

Physical Requirements

All Hatch Trips

There's a Hatch river trip for just about everyone. We have hosted guests from 9 to almost 90. But, for some it can be challenging to adjust to environmental conditions, including heat, cold, elevation, weather, water and sand. If you have factors that could make a trip more difficult including age, weight, lack of conditioning, and heart or other diseases, consider talking to a doctor before committing.

Here are some minimum requirements you must be able to meet to safely enjoy your journey:

- Able to fit into a Type 5 Life Jacket (max chest size 58")
- Able to hold onto the raft while going through whitewater. Ropes are provided throughout the raft for hand holds.
- Capable of climbing onto and off of the raft. There will be about a 2 foot step up/down from the raft to the beaches. Please note that some surfaces may be wet and slippery.
- Comfortable walking on uneven, rocky terrain. Trails in Grand Canyon are not regularly maintained. Also sand beaches are the norm for camp sites so make sure you are comfortable walking across the sand inclines.
- Able to carry your own personal gear to and from camp. The maximum weight for personal gear is 25 pounds.
- Able to tolerate prolonged/repeated exposure to water of 50°F
- Able to tolerate prolonged exposure to environmental temperatures up to 120°F (In colder months, temperatures may also drop to 30°F)

Note: We are happy to accommodate a wide range of physical challenges and medical conditions. Neither previous whitewater experience nor swimming ability is required. Please contact our office so we can assist you personally with any concerns.

No matter what trip you are on, we strongly recommend preparing in advance with pre-trip conditioning activities appropriate for being active in desert conditions.

5 Great Pre-Trip Conditioning Activities (for Full Canyon Hikers):

1. Find and hike local trails that have elevation gain and loss
2. Use the incline feature on machines at your local gym (or for a low tech alternative, take the stairs wherever you go)
3. Walk and hike on uneven terrain to prepare for rocky trails
4. Purchase hiking shoes or cross training shoes and hiking sandals and break in ahead of time to avoid blisters
5. Get in the habit of drinking water throughout the day – it's good for you every day, but mandatory on the river!

Physical Requirements

Upper/Lower Canyon Trips

NOTE: ALL Upper and Lower Canyon passengers MUST hike the Bright Angel Trail. Adequate preparation for this strenuous hike is essential.

Upper and Lower Canyon trips with Hatch River Expeditions are specifically designed for guests who are willing and able to complete a long and difficult hike on the Bright Angel Trail. Upper Canyon passengers will be required to hike out of the Grand Canyon on the last day of their trip, and Lower Canyon passengers will be required to hike into the Grand Canyon on the first day of their trip. Even seasoned hikers find hiking in the Grand Canyon to be more challenging than they anticipated.

To safely participate in the Bright Angel Trail hike, you'll need to prepare for:

- A full day's hike – Most hikers take 4-6 hours to get down the trail and 7-8 hours to get up it. Those times will be significantly impacted by pre-trip preparation and self-care while on the trail.
- A long, steep trail – The Bright Angel Trail is 9.3 miles long with an elevation change of approximately 4,300 feet (about 3.5 times the height of the Empire State Building)
- Temperatures that may reach 120 degrees Fahrenheit
- Uneven, rocky, and sandy terrain with steep steps up and down and occasionally narrow pathways
- Carrying personal gear – Many guests choose to use our UPS duffel service to lighten their loads. Remember that no matter what, you should be carrying at least 3 liters of water and any gear you want access to on the trail.

Note: We are happy to discuss other styles of trips that allow us to accommodate a wide range of physical challenges and medical conditions. Please contact our office so we can assist you personally with any concerns.

No matter what trip you are on, we strongly recommend preparing in advance with pre-trip conditioning activities appropriate for being active in desert conditions.

3 Steps to Condition for Your Trip (for Bright Angel Trail Hikers)

Step up your conditioning routine over time.

STEP 1: Start a few months in advance by using the incline feature on your treadmill, taking the stairs wherever you go, and walking every day.

STEP 2: Find and hike local trails with rocky terrain and elevation gain/loss to simulate Grand Canyon conditions. Start doing hikes that are 2-3 miles long a few times a week. Work your way up as the trip gets closer.

STEP 3: Between 1 month and 2 weeks before your trip, practice walking longer distances—you should be able to go 6-9 miles comfortably by this time.

DON'T FORGET TO:

- purchase your hiking shoes and sandals ahead of time so you can break them in and avoid blisters
- get in the habit of drinking water throughout the day NOW – it's good for you every day, but mandatory on the trail!