

BACKPACKER COVER GUIDELINES

Every month we are looking for amazing outdoor imagery for the cover of Backpacker. The cover image is unique because it has to hold text – cover lines and the title. While you are out photographing and hiking this spring, summer, and fall, please be thinking about cover images. The more simple and clean the image the better.

Here are some specific locations and ideas we are currently looking for 2008/2009 cover images.

Please feel free to e-mail me any possible cover photographs throughout the year.

- Glacier National Park
 - Canyonlands
 - Escalante
 - Zion
 - Bryce
- Colorado Rocky Mountains like the San Juans or Maroon Bells
 - Lost Trail, Oregon
 - Olympics National Park
 - Tetons/Snake River, WY
- A navigation shot – Someone using a compass, gps, or map.
- Light-and-fast: An action shot of someone hiking that says “light-and-fast.”

In general, we will always be looking for cover images from any of the National Parks.



Here are a few tips for shooting covers.

- A solo hiker is better than two or a group of hikers.
- If you see a possible location, shoot it both with and without a person/people in the frame.
- Try shooting in the early morning or twilight for dramatic lighting.
- Experiment with movement and energy. I am always looking for covers that express movement and energy with the subject still being super sharp.
- Have your hikers bring a wide range of clothing colors.
- Shoot with and with out a backpack.
- Camping scene (a tent scene, cooking dinner, relaxing, enjoying the location) is a great cover shot.
- Always pay attention to the details – hair out of place, clothing tugging in strange places, strange facial expressions, awkward body movements. Art direct your shoots but at the same time make sure they have an authentic natural feel to the photographs.



Here are Backpacker's cover guidelines along with some sample covers.

- Think simple and clean. Our formula is to have a person or a camp scene in the bottom right hand corner of the frame or centered in the lower quarter of the frame. A cover image might not be what you think will be your "best" stand alone image, think cover lines, simple, and clean.
- The middle center of the frame needs to be clutter free, not a lot of trees or mountains with a lot of texture. This is so cover lines can be read clearly.

- We never cover up the Backpacker logo with part of the photo so we need enough sky for the logo to live in.
- Show scale by using the hiker to show the size of the landscape which creates drama in the image.
- Wildflowers are always great.
- Camping scenes and navigations (someone using a compass, map, or gps) scenes are always great.

