

WATER STORAGE

You do need at least 6 quarts of water storage capacity for snow camp and most overnight outings. You do not need to buy any special container but having a dedicated collapsible bag is very helpful and easy to pack. On nearly every trip I bring 2 or 3 single quart containers (some people bring a drinking bladder), and I bring my 6 quart MSR Dromedary bag. This gives me 2-3 quarts of water carrying capacity (bottles or bladder) for when I'm out hiking and climbing, and when coupled with the 6-quart Dromedary bag which I leave back at camp that gives me ~2 gallons of storage capacity. That's plenty for a 2 or 3 day outing, so I only have to make water once. Other brands make collapsible water storage bags (such as Platypus) which may be even a bit lighter although less durable. Even empty 2-liter soda bottles work, they're just not collapsible. If you have two Nalgene bottles and two 2-liter soda bottles there's your 6 quarts of storage capacity at no significant additional cost and very little weight. Of course you'd need to figure out how to carry the bottles so they don't get crushed. But I know people who do that, for a while, . . . until they buy a collapsible bag or Dromedary.

I like the MSR Dromedary bags, a lot. They're indestructible, really. I've even dropped mine in a cactus. Yes it had pin holes but I just used a few dabs of Seam Grip and it sealed up fine and is still in use. I've had my original since 1999 and that's what I'll take to Snow Camp. They come in 4, 6 and 10 liter. I have a 4 and a 6. When coupled with a couple Nalgene bottles or a drinking bladder the 4 quart is good for most 2-day weekends, the 6-quart is good for all 2-day and most 3-day weekends. In fact if two people each have a few Nalgene bottles or drinking bladders then one additional 6-quart Dromedary bag is typically adequate storage for both people for most 2-3 day outings.

There's very little weight difference between the 4 and 6 quart models so I pretty much universally carry the 6 quart bag. The 10 quart bag seems like overkill to me unless the plan is for multiple people to share the one bag. MSR also makes two versions; the original black version which has a bit heavier fabric and with a cord all the way around the bag which is nice for hanging the bag, and the "lite" version which is a bit lighter and with only a hanging cord at one end. The weight difference isn't that great (3 oz. for the 6L bag), but now that they've updated the "lite" bag with the cord for hanging I'd probably buy that one now.

Black MSR Dromedary: 8.7 oz for the 6 liter
<https://www.msrgear.com/dromedary-bags>

Red MSR Dromlite bag: 5.7 oz for the 6 liter
<https://www.msrgear.com/dromlite-bags>

WHICH BOTTLES TO CARRY?

And for those of you who prefer drinking bottles over bladders, or if you're in cold conditions where a bladder hose freezing is a concern, here's what I've settled on: Nalgene bottles are wide mouth which is very useful in the outdoors and they're nearly indestructible, but they weight 6 ¼ oz. each. So that's over a pound of empty bottle weight if I carry 3 bottles. There are other collapsible containers made by different manufactures (such as Platypus) that are quite light. My experience is these products fail and leak after a year or so of use. So if you like these products just plan to replace them every year, you don't want to wait until they fail in the field and leave you without a way to store water. And I have friends who do that, enjoy the benefit of the collapsible 1-2 quart contains and then just replace them at the beginning of each season. There are lots of light weight plastic bottles we use and discard in our

daily life that make good water storage. Both Gatorade (1 $\frac{3}{4}$ oz.) and Powerade (2 $\frac{1}{4}$ oz.) bottles make good substitutes for Nalgene bottles (6 $\frac{1}{4}$ oz.). While $\sim 1/3$ rd the weight of a Nalgene bottle these sports drink bottles are also not as rugged and they get beat up if not protected. So what I do is bring one Nalgene bottle which I carry in an [Outdoor Research Water Bottle Tote](#) strapped to my hip belt for easy access and one or more Powerade bottle(s) which I leave in my pack. I just use them to refill the Nalgene which I always keep on my hip. So the Nalgene is always out getting beat up as I scramble and climb, and the Powerade bottle(s) stay protected in the pack. I prefer Powerade over Gatorade as they're significantly stronger and only $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. heavier. So:

- 3 empty Nalgene bottles weight 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ oz.
- 1 Nalgene and 2 Powerade bottles weight 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ oz.

That's a $\frac{1}{2}$ pound weight savings (and cheaper)

My thoughts,
Neal