

PHONE NUMBERS

Mountaineers Emergency Cell (206) 335-0566

National Park Service

Mount Rainier National Park (360) 569-2211

www.nps.gov/mora/

North Cascades National Park (360) 856-5700

www.nps.gov/noca/

Olympic National Park (360) 565-3130

www.nps.gov/olym/ roads (360) 565-3131

National Forest Service

Gifford Pinchot National Forest (360) 891-5000

www.fs.fed.us/gpnf/

Mt Baker/Snoqualmie National Forest (425) 775-9702

www.fs.fed.us/r6/mbs/

(800) 627-0062

Okanogan National Forest (509) 826-3275

www.fs.fed.us/r6/oka/

Olympic National Forest (360) 956-2402

www.fs.fed.us/r6/olympic/

Wenatchee National Forest (509) 664-9200

www.fs.fed.us/r6/oka/

Other Areas

Alpine Lakes Wilderness Area (425) 744-3400

www.washington.edu/trails/alpine

Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge (360) 457-8451

www.dungeness.com/refuge/

Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge (360) 753-9467

164.159.11.73/nisqually/

WSDOT (800) 695-7623

Web links: Mountain Passes

<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/traffic/passes/passinformation.aspx>

THE MOUNTAINEERS

HIKING LEADERS GUIDE



HIKING LEADER’S GUIDE

“Mountaineers outings are organized by and for the membership, for group enjoyment, exploration and education in the outdoors. The leaders are volunteers, and trip participants cooperate in sharing responsibility and meeting the needs of the group as a whole.”

The Mountaineers

INTRODUCTION

This Hiking Leader’s Guide is designed to provide suggestions for leaders of The Mountaineers Hiking trips. It reflects The Mountaineers policies and procedures for hikers and hiking leaders. In addition to the few mandatory rules, the manual provides general guidelines for the variety of hiking trips The Mountaineers offers. But no guidebook can substitute for an experienced and sensitive leader exercising careful and thoughtful judgment throughout the trip.

The various Hiking Committees appreciate your willingness to lead hiking trips for the fast growing hiking programs, and welcome you to our pool of over 100 volunteer leaders. This guide will acquaint you with the policies, procedures and expectations set forth by the various Hiking Committees for a safe and successful Hiking program. If you have questions concerning any of the information presented here, please don’t hesitate to contact the appropriate committee person for additional clarification.

Happy Mountaineering!

3rd^d Edition, 2008
The Mountaineers Hiking Committee

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SUSPENDING LEADERS

The Hiking Committee of jurisdiction may temporarily or permanently suspend any leader who demonstrates dangerous leadership, poor judgment or unsafe conduct. When one of the Mountaineers Committees receives a complaint concerning the action of a leader, the complaint is reviewed by the Committee Chair to determine the seriousness of the complaint. If it is an emergency situation, the Committee Chair will deal with the problem immediately; otherwise the problem will be addressed at the monthly meeting. The Committee Chair will assemble the facts pertinent to the complaint and will then discuss the situation with the leader. Based on the findings, the leader will be notified in writing of the action taken, which could include a written warning, suspension, or deletion from the leaders list.

ROLE OF THE LEADER

The leader is a volunteer whose experience and judgment have qualified him or her for a leadership position. The leader has the authority and responsibility for the safety of the group, making sure that the participants of the trip are adequately equipped based on Mountaineers policy. The leader may wish to consult with the trip participants, but the leader makes the final decision regarding the group's safety in difficult situations.

Ultimately, the point of any Mountaineers trip should be the fun and full experience of arriving at/and returning from the destination - not merely the destination itself. Even the most strenuous expedition is enriched by memories of good conversation, shared perceptions, and new friends. Reaching the destination is important, if reasonably possible, but having an enjoyable experience and returning safely rank higher. The leader is in a unique position to shape the quality and promote the safety of the trip. We hope that this guide will assist leaders in strengthening their innate leadership skills.

LEADERSHIP QUALIFICATIONS

The Mountaineers always welcomes new leaders. In general, an aspiring leader must be at least 18 years old, be a member of The Mountaineers, have demonstrated leadership within The Mountaineers, and be approved by the appropriate Committee for inclusion on that Committee's leaders list. The Seattle Hiking & Singles Committees require attendance at a Hiking Leadership Workshop and the completion of at least one mentored trip with an experienced hike leader (two are recommended). Branches and other activities that offer hikes may have different requirements for new leaders. Check with the committee for which you wish to lead hikes. The Mountaineers minimum clubwide hiking standards (approved 1/25/07) state that all hiking leaders have knowledge of group leadership; use of topographical maps & compass; mountain safety(including identification of hazards and actions to avoid injury); basic first aid; and emergency preparedness (how to summon help should it be needed). MOFA (Mountaineer Oriented First Aid) and wilderness navigation courses are offered by The Mountaineers several times a year.

