

CHESAPEAKE AND OHIO CANAL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK  
P.O. Box 4  
Sharpsburg, Maryland 21782  
301 739-4200

## BIKING ALONG THE CANAL

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Detour at Widewater: between Old Angler's Inn & Lock 16 use Burma road (upper side of Widewater) cross back to towpath at Lock 16 Via wooden bridge.

Big Slackwater: during periods of high water, detour marked at the area.

### TOWPATH CONDITIONS

The surface of the towpath varies from excellent to rough due to tree roots, rocks, chuckholes and weather conditions. It is advisable to carry tools and materials with which to repair broken chains and flat tires and broken spokes. Try to plan your trip so you are on the towpath at least two days after heavy rain storms as the towpath becomes muddy and slick. The simpler the bike the better, as dirt and mud gets in the gears and shifting mechanisms. Small wheeled bikes (childrens bikes) are not recommended for extended trips.

#### The Bike should:

- be a good fit for the rider
- be in good condition
- have a permanently attached seat
- have both fenders
- have nuts and bolts tightened
- be ridden with both hands on handlebars
- be ridden only in daylight
- be walked across aqueducts and footbridges
- be locked at night to avoid theft

There are three sections of the canal that lend themselves to one day bike trips. The towpath in these areas is in good condition and the scenery is great!

Great Falls Tavern to Georgetown  
Fifteen Mile Creek to Paw Paw Tunnel, Approx. 15.5 Miles  
Dam 4 to Lock 33, 24 Miles

There is access by motor vehicle to either end of these areas.

Towpath guides and information are available on the canal at:  
Georgetown: (Lock 3-4) Foundry Mall; Great Falls Tavern: Antietam Creek Acqueduct  
Ranger Station: Ferry Hill Canal Headquarters (Lock 38): Hancock Visitor Center:  
North Branch (Lock 75): Tourism Office Cumberland, Md. or Boy Scouts of America  
Council Offices (184 Miles of Adventure): American Youth Hostels 1501 16th St.  
Washington, D.C. 20036.

## Books, Guides and Information

### Information:

National Park Service, Georgetown and Great Falls Tavern  
Appalachian Outfitters (they can give advice on packing, rations, touring,  
precautions, the canal ...)

### Guides:

Detour Pamphlets, National Park Service  
General Maps, N.P.S.  
184 Miles of Adventure, Boy Scouts of America  
Towpath Guides, Vols. 1-4, American Canal and Transportation Center

## Where to Get Things Before the Trip

### Outdoor Equipment

(stoves, sleeping bags, dry food, tents, advice...)  
Appalachian Outfitters; Oakton, Va.  
Hudson Bay Outfitters; Fairfax, Va.  
Kensington, Md.  
Gaithersburg Md.

### Bicycle Repair and Equipment

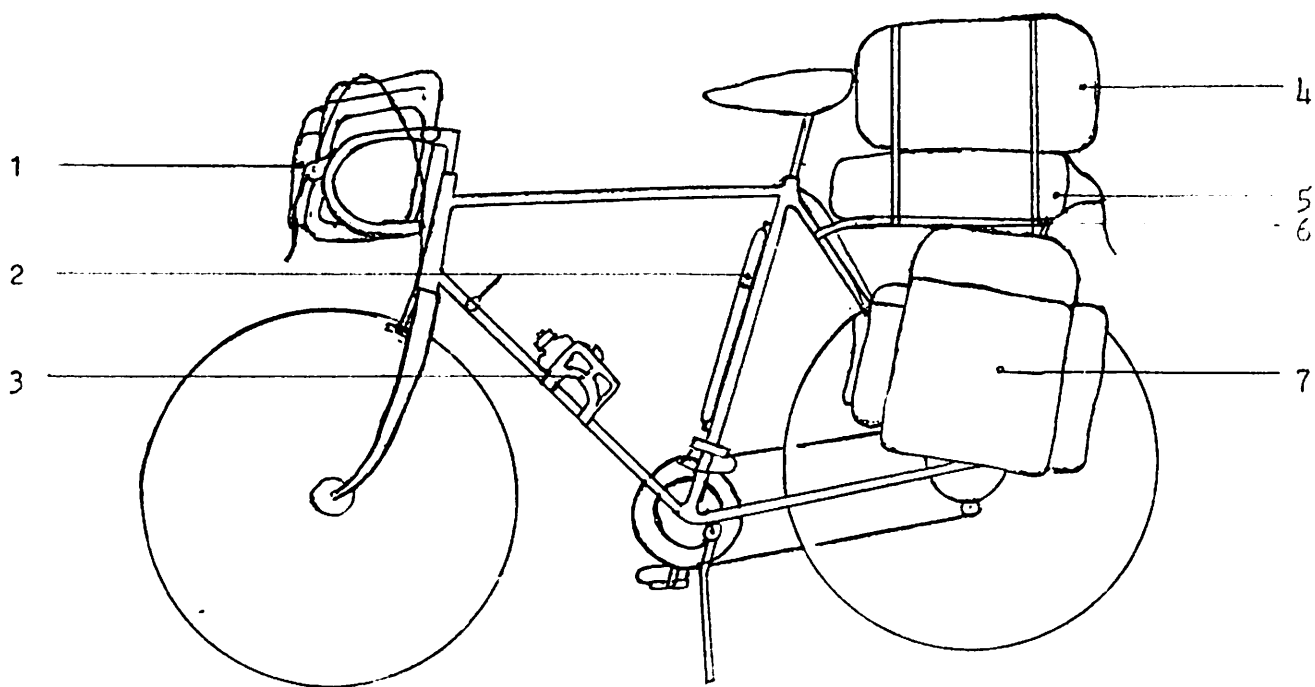
(spare parts, tools, clothing, advice...)  
Proteus Design, College Park, Md.  
Local Bike Shops...(but beware)

