



WHITEWATER RAFTING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What do we wear?

In warmer weather, a swimsuit or shorts and T-shirt are best. A baseball cap, visor, or sunglasses are helpful in bright, sunny weather. Old sneakers or shoes that lace-up offer the best foot protection. **Flip flops, loose-fitting sandals, "croc" and bare feet are not permitted.** Snug fitting sandals (like Tevas) that attach firmly at the toe and heel are acceptable, but don't offer the same foot protection against sharp rocks as old sneakers do. You may rent wet suit booties on-site. If wearing glasses, be sure to secure them with reliable glass-straps.

In cooler conditions, a wool sweater or windbreaker is ideal. In cool or cold conditions avoid wearing cotton, either on its own, or under a wet suit or windbreaker. Wet suits and waterproof paddling gear can be rented on-site. (Rental fee is \$20 for full wet suit package; or \$6 for jacket; \$6 for pants; \$5 for booties and \$3 for mittens.) Cotton, when wet, loses all insulation value and will make you colder, not warmer. A ski-type cap is helpful in colder weather, such as in early April or late October.

2. What can we bring?

In the raft, bring as little as possible. On the Lehigh River, a light lunch. (On warm summer days, we recommend you bring a small ice pack or frozen water bottle(s) to place in the water-tight lunch container inside your raft). If there is medication you might require, keep it with you on the river. Towels, dry clothes, valuables, alcohol, glass containers, pets and cameras (unless waterproof) should be left locked in your car.

3. How do we get back at the end of the day?

Your vehicle will remain at the raft launch site, and a free shuttle buses will take us to and from the river.

4. How deep is the water?

River depths vary. Slow, calmer stretches of water tend to be those that are deeper. Faster, choppy water tends to be shallow, often 4 feet deep or less. Regardless of the depth, however, if you should find yourself overboard in fast moving water, the proper procedure is to float on your back, feet pointed downstream. Don't attempt to stand until the water is less than 18 inches deep. When you reach calmer water, swim toward a guide or nearby raft, or swim to shore.

5. Is there pre-trip instruction?

Your trip leader will review paddling and safety tips, such as how to sit in your raft (on the perimeter tube with both legs inside), how to hold your paddle, how to steer, the importance of avoiding rowdy behavior (the leading contributor to river injuries), keeping your life jacket on and buckled at all times except lunch stop, how to self rescue in rapids, leaning towards big rocks, but away from little ones, never splashing with your paddles, remaining seated and paddling as a team when entering rapids, never standing up in fast moving water, and so on.

6. Do I have to know how to swim?

Swimming ability is not required. Nevertheless, if you are especially apprehensive in or around water, you may want to consider one of our land-based adventures. Rafting, by its nature, places you on, in or around water most of the day. On all of our trips a PFD (life jacket) is worn at all times. Safety equipment will not fit all shapes and sizes, so please consider this in planning your reservations. Also, please remember that whitewater rafting is an active sport that requires some exertion on your part. The larger the rapids, the better your physical conditioning should be.

7. How big are the rapids?

Rapids are rated from Class I (easiest) to Class V (most challenging). Class VI is considered to be not navigable without unreasonable risk of injury. Our easiest trips feature Class I or II rapids. At the Lehigh River, it's not uncommon to see Class III whitewater.

8. What do I do if I fall out of the raft?

Your first priority is to get back into the raft as quickly as possible. Grab onto the raft, or its carrying rope. Your raftmates should reach under your armpits and then lean backwards, helping pull you up and over the raft tube. You can help by kicking, just as if you were swimming.

9. What do I do if I fall out into the rapids and get separated from my raft?

Whatever you do, DO NOT STAND UP in moving water. The force of the water is powerful, even if only knee-deep. Instead, lie on your back, feet pointed down stream, and float through the rest of the rapids. Then in the next calm spot, you can swim back to your raft, or to whatever raft is closest.

10. Do I need experience?

No. Be sure to check minimum age requirements, though.

11. Is lunch provided?

Yes, lunch is included in the price of the trip.

12. What is the cancellation policy?

Unlike most of the other trips we offer, there are no refunds for a cancellation and you may not apply your payment to another trip in the future. Also, rafting trips are governed by strict launch schedules and there can be no refund for late arrivals or no-shows.