ONGOING LEADERSHIP TRAINING: It is recommended, but not required, that current leaders participate in a Hiking Leadership Workshop every three years. The Committees would appreciate experienced leaders serving as resources and providing case studies to the program.

CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD LEADERS

1. Enthusiasm for hiking and sharing the experience with others
2. Personal preparation and good judgment
3. Group awareness
4. Knowledge of and adherence to Mountaineers principles
5. Ability to make decisions
6. Willingness to accept responsibility for decisions
7. Concern for safety appropriate to the nature of the activity
8. Knowledge of hiking and wilderness skills

BENEFITS OF LEADERSHIP

Leading hikes is a way to become involved, get to know more club members who love to hike, and you get to choose your own destinations and hike dates. Learning to lead hikes is learning how to manage people and situations--skills that carry over into other aspects of life. Leading makes it possible for less experienced people to learn from you and experience the wilderness safely. The Mountaineers is a volunteer organization. Without volunteer leaders, there would be no hikes and no Mountaineers organization.

TRIP RULES

The Mountaineers has always been interested in minimizing formal requirements for trip participation in order to foster initiative and the spirit of adventure. Thus, most of this manual suggests guidelines for leader action that should always be tempered with judgment about the circumstances of an outing. There are, nevertheless, a few rules that are necessary to enhance the safety and appropriate conduct of all hiking trips. It is these rules, derived from The Mountaineers Board of Trustees Policy, which set the standard for a leader's performance.

LEADER: Every trip must have a leader who is at least 18 years old, a Mountaineers member, and formally approved by the appropriate Mountaineers Committee. A co-leader may be assigned at the discretion of the leader. In this case, the co-leader must also be at least 18 years old, and a Mountaineers member. The function of a co-leader is to share responsibility with the leader.

CAMPING: Camp at least 200 feet from water. Reduce contamination of water and impact on animals by locating your camp out of sight of trails, lakes and streams and away from animal feeding or sleeping areas. Use a highly impacted site, do not sprawl your campsite out, and keep the damage in one area. Try not to camp on vegetation, instead choose rocks, snow, sand, gravel, or hardpan. When camping in a pristine area, move your campsite often to minimize impact on any particular plants. Do not camp on tundra at all when you have a choice. Leave no sign of your camp.

STOVES AND FIRE: Use a stove unless a life depends on using a fire.

SANITATION: Minimize the chance of water pollution and the spread of water-borne diseases such as giardia (fecal contamination of water is the most common route of transmission). Never urinate in lakes or streams. Dispose of human waste at least 200 feet away from lakes or streams, not in a drainage area affected by storm runoff, and above spring runoff line.

- Pack it all out - especially when no hole can be dug (e.g., winter and glacier travel, rock climbing, etc.). Dispose of waste properly once out.
- Cathole: 6-8" deep; carry out toilet paper and tampons in plastic bags.
- Latrines: least desirable; cover with dirt after each use; cover completely when leaving; carry out toilet paper (t.p.) and tampons in plastic bags.
- Always wash hands before handling food, at least 200 feet away from lakes and streams.

WATER POLLUTION: Use biodegradable soap and a solar shower. Dispose of soapy water at least 200 feet from water. Use dirt or sand as scouring powder. Disinfect with boiling water. Disinfect all drinking and cooking water by use of a filter, chemical disinfectant (iodine or chlorine dioxide) or boiling at least one minute. Boiling is the most effective method; combine methods if necessary.

LITTER: Pack out all of your trash and other trash that you find. Take trash home and recycle. Do not place in roadside bins.

NEW LEADER TALENT: People of considerable experience and maturity often join Mountaineers trips. Consider talking with them about the opportunities to lead trips. Inform the Committee of possible new leaders. The Mountaineers are always seeking to renew its supply of competent, enthusiastic leaders.

CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

As more people venture into the outdoors, it becomes ever more important to minimize our impact through good environmental practices. The high country is a very fragile ecosystem, which does not have the capacity to re-vegetate quickly. Areas of high use are also under great stress. The wilderness is home to many plant and animal species. We are a visitor in their home--respect this. The following guidelines have been prepared to help us recognize some of the environmental concerns in our use of the outdoors.

WILDLIFE: Don't feed the animals or allow them to steal your food. Camp out of sight of water so that animals won't be forced to go elsewhere to drink. Winter is a time of stress. Animals need all their stored calories from the summer to survive. There is no margin for fleeing from humans. Do not disturb wildlife--at any time.

