



Hike and Learn

Leave No Trace™

TroutAdventureTrail.org

A proud partnership of Trout Unlimited, the US Forest Service, and Boy Scouts of America



LEAVE NO TRACE™

Leave No Trace™ is a set of principles for responsible behavior in the outdoors. There is a nonprofit organization that protects and promotes those principles named the [Leave No Trace™ Center for Outdoor Ethics](#). Leave No Trace has been promoted, advocated and taught by the USDA Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, the Sierra Club and the Boy Scouts of America.

Materials to teach Leave No Trace™ are available from the [Center for Outdoor Ethics](#).

- Free materials are available for view or download at [Leave No Trace/Tools and Activities for Educators](#)
- In particular the [Concepts and Plans for Teaching Leave No Trace](#) are particularly useful.
- The Center provides specific age-appropriate materials to teach Leave No Trace™. See [Focus on Youths and Teens](#)
- Kids 4 to 8 years old can learn the principles in a short game called [Trek and Track Say](#) available for free.

Terrific teaching materials also are available for free from the Boy Scouts of America at [Teaching Leaving No Trace](#). The Leave No Trace™ Seven Principles are set out below.

The Leave No Trace Seven Principles

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Plan Ahead and Prepare

- Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you'll visit.
- Prepare for extreme weather, hazards and emergencies.
- Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use.
- Visit in small groups when possible. Consider splitting larger groups into smaller groups.
- Repackage food to minimize waste.
- Use a map and compass to eliminate the use of marking paint, rock cairns or flagging.

Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

- Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel, dry grasses or snow.
- Protect riparian areas by camping at least 200 feet from lakes and streams.
- Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary. In popular areas:
 - Concentrate use on existing trails and campsites.
 - Walk single-file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy.
 - Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent.
- In pristine areas:
 - Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails.
 - Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.



Dispose of Waste Properly

- Pack it in, pack it out. Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods. Pack out all trash, leftover food and litter.
- Deposit solid human waste in catholes dug 6 to 8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water, camp and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished.
- Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products.
- To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.

Leave What You Find

- Preserve the past: Examine, but do not touch, cultural or historic structures and artifacts.
- Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.
- Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.
- Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.

Minimize Campfire Impacts

- Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the backcountry. Use a lightweight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light.
- Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans or mound fires.
- Keep fires small. Only use sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand.
- Burn all wood and coals to ash, put out campfires completely; then, scatter cool ashes.

Respect Wildlife

- Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them.
- Never feed animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers.
- Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely.
- Control pets at all times or leave them at home.
- Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young, and in wintertime.

Be Considerate of Other Visitors

- Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.
- Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail.
- Step to the downhill side of the trail when encountering pack stock.
- Take breaks and camp away from trails and other visitors.
- Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises.