

# 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.

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*For more information and materials, visit [ADK.org](http://ADK.org) or [LNT.org](http://LNT.org).*