'll have your period?

Yes 33%
No 67%



[Pregnancy]

How To Hike When You're Expecting

How's this for inspiration: Our editor-in-chief's wife went backpacking less than two weeks before delivering her first child, and our gear editor did a five-day trip on Isle Royale while seven months along. Yes, you can.

CHECK IN WITH YOUR DOCTOR.

Make sure there's no reason backpacking is contraindicated for you, and ask how much you can carry. If you hiked and backpacked before getting pregnant, you'll likely be able to continue.

DON'T CLIP YOUR HIPBELT.

It's just plain uncomfortable.

AVOID TREATING WATER WITH IODINE.

It accumulates in your system in a way that you just don't want to mess with. Treat your water in other ways, like with a filter.

COMPENSATE FOR YOUR COMPROMISED BALANCE.

Consider trekking poles mandatory, and make sure to wear boots with good ankle support.

PACK A REALLY COMFORTABLE SLEEPING PAD.

This is no time to tough it out on hard ground. The inflatable Big Agnes Insulated Double Z is 4 inches thick (\$110; bigagnes.com).

HAVE AN EVACUATION PLAN.

Always smart, but especially so now. Consider a two-way messaging device if cell service isn't available (see page 71).

5. We've accomplished some amazing things.

THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS THE OFFICIAL BACKPACKING HALL OF FAME, BUT IF THERE WERE, IT'D BE CHOCK-FULL OF IMPRESSIVE LADIES. HERE ARE A FEW TO HELP INSPIRE YOUR NEXT ADVENTURE. BY ERIN BLAKEMORE

1798
Dorothy Wordsworth takes two of the first recorded overnight pleasure hiking trips involving women. Along with her brother, future poet laureate William Wordsworth, she takes two "walking tours" along the banks of the River Wye in England and Wales. Dorothy had already raised eyebrows with her love of hiking: When an angry aunt wrote scolding her for walking 30 miles with her brother, she replied: "I rather thought it would have given my friends pleasure to hear that I had courage to make the use of the strength with which nature has endowed me."



Survey Says

Readers who could name a female backpacking hero



1897-1910
Annie Peck (left) and **Fannie Workman** battle for the women's record for highest climb. By 1897, they were locked in a lofty competition, scaling peaks of 18,491 feet (Pico de Orizaba, Mexico; Peck) and 22,736 feet (Pinnacle Peak, Pakistan; Workman). Peck then climbed Peru's Huascarán, which she estimated as 24,000 feet. Workman hired surveyors to triangulate the peak's real height. When they estimated 22,205 feet instead, Workman claimed victory.



1910-1940
Mary Colter designs many iconic national park buildings and hotels, including Hopi House and Hermit's Rest, for the Fred Harvey Company.

1912 and 1914
 Women walk from New York City to Albany, NY, and from Newark, NJ, to Washington, D.C., in two "suffrage hikes" to draw attention to their battle for the right to vote.

1918
 18-year-old **Claire Marie Hodges** becomes Yosemite National Park's (and the nation's) first female ranger, patrolling the park on horseback.

1893
 Inspired by Pikes Peak's "purple mountain majesties," **Katharine Lee Bates** writes "America The Beautiful" after a burro-assisted hike.

1881
Sara Plummer Lemmon scales the 9,157-foot Arizona mountain that will later be known as Mt. Lemmon—one of the country's few peaks named after a woman.

1873
Addie Alexander is the first woman to climb Longs Peak. Her accomplishment is soon matched by **Anna Dickinson**, an abolitionist who "dared to wear trousers for her climb."



