

1. Hiking boots

As beautiful the trails are along our creeks and rivers, they present challenges to your feet. Rocks, roots and a variety of obstacles can be bad for feet and toes. Wearing sturdy hiking boots is a must. Luckily there are plenty of good shoe stores in Duluth that feature the best in hiking boots. **Hoka, Salomon, Keene, Merrell**, are just a few of the top-rated brands of hiking boots. In Duluth you can find those brands at places such as: **The Tortoise and Hare**, [Home - Tortoise Hare Footwear](#) **Trail Fitters**, [Trailfitters | Duluth's Outdoor Store](#) **Dick's Sporting Goods**, [DICK'S Sporting Goods Store in Duluth, MN | 1017 \(dickssportinggoods.com\)](#) **Benders**, [Benders Shoes, Clothing and Gifts](#) and **Duluth Pack**. [Duluth Pack | Made in the USA | Heritage Outdoor Gear & Packs](#)

2. Hiking clothes

Because the weather in Duluth can change in an instant it is important to have good quality clothing for your hike. Usually, you will want to dress in layers that can be taken off when you get overheated or put on when the wind shifts off Lake Superior. New fabrics make it easy to dress relatively light but stay warm. My favorite is **Columbia** but other brands such as **North Face, Patagonia, REI** all have excellent clothes for hiking up north. **You can find these clothes and more at the stores listed for hiking boots.**

3. Safety

Always have a **working cell phone, plenty of water**. **Using a cell phone for navigating the maze of hiking and biking trails in the Duluth area is important.** There are maps available at the state parks and city of Duluth but I still recommend using a cell phone. Most of the trails in the area are well traveled and can be busy on weekends. If you are on a **COGGS** bike trail, hikers have the right of way but be courteous to bikers and let them pass. Having dogs on these trails can be complicated unless well trained or on a leash. If you are hiking in a more remote area, hike with other people in case of trouble. **Stay clear of high running water and be careful around overlooks and cliffs. Be extra careful when on or crossing streets and roads.**

It is rare to come upon a bear on the trail. Bears usually stay clear of human activity. If you do come upon a bear **stay calm** talk in a quiet voice and generally let the bear clear the trail. If

the bear moves toward you **walk slowly back the way you came** (do not run). **Raise your arms and make a lot of noise** at this point until the bear moves on.

The **biggest threat on hikes** in our area are actually very tiny, **deer ticks**. Late spring to early fall you need to be aware of the possibility of deer ticks in tall grass. It is usually best to wear long, **light colored clothing** to be able to spot them on you. Deer ticks are very small compared to regular ticks and if bitten can transmit **Lyme Disease**. Always use **bug spray with DEET** on your feet and legs and **stay in the middle of the trail** to avoid long grass. A **red target shaped rash** can appear if bitten and it is necessary to **seek medical help** if you see one.