

Wyoming State Museum

The Oregon Trail: Pack Your Wagon Activity



Your Wagon Number:

Immigrant #1:

Immigrant #2:

Your Wagon Party Name:

Immigrant #3:

Immigrant #4:

Welcome to the Oregon Trail! You are about to start the adventure of your lives, as you travel more than 2,000 miles from Independence, Missouri to Oregon City, Oregon!

Facts of the Trail

- About 300,000 immigrants traveled the trail from 1840-1860.
- They left their homes behind and sold almost everything they owned to afford the trip West, to Oregon, California, or Utah.
- Most of them would never see the friends and family they left behind, ever again.
- Most travelers started in Independence, Missouri or other nearby cities.
- The trip could take anywhere from four to six months, depending on when the immigrants left and how lucky they got.
- When the immigrants arrived, there would be no home waiting for them. They would have to build their house that autumn, with whatever tools they brought with them.

Life on the Trail

- The pioneers rarely rode in the wagons, due to the brutal bumps. Almost everyone had to walk beside the wagon... up to fifteen miles per day.
- There were no hotels along the trail. The immigrants camped the entire way.
- There were no grocery stores along the trail, either. They passed a very small number of trading posts and forts. They also had a few opportunities to trade with Native Americans. But the immigrants had to bring most of their supplies.
- The pioneers had to be outside during extreme cold, intense heat, severe thunderstorms, and all other weather.

Discuss the following questions in your wagon group.

- What would be the most important thing you would take with you?
- Which of these would bother you the most? Why?
 - Being hungry.
 - Being cold and wet.
 - Not having your favorite personal item.
 - Not feeling safe.
 - Being stranded in the wilderness.
 - Eating the same things every day.
- What do you think are some differences between going on the Oregon Trail in 1850 and a taking a road trip in 2020?



It's time to pack for your journey to Oregon! With your wagon party, examine "An Emigrant's Guide to the Oregon and California". This will help you know what to take with you. After you read through the guide, take a look at the items available within the "General Store". Work together to pick how many of each item your team will be bringing with you. Fill out your shopping list and add up the total weight of your wagon.



Weight = The weight of one item, listed within the general store.

Number = The total number of items that you will be bringing, for each type of item.

Total = The total weight of each type of item. Multiply **Weight** and **Number** together.

Total Weight of All Supplies:

| | Item | Weight | Number | Total |
|----------------|----------------|-----------|--------|-------|
| Cooking | Cookware | 35 lbs. | | |
| | Soap | 10 lbs. | | |
| | Stove | 300 lbs. | | |
| | Water Keg | 5 lbs. | | |
| Food | Bacon | 100 lbs. | | |
| | Beans | 30 lbs. | | |
| | Coffee | 10 lbs. | | |
| | Corn Meal | 25 lbs. | | |
| | Dried Fruit | 25 lbs. | | |
| | Flour | 100 lbs. | | |
| | Fresh Fruit | 25 lbs. | | |
| | Hardtack | 60 lbs. | | |
| | Lard | 150 lbs. | | |
| | Rice | 20 lbs. | | |
| | Saleratus | 5 lbs. | | |
| | Salt | 20 lbs. | | |
| | Sugar | 20 lbs. | | |
| | Tea | 5 lbs. | | |
| | Vinegar | 25 lbs. | | |
| | Weapons | Gunpowder | 5 lbs. | |
| Lead Shot | | 10 lbs. | | |
| Revolvers | | 10 lbs. | | |
| Rifle | | 10 lbs. | | |

| | Item | Weight | Number | Total |
|-----------------------|--------------|----------|--------|-------|
| Personal Items | Bedroll | 5 lbs. | | |
| | Books | 30 lbs. | | |
| | Boots | 3 lbs. | | |
| | Chair | 20 lbs. | | |
| | China Set | 40 lbs. | | |
| | Clothing | 3 lbs. | | |
| | Dresser | 50 lbs. | | |
| | Family Clock | 100 lbs. | | |
| | Heavy Coat | 3 lbs. | | |
| | Heirlooms | 5 lbs. | | |
| | Instrument | 5 lbs. | | |
| | Medicine | 10 lbs. | | |
| | Mirror | 10 lbs. | | |
| | Table | 25 lbs. | | |
| | Toys | 10 lbs. | | |
| | Trade Goods | 10 lbs. | | |
| Tools | Canoe | 60 lbs. | | |
| | Extra Parts | 75 lbs. | | |
| | Fishing Gear | 5 lbs. | | |
| | Iron Safe | 75 lbs. | | |
| | Tent | 50 lbs. | | |
| | Tools | 50 lbs. | | |
| Wagon Tools | 100 lbs. | | | |

