

# List of essential things to carry for Ladakh

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Written by Yogesh Sarkar for BCMTouring.com

More info at <http://www.bcmtouring.com/forum/ladakh-zanskar-f24/all-you-wanted-know-about-traveling-leh-ladakh-t1211/>

Here is a list of essential things one should carry for a trip to Ladakh, irrespective of the mode of transportation being used (check the following links on what to carry and how to prepare your car or motorcycle for trip to Ladakh; [Preparing your car for Ladakh | BCMTouring](#) and [Preparing your motorcycle for Ladakh | BCMTouring](#)). While this in no way is an exhaustive or one size fits all guide, we have tried to come up with the list of things we feel are quite essential and shouldn't be missed out on.

**Water:** Water is the most essential thing while traveling in Ladakh, since dehydration can further complicate health issues at such a high altitude. So make sure you are carrying at least couple of liter of water per person all the time and drinking at regular intervals.

**Medicines:** Carry Diamox if you aren't allergic to sulfur drugs (helps reduce some of the symptoms of [AMS](#)) and medicines for headache, fever, stomach ache, cold and cough syrup. You can find more detailed list for medicines here, [First Aid Travel kit](#).

**Sunscreen lotion:** UV rays at high altitude can be quite damaging to the skin, even during the harshest of winter, so don't forget to carry a good quality sunscreen lotion eg. Lotus Herbal Sun Screen Lotion with rating of SPF30 or higher and apply it properly before going out in the sun.

**UV sunglasses:** As mentioned earlier, UV rays at high altitude can be quite damaging and this holds true for eyes as well. So having decent quality UV sunglasses (Fastrack ones are available for as little as Rs. 800) is quite essential, especially if you are traveling early in the season or during winter, when mountain passes have a lot of snow cover and sunlight reflecting from the snow can be even harsher!

**Lip balm:** Dry and cold weather of Ladakh will make your lips dry, which can get quite painful due to cracking and skin coming off, so make sure to carry a lip balm or Vaseline.

**Mustard oil:** Mustard oil can be used for moisturizing skin, putting it in your hair and for lubricating insides of nostrils, which can become quite dry and painful due to dry and cold winds of Ladakh.

**Glucose:** Carrying water mixed with Glucon C/D is a good idea while traveling at high altitude, as it provides instant energy on the move, when your appetite is likely to be reduced due to AMS and at the same time, doesn't act as a diuretic, like most caffeinated energy drinks. Carry couple of small packs with you, which you can mix in water, at the beginning of the day.

**Chocolates, biscuits and nuts:** Carrying couple of chocolates, a pack of biscuits and few hundred grams of almonds, raisins and cashews is a good idea, as these provide instant energy and easy snack and don't take up too much space. Those who love spicy food, make sure to carry pickle or sauce, since Ladakhi food is a bit bland.

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**Other personal essentials:** Paper soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, comb and toilet paper. You can also carry your shaving kit and face wash if you have the space and need for these and any other toiletries.

**Clothes:** In Ladakh it is best to dress in layers, since majority of coldness is due to wind chill and temperatures can change rapidly depending on the place, time and weather. Hence dressing in layers will allow you to add/subtract layers as and when needed. So make sure apart from your regular cloths, you are also carrying a sweater, gloves, cap (protect head and ears from cold winds), warm inners (especially if you are traveling in off season) and if possible, air/water resistant jacket.

**Documents and IDs:** It is essential to carry at least one government issued identity card and couple of photocopies of it, since it is needed while applying for [inner line permit](#) and at certain places, to register at the check post. You should also carry your medical insurance card (if you have one), [Map of Ladakh](#), your printed itinerary, hotel reservation slips (if you have prebooked), couple of copies of your flight ticket (if traveling by air) and list of important contacts (useful in case your mobile phone stops working).

**Chargers for all the gadgets, cameras and mobile:** Need I explain this?

**Spare camera batteries:** Carry at least one spare set of batteries required by your camera, since in cold environment, batteries can die quickly.

**Car charger or battery bank:** If you are an avid smart phone user and planning to log your route on your favorite GPS App, then make sure you are carrying car charger or a power bank with at least 4000-5000mAH capacity to keep your mobile phone running throughout the day.

**3 socket Belkin Surge Protector:** While it is a little large in size, 3 socket Belkin Surge Protector will not only keep your gadgets protected from power surges, but will also allow you to charge multiple devices simultaneously and at the same time, provide the crucial cable length to safely place your gadgets in rooms with idiotic power socket locations (sadly enough, many hotels have this).

**Enough memory cards to last you the entire trip:** Doesn't matter if you are carrying a laptop or planning to burn CDs/DVDs at Leh, carry enough memory cards to cover your entire shooting duration in Ladakh. If needed, borrow from friends but don't depend on laptop HDDs or worse still, virus infested cyber café computers to copy and save your photographs!

**Torch:** Not really needed if your mobile phone has one, but if in case it doesn't, carry a small LED one.

**Money:** While my recommendation would be to carry enough cash you need, to avoid wasting time withdrawing cash, it may not be feasible for everyone. So please keep in mind that ATMs beyond Srinagar and Manali are only available in Kargil and Leh and they too are few with often long queues in

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front of them.

**Mobile phone connectivity:** Only post-paid mobile phone connections from other states work in Ladakh and even from these, only BSNL has presence beyond Leh. So unless you wish to be dependent upon STD booths, carry a BSNL/MTNL post-paid connection.

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Juley!