

Eddie Bauer First Ascent BC-200 \$199

You can pretty much bet on a short, fierce thunderstorm on your hike. This shell has welded seams and a cinchable but ample-size hood to make sure not a drop of rain gets through. And when the weather clears? It scrunches to the size of a grapefruit in your pack. firstascent.com

Lucy Velocity Halfzip \$78

Layers are key when it comes to summiting peaks. You can drop 20 degrees and gain as much as 6,000 feet in elevation from trailhead to summit. This quick-dry, breathable, mostly nylon top wicks away sweat as you get moving but will also keep you warm when the mercury dips. lucy.com

Osprey Manta 20 \$129

I am an organization freak, so I find Zen when all of my gear has its own place, like in the multiple pockets of this compact 1,200-cubic-inch hydration pack, which holds three Nalgene's worth of water. osprey-packs.com

Julbo MonteRosa Sunglass \$90-\$160

Remove the plastic side shields from these mountaineering-specific shades and you'll resemble any Boulderite. But once you reach the high country, evade sun-burned eyeballs by snapping them back on: Studies show they'll block about 85 percent more light than going without. julbousa.com

Patagonia Sport Top \$49

Not only is this racer-back tank adorable on its own; it's also a smart next-to-skin layer. The built-in shelf bra has you covered when it comes to support (even if you're a C cup), and the nylon-spandex combo is soft to the touch, wicks moisture, and won't make you stink. Bonus: the design looks good on a hot summer day. patagonia.com

Mountain Hardware Cortina Falls Pedal Pusher \$65

Sure, your rain jacket can stave off a downpour, but it's equally important to have quick-drying pants. These water-repellent nylon capris are roomy and have five secure pockets for stashing energy bars and a pocketknife. mountainhardware.com

Princeton Tec Remix Headlamp \$40

You'll often leave before sunrise to make a summit push. Pack this small, light LED headlamp, which has two settings: a floodlight for illuminating the trail and a beam for long-distance (150 feet) spotting. princetonotec.com

HIKE

Getting Started Your First Fourteener

Finding your own comfort zone for hiking mountains over 14,000 feet is a matter of trial and error: Haul too much baggage and you'll get bogged down. Go too fast and light and you might wind up with hypothermia. Either way, you'll be much happier if you're ready for some fickle weather. —STEPHANIE PEARSON

Leki Cressida Aergon \$119

Hiking up may be hard, but it's the downhill that your joints will really feel. Bring along a pair of trekking poles so they can take the brunt of the impact instead of your knees. The thermofoam-handled Aergons are lightweight and easy to adjust on the fly. leki.com

Point6 Merino Wool Socks \$14-\$17

Any guide will tell you: Keep your feet warm and dry. Merino wool naturally fends off water, keeps swamp foot away, and (as we were pleased to find) fights stink. Pair these with our hiking-shoe recommendations (opposite). point6.com