

Hiking Safety



Hiking Trail Etiquette & Safety

by Coach Liz Garcia

TRAIL ETIQUETTE

National Park Service Recommendations:

- Follow the “leave no trace” rule - pack out your trash
- Know who has right of way - uphill hikers have right of way over downhill hikers
- Be aware of your surroundings
- Make yourself known - when approaching other hikers
- Respect wildlife
- Single file on the trail
- Stay on the trail

SAFETY

Rules of the Trail & The Great Outdoors :

- Pick the trail that is right for you & the group
- Take no chances
- Prepare for the weather
- Check for park alerts and/or check with a ranger
- Have a plan “B”
- Have an emergency plan
- Have a plan to communicate
- If hunting season, wear hunter ORANGE
- Leave a trip plan

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KNOW YOUR LIMITS

Ask Yourself These Questions To Be Safe, Enjoy Your Hike, and Survive:

- What's my experience level?
- How long can I carry a backpack w/ essentials?
- How's my physical fitness?
- What's my familiarity w/ the trail and environment?

REMEMBER — Your Cellphone Is NOT (on the trail...)

- A light source
- A survival kit
- Map
- Always going to have reception

RULES OF THE TRAIL:

"Hike alert, hyper aware of yourself, your surroundings and your trail hike buddies." This translates to... "You are hiking & others are hiking with you!"

- Take breaks often - if you can talk while hiking you are at the perfect pace
- Pay attention & do self assessments on how you are feeling
- Hiking can drain your energy quickly - to avoid dehydration, heat exhaustion & eat snacks and drink water as you go
- Take your time & watch your step - especially on slippery areas & near cliffs
- Stick to dry paths & solid areas with good footing
- Stay away from rapid water & slippery slopes - including waterfalls & swift or cold waters
- Be aware of altitude sickness – be proactive, hydrate, pacing adjustments, etc...

Hike

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- Altitude sickness is real (and serious) - can happen when you climb too quickly, and everyone is different
- Symptoms of altitude sickness - nausea, headache, lack of hunger or thirst, lack of coordination, difficulty in breathing, confusion, and vomiting
- If you notice early, you can prevent altitude sickness - rest (reduce exertion), hydrate, eat. (as soon as you notice symptoms, let someone know and inform your guide and coaches)
- Be extra careful on the second half of your hike - energy levels are lower, muscles are fatigued, & your mind may be focused on getting to the finish rather than the next step
- Spray for mosquitos & check for ticks - during and after your hikes