

Arc'teryx Beta SL Jacket – Gear Review

Overview

The Arc'teryx Beta SL Jacket is the lightest model in the Beta shell lineup and is designed as a highly versatile waterproof shell for hiking, backpacking, travel, climbing, and everyday mountain use. Formerly known as the Beta Lightweight Jacket, the current Beta SL combines a PFAS-free GORE■TEX ePE membrane, C■KNIT™ backer technology, pit zips, and Arc'teryx's renowned fit and construction quality.

Weight

- Men's Medium: **340 g (12.0 oz)**
- Women's Version: **300 g (10.6 oz)**
- Despite the "SL" (Superlight) designation, the jacket prioritizes durability and weather protection over ultralight minimalism.

Key Specifications

- Weight: 340 g (12.0 oz)
- Waterproofing: 3-layer GORE■TEX ePE
- Backer: C■KNIT™ comfort technology
- Face Fabric: 40D x 70D nylon
- Ventilation: Pit zips
- Hood: Helmet-compatible StormHood™
- Safety: RECCO® reflector
- Best Uses: Hiking, backpacking, mountaineering, travel, everyday rain protection

Comfort & Fit

The Beta SL offers a trim but layer-friendly fit. The C■KNIT backer improves next-to-skin comfort compared with traditional hardshell fabrics, while the articulated patterning allows unrestricted movement on steep trails and technical terrain.

Weather Protection

Weather protection is where the Beta SL truly excels. The 3-layer GORE■TEX ePE construction provides exceptional waterproof and windproof performance, making it suitable for prolonged mountain storms, heavy rain, and exposed alpine environments.

Breathability

Large pit zips significantly improve airflow during high-output activities. Combined with the breathable membrane and C■KNIT backer, the Beta SL manages moisture better than many traditional hardshell jackets.

Durability

The 40D/70D face fabric balances durability and weight extremely well. The jacket withstands brush, rock contact, and backpack use better than many ultralight shells while remaining relatively lightweight.

Pros

- Outstanding weather protection
- Excellent durability-to-weight ratio
- Pit zips improve ventilation
- Premium Arc'teryx construction quality
- Helmet-compatible StormHood™
- Packs relatively small for a full-featured shell

Cons

- Premium price (approximately \$500 USD)
- Heavier than minimalist emergency shells

- Limited pocket storage compared with alpine-specific shells

Best For

Hikers, backpackers, climbers, travelers, and outdoor enthusiasts seeking a durable, highly weather-resistant shell capable of handling serious mountain conditions.

Editor's Rating: 9.7 / 10

The Arc'teryx Beta SL Jacket is one of the finest all-around waterproof shells available. While not the lightest jacket carrying an "SL" designation, its combination of weather protection, durability, breathability, and versatility makes it a benchmark product in the lightweight hardshell category.