

Fieldcraft Skill Series

Hiking Etiquette



Be respectful of other Hikers and the Outdoors

Most groups have some basic guidelines or rules that govern their activity to make things more pleasant for all those participating. Taking part in outdoor activities is no different. Following the Scout Oath and Scout Law serve as the best rules to follow. In addition, here are a few guidelines that will make your hike a more pleasant experience for you and for others.

- Always follow The Outdoor Code and the Principles of Leave No Trace.
- Hike quietly. Speak as softly as possible. Take the time to enjoy the sounds of nature and allow others do the same.
- Do your part to help preserve trails by "*Sticking To The Trail*". Shortcutting the corner of a switchback doesn't make your trek any shorter, and again negatively impacts trail sustainability.
- When hiking with your Patrol or in a group, don't take up the whole width of the trail; allow others to pass.
- Move off the trail to take a break in order to allow other hikers to pass unobstructed.
- Hikers going downhill yield to those hiking uphill.
- Quickly step *through* mud or a puddle, and not around it, unless you can do so without straying off the trail. Walking around wet spots and puddles only causes widening of the trail, and negatively impacts trail sustainability.
- Always pack out your trash - even biodegradable items such as apple cores and banana peels. It is not good for wildlife to be exposed to foodstuff that is not part of their normal food chain.
- Don't feed the wildlife. Giving these creatures food only disrupts their natural foraging habits.
- When you need to relieve yourself in the outdoors, move a minimum of 200 feet off trail and any from any water sources.
- Leave what you find. Experienced hikers bring home only photographs and good memories. The most experienced don't even leave footprints.