### Bicycle Packs

(panniers, handlebar bags, pouches, advice...)  
Appalachian Outfitters; Oakton, Va.

Note: You will need good advice. The establishment listed above will provide you with this type of advice. Bad advice can ruin your trip and cost you lots of money!

1. Handlebar Bag
2. Air Pump
3. Water Bottle
4. Sleeping Bag
5. Tent and Sleeping Pad
6. Back Pack
7. Panniers



## Packing Your Bike for the Trip

1. The more Weight you carry the fewer miles you can travel and the more difficult those miles will be.
2. The location of the load has a tremendous effect on the performance of your bike.
3. Regardless of where the load is located, it must be absolutely secure and not be prone to shifting or bouncing.
4. It is a good idea to strike an even side to side balance when loading your bike.
5. The load, specifically small heavy objects, should be located as low as possible in your pannier bags.
6. An attempt should be made to not overload the rear wheel of the bicycle because of the disastrous effects it can have on the steering, not to mention the effect it has on the rear wheel itself.
7. Know where you pack things in your pack. It gets to be a drag to have to empty out three pockets to find something.
8. Use zip-lock bags to seal things in. These are quite waterproof and are acceptable to put delicate equipment in, ie. camera gear.
9. Try to keep related small items together in pouches, ie. tools and spare parts.
10. Carry extra zip-lock bags
11. Carry foam blocks in case your seat gets to you.
12. Tape is a fix-all item, keep it handy. (The best type of tape is duct tape.)
13. Be sure to carry extra tires and spokes with you.

### Carried on Bike

- |                  |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Fuel Bottle   | 4. Water Bottle |
| 2. Extra Spokes  | 5. Rear Rack    |
| 3. Handlebar Bag | 6. Pump         |

### Rear Rack

- |             |                 |
|-------------|-----------------|
| 1. Tent     | 5. Sleeping Bag |
| 2. Foam Pad | 6. Tire         |
| 3. Frisbee  | 7. Lock         |
| 4. Panniers | 8. Chain        |

### Handlebar Bag

- |                  |                          |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Wind Breaker  | 6. Camera                |
| 2. Rain Pancho   | 7. Wallet                |
| 3. Riding Gloves | 8. Insect Repellent      |
| 4. Matches       | 9. Disposable Towelettes |
| 5. Lid Pocket    | 10. Extra Pockets        |

### Lid Pocket

1. Maps
2. Schedules

3. Detours
4. Guide Books

### Extra Pockets

1. Sunglasses
2. Flashlight
3. Knife

4. Pens
5. Pencils
6. Air Horn

### Panniers

#### Right

Underwear  
Cooking Utensils

Tool Kit  
30' Cord  
Fishing Kit  
Tape

Jersey and Sweater  
Extra Shorts and Pants

Toilet Paper

#### Pockets

##### Bottom Outside

##### Bottom Inside

##### Top Inside

##### Top Outside

##### End Pocket

#### Left

Cook Stove  
Can Opener  
Mess Kit

Grooming Kit  
Wash Cloth and Soap  
Towel and Swim Suit

Sewing Kit  
Canteen for Water

### Things to Put in a Bike Repair Kit

1. Extra Tire
2. Extra Inner Tube
3. Extra Spokes
4. Assorted Nuts and Bolts
5. Wire
6. Tape
7. Extra Chain Link
8. Tire Patch Kit

10. Tools
  1. Wrench Set
  2. Spoke Wrench
  3. Pliers
  4. Screwdrivers
  5. Tire Irons

### Things to Watch Out For

1. Roots, Rocks and Holes
2. Low Overhangs
3. Dogs and other Animals
4. Slower Cyclists
5. Large Groups of Cyclists
6. Loose Nuts and Bolts

### Things One Should Know

1. Basic First Aid
2. How to make simple bicycle repairs.
3. How to change an inner tube and a tire.