So, you are booked on the West Highland Way Experience, what do you need to do to prepare? Here are a few things to consider….

**Kit to bring:**

* First off you need to pack the kit you are going to need for the 6 days, things to consider are...
* We will supply all camping equipment (you can bring your own if you prefer but please let us know as room in vehicles will be limited).
* Pack enough clothing to be comfortable in the evenings, ensure you have warm clothing for later at night as even in July it can turn chilly. Don’t go overboard though as room will be limited in the vehicles, we will bring the kitchen sink so leave yours at home.
* Pack your walking clothes and changes of and include waterproof jackets.
* Boots or shoes for walking in, please don’t forget these.
* Consider soft shoes, flip flops or trainers for when relaxing around camp, it is crucial you get to rest your feet and let them recover between each day.
* Put in a first aid kit with the emphasis on your feet, Compeed anti blister sticks and blister plasters, talc, a separate towel or bit of towel you can carry with you when walking in the event feet get wet.
* Walking poles if required.
* A small day pack for carrying your gear on the trail.
* Phone chargers and leads, we will charge your chargers up in day as best we can.
* Any small luxuries, small pillows,
* Socks for both walking and relaxing, fresh socks daily and spares for on the trail are essential so don’t scrimp on this item. Your feet are key.

**Your Day Pack:**

* What you carry out on the trail can make a massive difference to success or failure so consider the following
* Waterproofs
* Midgie Net and spray or cream
* Spare socks and small towel
* First aid kit
* Map and compass/route cards (we will supply)
* Lunch and snacks, we will supply a packed lunch each day (except day 1 when we will give you a voucher for the Beech Tree Inn), consider a Tupperware type container to put it into
* Water containers or bag
* Phone and other tech - in waterproof pouch
* Gloves, sunglasses, sun cream, sun hat, beanie hat, phone, spare laces, money or card.

**Being prepared:**

* Often the key to success on distance walks is being prepared, both mentally and physically, with that in mind there are steps you can take to get you well set up.
* Train beforehand; the fitter you are the more fun you will have and the less you will suffer. Distance walking is different to hill climbing, you need to build endurance to go out day after day. Take a look at our 10-week training programme on our website, if you found this you know where to look.
* Start to look at the route now and get to know it, see where the hard parts are so they don’t take you by surprise. There are lots of videos, blogs, etc online that you can use to get to know the route and what it entails.
* Understand that not all days will be the same. The terrain changes along the course of the route. Some of the longer distance days may not be that challenging and some of the shorter ones are over rougher ground.
* Know that when you get in at the end of the day we will be there, camp will be set and you can get in and relax.
* Break your walking boots or shoes in before you come along, there is no need to wear heavy boots on the WHW. Light boots or a good pair of walking shoes or approach shoes will be OK but go with what you prefer and are comfortable in.
* Make sure your walking boots/shoes fit well and check them with the socks you intend to walk in.
* Decide what clothing you intend to walk in, make sure it is comfortable and fits well and have spares in case you get soaked one day. Quick drying trousers and sports t-shirts are a godsend and not necessarily expensive.
* If you intend to wear shorts then consider the threat of ticks and check yourself (there are a few – not many - sections with overgrown bracken by the side of the track in the summer). Bring a tick remover and have it in your day pack just in case.
* Will you need gaiters, we often carry them but never use them?

**On the Experience**

* Eat well each day and rest well at night. Look after your body and mind and they will look after you.
* Take your time and enjoy the day, we will be there if you get in at 4pm or 7pm or even 9pm and we will have your dinner sorted.
* Discuss any issues before they become problems, aches, pains, kit issues, no matter what, talk to us and we can try to sort things out before they stop you in your tracks.
* Walk at your own pace. Don’t feel you need to rush to keep up with fast paced walkers. They can go ahead and maybe you can plan stops along the way to regroup? That way everyone gets to walk at a pace that suits them. After a day or 2 your group will naturally find its own rhythm.
* Take each day as it comes – don’t get worried about the total length of the route – it is just a series of day walks.
* Check the weather forecast each day and pack accordingly.
* Look out for each other in your groups. If you can lend a helping hand or offer a word of encouragement to someone who is struggling then try to do so. Accept help from others if they see you have a need.
* The WHW has a reputation for being a friendly and sociable experience. You will pass others on the route. If you are up for it, have a chat to hear how their adventure is going.
* Remind yourself how lucky you are to have the time, the money, the freedom, the confidence, the kit and the health to be able to undertake this adventure. Also, it’ll be a challenge – but that’s why you are doing it.
* Look up! You will be moving across some of the most stunning landscapes in Scotland. Take breaks and enjoy the views. Take loads of photos and maybe keep a journal of your adventure (in fact you might want to start your journal as you prepare to do the route).
* As the week goes on you will get fitter and the last day will be a doddle!