

ADIRONDACK MOUNTAIN CLUB
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GUIDELINES FOR ADK CHAPTER OUTINGS LEADERS

TAKING A HIKE?

THE ROUTE - Select a route that accommodates the physical abilities of the group. Consult guidebooks, topographical maps, and other hikers knowledgeable of the area. Plan to have as much or more time for walking out as you spent walking in. Injuries are more likely to occur when rushing, at dusk, or when going downhill.

TELL SOMEONE YOUR PLANS - Leave your itinerary with a reliable person. Include your estimated time of arrival. Register at the trailhead where appropriate, giving your name, address, number of people in the party, and your route. Be sure to write "out" next to your name as you leave.

In New York State, a permit is needed from the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) if you have a group of 9 or more who wish to stay overnight in a wilderness area.

It is better to have less than 9 persons in a group to avoid heavy impact on woods.

WATCH THE WEATHER - Consult a local weather report. Even on a sunny day, include non-plastic rain gear. Mountain weather can take a quick change for the worse, making hypothermia a potential problem. Bring clothing such as wool or polypropylene which insulate even when wet. Jeans and sweatshirts (100% cotton) absorb moisture, do not dry quickly, and are, therefore, uncomfortable and dangerous in inclement weather. Cotton/poly clothing is lightweight and dries quickly, making it a good choice. Plan on drinking approximately a half cup of liquid for every mile you hike.

FOOTCARE - Comfort and protection of the feet and ankles are essential to insure an enjoyable hike. Choose a shoe which:

- * Supports the ankle, especially when carrying a pack.
- * Has adequate space around the toe.
- * Has a well-defined heel.
- * Has a sole that will protect your foot from sharp rocks and continuous pounding.
- * Flexes with the foot.

Take time to break in new boots. Be prepared for blisters. As soon as a "hot spot" occurs, take time to stop and apply mole skin around the sore or blistered area.

EQUIPMENT AND CLOTHING - Although every equipment list will vary as to the activity, time of year, and the individual, the following is essential for a summer day hike:

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| *Pack | *Guidebook, map and compass |
| *Proper hiking shoes | *Jackknife |
| *Insect repellent | *Whistle |
| *Wool or non-absorbent pile jacket or sweater | *Flashlight with extra batteries and lightbulb |
| *Hat | *Plastic trash bag |
| *Trail food | *First-aid kit (see next section) |

FIRST AID - For safety reasons, a minimum of three people is recommended for a hiking group. In case of an injury, one person can stay with the victim while the other goes for help. Keep victim comfortable and quiet. The location, time and nature of the accident, and the height, weight, age and sex of the victim should be written down and taken by the person going for help.

Consider the following items to carry in a first-aid kit:

*Elastic ace bandage	*Antacid tablets
*Aspirin	*Safety pins
*Moleskin	*Tweezers
*Gauze	*Needles
*Gauze pads	*Antiseptic cream
*Scissors	*Salt tablets
*Band-Aids	*Chapstick
*Sanitary napkins	*Notebook and pencil
*Sunburn preventative	*Several quarters and a list of emergency
*Thermometer	*Phone numbers

FOOD - A trail lunch should consist of easily digestible food, high in energy and moist in content. Try a sandwich, juice, orange, and candy bars. Better to eat small amounts at intervals than to eat one large mid-day meal.

Hard candies, nuts, raisins and other dried fruits, sunflower seeds, granola, coconut, dried cereal, hard chocolate, and other readily available supermarket items make good snack food (gorp). Avoid soft chocolates that melt in hot weather.

Have a reserve supply of food for emergencies. Some "food sticks" and "breakfast bars" found in supermarkets are balanced, relatively high in calories and have a reasonably long "pack life."

WATER - Unfortunately, the potability of backcountry water is not certain. Boil water for at least three minutes. Suggestion: Boil the next day's drinking water at dinner, and set water bottle in stream to chill overnight.

Be sure that you wash your dishes and yourself well away from the stream. Even biodegradable soaps take awhile to break down.

Bury all human waste 4 - 6" deep and away from any water or wet areas. Cover waste with soil.

And PLEASE...

Stay on the trail. Alpine vegetation is especially fragile. Try to "rock hop" where possible.

Camp at designated sites below 4000' and 150' from trail or stream.

Use a camping stove rather than an open fire. If you must build a fire, use wood that is "down and dead." Be sure not to leave your fire smoldering. And remember that aluminum foil doesn't burn!

"If you carry it in, carry it out." (This includes orange peels, egg shells, and even the tiny pieces of aluminum foil.)

LEADING A HIKE?

The Adirondack Mountain Club recommends the following guidelines to trip leaders. These guidelines are not hard and fast. Actual situations and conditions require good judgment, but the following are a good starting point for leaders:

1. Group activities in the wilderness areas of the Adirondack Park and in the proposed wilderness areas of the Catskill Park should be limited to a total party size, including trip leader(s), of 12 individuals.
2. Trips should be adequately described to potential participants prior to signing up. Descriptions should include:
 - *Trip length (miles or kilometers)
 - *Trip duration (hours)
 - *Elevation to be climbed (feet or meters)
 - *Mention of any special equipment or other factors
 - *Brief description of the level of difficulty to be expected during average conditions.
 - *Brief description of the trip plan, including parking and possible hiking options.

Participants should select activities well within their capabilities.

3. Trip leaders should count the number of trip participants at the start of the trip, periodically throughout the trip, and again at the end of the trip to insure that everyone is accounted for. A trail "sweep" should be designated on hiking trips and the participants of the trip should be kept between the trip leader and the sweep
4. Trip leaders and participants should carry equipment and supplies appropriate to the trip description and anticipated weather conditions. For significant, all-day hikes, a small pack with reasonable food, water and clothing, including a hat, rain gear, suitable footwear and extra garments suitable to the season are recommended. Participants in significant, all-day hikes might also carry insect repellent, sun screen, a whistle, matches, a knife, small flashlight, compass and trail map. A basic understanding of the use of map and compass is suggested.
5. Trip leaders volunteer their time in order to help those less experienced or less familiar with a region to enjoy an outdoor experience. Cheerful cooperation with the leader is the best appreciation a participant can give a trip leader.
6. Standard safety procedures, appropriate to the type of trip, and good common sense should be observed by trip leaders and participants at all times.
7. Under no circumstances should individual participants should not go off alone during an organized trip. A minimum party size of three (four during winter conditions) is recommended at all times in wild land regions.
8. The trip participants should share with the trip leader the responsibility of making a trip safe and enjoyable and must respect the trip leader's advice and final judgment.

*Adapted from Taking a Hike? Leading a Hike? -- an educational brochure published by ADK and available through Headquarters.