

Principles of Leave No Trace



1. Plan Ahead and Prepare

Proper trip planning and preparation helps hikers and campers accomplish trip goals safely and enjoy-ably while minimizing damage to natural and cultural resources. Campers who plan ahead can avoid unexpected situations, and minimize their impact by complying with area regulations such as observing limitations on group size.

2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

Damage to land occurs when visitors trample vegetation or communities of organisms beyond recovery. The resulting barren areas develop into undesirable trails, campsites, and soil erosion.

3. Dispose of Waste Properly (Pack It In, Pack It Out)

This simple yet effective saying motivates backcountry visitors to take their trash home with them. It makes sense to carry out of the backcountry the extra materials taken there by your group or others. Inspect your campsite for trash or spilled foods. Accept the challenge of packing out all trash, leftover food, and litter.

4. Leave What You Find

Allow others a sense of discovery, and preserve the past. Leave rocks, plants, animals, archaeological artifacts, and other objects as you find them. Examine but do not touch cultural or historical structures and artifacts. It may be illegal to remove artifacts.

5. Minimize Campfire Impacts

Some people would not think of camping without a campfire. Yet the naturalness of many areas has been degraded by overuse of fires and increasing demand for firewood.

6. Respect Wildlife

Quick movements and loud noises are stressful to animals. Considerate campers observe wildlife from afar, give animals a wide berth, store food securely, and keep garbage and food scraps away from animals. Help keep wildlife wild.

7. Be Considerate of Other Visitors

Thoughtful campers travel and camp in small groups, keep the noise down, select campsites away from other groups, always travel and camp quietly, wear clothing and use gear that blend with the environment, respect private property, and leave gates (open or closed) as found. Be considerate of other campers and respect their privacy.