Backpacker – Gear Guide

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Packs – Multi-Day
Featuring: Exos 48
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[BEST ALL-AROUND]

Osprey Exos 48

WHY WE LIKE IT The redesigned Exos carries a week's worth of ultralight gear, but it's svelte and compressible enough to use for just about any day-long adventure. Outdoor junkies who dabble in everything—biking, skiing, climbing, dayhiking, and backpacking—were hooked.

▸**VERSATILITY** The removable top lid is fairly standard (ditching it saves 3.6 ounces), but a unique flap crosses over the drawstring opening, adding a bit of weather protection and compression to the lid-free mode. Our tester stuffed the pack with five days of supplies in the John Muir Wilderness, and then removed the lid and compressed the pack down for day trips from basecamp.

▸**COMFORT** While many packs in this weight range sacrifice big-load support, the Exos avoids this tradeoff: One tester toted up to 42 pounds on more than a dozen trips in the Sierra Nevada. Shoulder straps employ two layers of soft, open-cell polyester mesh—rather than the typical foam—to save weight and amp up breathability. "They're amazingly pillowy," reports our tester. "There's no hard binding tape to chafe my armpits—the edges are rolled. And despite their thinness, they still lie flat so weight distributes evenly." The hipbelt (made of the same material) and trampoline-style backpanel provide excellent load support and venting.

▸**DURABILITY** The featherweight, 100-denier nylon packbag and mesh showed no weakness during two months of backcountry use in the Sierra.

▸**$190; 2 lbs. 3 oz.; 48 liters; 3 sizes; ospreypacks.com**

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