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Gear Review

Featuring: The Exos 34 & 46

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Osprey isn't joking when it calls its Exos-series packs 'superlight'—these overnight-capable packs come with a stiff and robust frame yet weigh about the same as most frameless daypacks.

But the Exos' design is tantalizingly close to such a capability, and even staying within the range of their intended use, the Exos do offer several compelling features.

More significantly, the Exos packs employ what may be the most aggressive edition yet of Osprey's Airscape/Airspeed design. Desert hikers take note: the Exos' frame creates a ventilation space between the body of the pack and your torso, allowing air to freely flow across your back. In the field, the concept is most effective on windy or at least breezy days.

Another possible use would be extreme dayhiking, where you want an ultralight framed pack to manage heavier loads of water and gear while still keeping the weight as low as possible. In case it's not obvious, the Exos is specifically targeted toward thru-hikers, who need to carry multi-week loads but who also want the lightest base pack weight possible.



I just don't see this kind of willingness to engage in wide-open experiments in any other major pack maker's designs right now. But Osprey is clearly challenging—and changing—the rules of backpack design, and that's great news for all of us.