PHOTOS BY (FROM LEFT) "DRAWING OF DOROTHY WORDSWORTH IN MIDDLE AGE" BY SCEWING, ANNIE PECK-MICHIGAN STUDENT PORTRAIT, BENTLEY HISTORICAL LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, PUBLIC DOMAIN, "PUBLIC DOMAIN, "JUNCO TABEI" BY JAAN KUNNAP, "JUNCO TABEI" BY JAAN KUNNAP, LICENSED UNDER CC BY-SA 4.0 VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS - HTTPS://COMMONS.WIKIMEDIA.ORG/WIKI/FILE:JUNCO_TABEI.JPG#/MEDIA/FILE:JUNCO_TABEI.JPG, "EMMA GATEWOOD" BY STRATNESS, LICENSED UNDER CC BY-SA 3.0 VIA WIKIPEDIA COMMONS JULY 20, 2015, COURTESY OF COLUMBIA, COURTESY OF JENNIFER PHARR DAVIS

1929
Herma Baggeley becomes the first female naturalist to work at a national park. She helps lay out the first nature trail at Yellowstone's Old Faithful geyser and writes an influential guide to the park's flora and fauna.



1933
Eleanor Roosevelt lobbies for (and gets) a female alternative to the popular men's Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) nicknamed the She-She-She Camps. Despite the derisive attitudes of their male counterparts, about 8,500 jobless women were given job training and outdoor experiences like hiking, skiing, and camping between 1933 and 1936 in 90 camps across the country.

1947
Barbara Washburn becomes the first woman to climb 20,320-foot Mt. McKinley (Denali). A self-dubbed "accidental adventurer," she was the steadfast companion of her husband, mountaineer Bradford Washburn. She completed daring treks like the first recorded ascent of Alaska's 9,750-foot Mt. Bertha, which she did while pregnant. She earned praise for her calm under pressure, and it would be 20 years before another woman followed her up Denali. Later in life, she worked with her husband to create new, detailed maps of both Mt. Everest and the Grand Canyon for National Geographic.

1952
Mildred "Peace Pilgrim" Norman is the first woman to thru-hike the Appalachian Trail, four years after the first man. She follows up her feat by giving up all of her worldly possessions and trekking 25,000 miles across the United States to spread a message of world peace.

1972
Mary Carstens is the first woman to thru-hike the PCT.

1975
Japanese mountain climber **Junko Tabei** becomes the first woman to summit Mt. Everest—on the first all-woman expedition to the mountain. She became the first woman to achieve all Seven Summits in 1992.

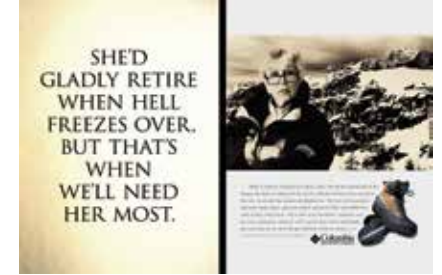


2011
Jennifer Pharr Davis sets the Appalachian Trail thru-hiking supported speed record. She completes the 2,181-mile trek in just 46 days, 11 hours, and 20 minutes. (Scott Jurek beat the record by three hours in 2015).

2013
Heather "Anish" Anderson sets the self-supported speed record on the PCT. It still stands.



1970
Gertrude "Gert" Boyle becomes president of Columbia Sportswear. After fleeing Nazi Germany with her family when she was 13, she grew up helping out with the family business, Columbia Hat Company. In 1970, her husband died at 47, leaving her at the helm of a financially struggling company (she turned down an offer of just \$1,400 to buy the company outright the next year). "Ma" Boyle grew Columbia to a billion-dollar empire, becoming an industry icon in the process as she starred in the company's ads (above). In 2003, she was the first woman inducted into the Sporting Goods Industry Hall of Fame. Now in her 90s, she still serves as chairman of the board.



1955
Emma "Grandma" Gatewood thru-hikes the AT alone at age 68, then, in 1964, becomes the first person to complete the trail three times... wearing Keds sneakers.



6. We're less likely to see ourselves as leaders—and that's everyone's loss.

HERE ARE 4 REASONS WE NEED MORE WOMEN TAKING CHARGE IN THE OUTDOORS.

It improves the bottom line.



Research shows companies with more female leaders perform better financially. But sometimes you need to get out to lean in. We talked to CamelBak CEO Sally McCoy, who's been backpacking since she was 5, about how her wilderness experiences have shaped her career.

