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Featuring: Stratos 24

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URL: <http://tinyurl.com/76gebri>



[www.ospreypacks.com](http://www.ospreypacks.com); two pounds, eight ounces.

What is it that separates a great pack from a good one? Streamline design, versatility, the right measure of features and none of the unessential, complex add-ons that just add weight and increase the chance of mechanical failure while on the trail. Admittedly, what a thru-hiker needs to break the AT land speed record and what makes a weekend warrior happy varies considerably—no pack can do everything perfectly. But the Stratos 24 comes damn close, targeting that sweet spot for people who discover hiking—and know it'll become a growing obsession throughout their lifetime. The bag features Osprey's spectacular AirSpeed suspension; the pack rests against your back on a mesh trampoline, while the pack contents are elevated on a curved platform. The space between the main compartment and your back create a veritable tornado of cooling air, from your waist to your shoulders. It's one of the most comfortably harness systems we've tested.

The single-panel top-load main pocket boasts 24 liters of storage (size medium), and is secured with dual nylon buckles. Mesh pockets on either side of the pack, on both sides of the hip belt, and on the left shoulder strap (perfect for sunglasses) expand storage options. The hydration-compatible pack also has two smaller pockets, one on the top for quick-grab items like food or a camera, and another tucked in over the top of the harness, complete with a key clip. And remember what we said about versatility? The Stratos has it in spades, including a removable rain fly and secure ice axe and trekking pole loops—ideal for when the novice hiker suddenly graduates the next level of gear nirvana.

