



Hiking

SafeTips from the Naval Safety Center

Quick and easy summaries to find out about something new you're doing or as a refresher for something you haven't done in a while. They're a great training tool to pass around at meetings, through e-mail, or post on bulletin boards.

- ⦿ Plan ahead, and plan carefully.
- ⦿ Study maps, guidebooks and other references so that you know about the roads, trails, and streams in the area.
- ⦿ Check the weather forecast before you leave.
- ⦿ Make sure you're in shape for the demands of your hike.
- ⦿ Leave a written plan of your route, schedule and campsite with a responsible friend. Follow your plan, and let them know when you return.
- ⦿ Wear a good pair of hiking shoes or boots.
- ⦿ Bring an extra layer of clothing, and avoid cotton if you might get wet.
- ⦿ Carry a compass and a topographic map of the area.
- ⦿ Know how to use the gear you plan to carry. If you bring a water filter, tent, stove or GPS unit, practice using them before you leave.
- ⦿ Carry a flashlight or headlamp with extra batteries.
- ⦿ Don't travel too lightly. Many campers have ended up wishing they had brought a poncho, a jacket, more food and water, a first-aid kit, knife, whistle and matches in a waterproof container.
- ⦿ Don't drink water from ponds or streams unless you have treated it first by boiling, filtering or using purification tablets.
- ⦿ If you get lost, don't worry. If someone is going to report you missing, then most experts stress the three "stays": stay dry, stay warm and stay put.
- ⦿ If you have to find your way out of the woods, follow a stream downhill. Remember that river and streams usually flow toward the sea.
- ⦿ Don't hike alone. For long trips, take along at least two friends.
- ⦿ For day hikes, make sure you will finish well before dark.
- ⦿ Turn back if the weather gets bad.

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