BACKPACKER When did you first really feel like a leader in the outdoors?

SALLY MCCOY When I was 13, on a NOLS course, we had a hurt instructor who needed to be evacuated. We worked 24 hours and then were 10 miles from camp in the afternoon. Everyone was beat, but I volunteered to lead us back. We got within 2 miles of camp at dusk, but I picked the wrong way to go. We ended up bivying on ice and boulders that night. I learned a lot about owning your decisions.

BP Do you see a connection between leading in the outdoors and leading in the business world?

SM Good decision-making gets really honed outdoors. You take in a lot of info, make the best choice possible, push forward with a sense of humor, and live with the consequences. In both, you're not always going to be right, but you want to be consistent, have a point of view, and articulate where you want to go.

BP Why do you think women are less likely to lead in the backcountry?

SM I think women should ask themselves that. Do you need more skills training to feel comfortable? But there's also a saying I learned at NOLS: If the leader's lost, you're lost. If you think we're making a wrong turn, it's your job to speak up. That's what you should do both in business and in the outdoors.

Survey Says

Backpackers who still call themselves beginners after 1-3 years of experience



39%

Across all experience levels, women are 39% less likely to agree they're "often in a leadership role".

Our children are watching.

My mom didn't think of herself as a leader, but she taught me all the most important things.

By Jonathan Dorn

◆ **End of summer**, a tranquil lake in the north woods. Mist lingers where windblown pines lean over the glassy water, shrouding a pair of loons from morning's first pink rays.

Her paddle dips and twists, dips and twists, propelling our battered Old Town canoe toward a distant cove where we hope to find walleye.

She doesn't seem old yet, or like a girl, that alien species my 8-year-old mind is struggling to comprehend. She's just my mom, tanned and lean with a floppy sun hat squished down on her new perm. She's my pal and my first camping partner, and both seem perfectly normal. When we near the cove, she stows the paddle and the canoe drifts silently through water so clear I can almost touch rocks 20 feet down.

We bait our hooks, saving my shiny new Rapala lure for later. The fishing is good early, but tapers after our 10 o'clock sandwiches. It doesn't matter. We drift and cast 'til midafternoon, content to meander in the corners of our minds that don't get much attention back home. We daydream and point out cloud formations and pierce the silence now and then with a silly story.

On the way home, we'll switch positions and she'll hand me the long paddle with the dark streak down the middle. And she'll teach me the most graceful and efficient of all outdoor skills—the J stroke. At first, like a boy, I'll try to muscle it, pushing the bow left over and over until we're both exasperated. But patience will follow, and soon the blade will settle into that perfect easy rhythm of dip, pull, twist, lift—the rhythm that lets a patient paddler glide plumb-line straight without switching sides.

This year, I'll hand the paddle to her granddaughter when we canoe the Boundary Waters for the first time. I'll share the same technique, and those good lessons about patience and touch, and my own kid will discover that a smart paddler can go farther, faster, if she doesn't fight the water. We'll chat about letting moments unfold, especially in the wilderness, and about not rushing past the loons and the clouds and the quiet times together.

And then I'll close my eyes and listen for the blurpsssssss-trickle of her paddle dipping, pulling, and dripping. And I'll imagine it's my mom in the stern again, quietly steering me through the north woods, and life.

Leaders get out more.

Backpackers (male and female) who describe themselves as leaders are three times as likely to have taken more than four backpacking trips in the past year. Non-leaders, meanwhile, are three times as likely to have taken zero trips.

A woman in a blue puffer jacket and black pants stands on a rocky mountain peak. She is wearing a grey beanie and has a large blue backpack. The mountain is covered in snow and has colorful prayer flags strung across it. The background shows more snow-capped mountains under a clear blue sky.

It changes minds.

“When people look at me with a group, their first assumption is that I’m not the leader. When they realize I am—and a good one—it completely expands their expectations of who can lead. I love that moment. If we can get the idea across that women are leaders, in 10 years, it could just be normal.”

—Melissa Arnot, mountain guide and five-time Everest summiter (the most of any American woman)