

LEAVE NO TRACE on your Hiking Challenge

Help Preserve a Wild Experience for Future Generations

PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE

- Bring the 10 essential gear items with you on every adventure, including a physical map, a headlamp, and a bathroom kit. A willingness to prepare can ensure group safety and the preservation of the natural resource.
- Review your intended route, leave a trip itinerary with someone you trust, and know the rules and regulations for the area you're recreating in (i.e. bear resistant food canister requirements, dog leash zones, snowshoe / ski requirements, etc.).
- Check the forecast and sunset time before you go.

TRAVEL AND CAMP ON DURABLE SURFACES

- Hiking challenges are enjoyed by thousands of people. Concentrate your recreation on the most durable surface by sticking to the trail and designated campsites.
- Walk single file on trails.
- Mentally prepare your group to hike through mud. Sturdy boots, trekking poles, and gaiters can help you stay on trail.
- Popular campsites can fill quickly. Use your map to find a legal camping alternative if a campsite is full.
- Alpine zones and wetlands are very susceptible to trampling damage. Defend these rare ecosystems by staying on trail.

DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY

- “Carry it in, Carry it out!”
- Toilet paper, food scraps, and microtrash should not be left behind on any hiking challenge routes. It's up to *YOU* to be the solution!
- If there is no toilet, walk at least 200 ft (80 steps) from campsites, trails, and water sources to bury poop in a hole 6 to 8 inches deep. Carry out or bury toilet paper.
- Pack out disposable wipes and hygiene products.
- While at camp, broadcast your toothpaste and strained dishwater 200 ft from the sleeping area, minimize the use of soap, and pack out all of your food scraps.

LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND

- Take only photographs. Leave natural and historic features undisturbed.
- Don't carve or leave your mark on lean-tos, toilets, signs, trees, or rocks.
- Pass on the gift of discovery to the next visitors of this natural area.

MINIMIZE CAMPFIRE IMPACTS

- Check to see if fires are legal in the land area that you are visiting.
- Is it safe to have a fire? Does your group have the skills to have a safe fire in an existing fire ring? Is there a water source nearby to put out the fire?
- Consider alternatives to campfires when the conditions aren't safe. Bring warmer layers, use a stove to prepare meals, bring a headlamp for light, and enjoy the starry skies and nighttime sounds instead.
- Collect dead, downed, dinky, and distant wood that you can break by hand, less than 3 inches in diameter.
- Do not burn or bury trash or food (these items attract wildlife).
- Douse your fire thoroughly with water.

RESPECT WILDLIFE

- Store food, trash, and scented items out of reach of animals using approved food storage devices or hang 12 ft from the ground and 6 ft out from a limb or trunk.
- If you are taking a dog along for the challenge, keep it restrained and leashed at all times.

BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHERS

- Keep loud voices and noise to a minimum. Refrain from using phones or speakers around others. Ear buds are fine!
- Be mindful of other user groups and maintain an inclusive mindset.
- Give back to the places you love! Your stewardship matters for the thousands of hikers who follow in your footsteps and the wildlife that calls these habitats home.

For more information and materials, visit ADK.org or LNT.org.