The Leave No Trace Seven Principles

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.

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.

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.

MINIMIZE CAMPFIRE IMPACTS

• Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the environment. 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, or winter.

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.

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.