HIKING: Stay on trails, thereby minimizing impact. If there is no trail, use the route least damaging to soil and vegetation (e.g., rocks, snow, and dry grass). Shortcutting switchbacks damages vegetation, causes erosion and leads to trail deterioration. Block shortcuts with rocks or logs to deter further use. Use low impact footwear whenever possible.

WAIVER: All participants, including guests, must sign The Mountaineers Release and Indemnity Agreement (The Waiver). The Waiver must be on file at the clubhouse before the trip commences. Signing at the trailhead is not acceptable as it can be construed as duress.

The Waiver is part of an overall risk management strategy. If you lead a trip or instruct at a field trip for the club and an accident occurs, you are protected by the club's liability insurance program, provided all participants have signed The Waiver.

SIZE: The group must be no fewer than 3 and no more than 12 persons. Be sure to observe any lower limits instituted by government agencies or property owners.

MINORS: No person under age 14 is allowed on a trip unless accompanied by a parent. No one between ages 14 and 18 is allowed on a trip without written parental consent. Leaders may decide whether to allow any person under 18 on a trip.

GUEST POLICY: Guests are allowed on Mountaineers hikes provided the guest has a signed liability waiver at the clubhouse and meets the same requirements of club participants. These include being fit enough for the trip, 18 years or older, and carrying all necessary equipment. Guests are limited to two trips per year. A waiver can be downloaded from the club website, signed and then faxed to the administrative office.

TRIP LIST: In order to maintain complete records of trips and assure that all participants are accounted for, leaders must have a Trip List. When signup is handled through the Seattle clubhouse, the Trip List will be available from the Clubhouse on the FRIDAY preceding your weekend trip. You can download from the club website after you log in or it can be faxed or e-mailed upon request. The Trip List provides the names, phone numbers, and carpool assignments of those who have signed up for the trip. The Trip List also shows whether hikers have signed the insurance waiver. Those who have not signed the waiver (including guests) are not allowed on the trip. Signing a waiver at the trailhead is not acceptable (it can be construed as duress in court).

When trip listing and signup is handled through a Branch, the trip leader is responsible for preparing the Trip List. The Trip List can be developed on a trip planner form which can serve as telephone signup sheet, trip list and post Trip Report form.

POST-TRIP REPORTS: Trip Reports are used to determine trail conditions and to notify the appropriate Committee of any participant problems, accidents, etc., that may have been encountered on the trip. The appropriate Committee will follow up on any concerns or problems so it is very important to be specific when filling out the online post-trip report. Problems or not, you will need to submit the online trip report found with the listing of your hike in your profile when logged in to The Mountaineers website, within a week after the trip.

The common method to submit trip reports is to use the trip completion form found in the list of your trips within your profile on The Mountaineers website. The web trip report will become available the day after the date of your hike. Branch reporting procedures vary from Branch to Branch. The appropriate Committee will notify trip leaders of the proper channel for submitting post-hike trip reports or whether there is a manual form still in use.

ACCIDENT REPORTS: The leader must report all accidents or injuries to the appropriate Committee sponsoring the trip. Minor injuries and accidents can be reported in writing within 10 days. Major accidents or injuries need to be reported to the clubhouse within 24 hours. After rescue has been initiated, contact the club by dialing The Mountaineers Emergency cell phone at (206) 335-0566. Getting your group of hikers out safely takes priority over calling the cell phone.

HIKER CANCELLATIONS: Hikers who cancel late and no-shows should be clearly indicated on the post Trip Report. This will enable the appropriate Committee to contact any chronic no-shows and late-canceling participants and clarify the cancellation policy. If your trip has a waiting list, please make an effort to fill the cancellation by calling those persons as soon as possible.

CHANGING THE DESTINATION OF A TRIP: If the weather or trail conditions do not permit you to do the pre-scheduled trip, it is possible to make a change in the destination. If the trip is listed through the Seattle clubhouse, you will need to call or email hikers on the signup list and notify them of the change. The new destination should be of the same level of difficulty. As leader, you will be responsible for notifying each participant of the change, as well as the new meeting place and time. (See appendix on website tips & timesavers)

TRAILHEAD CHECK: Complete the steps set out in the section on AT THE TRAILHEAD. Size up participants for fitness and equipment. Look over their clothing and gear. If anyone is ill equipped, don't let them go, no matter what sort of scene it causes. (Better a scene now than aborting the trip or bivouacking on the mountain.) Discuss the trip plan with the group. If faced with cold or wet weather, explain the symptoms of hypothermia and advise everyone to watch each other for these signs.

PACE: Once on the trail, your constant challenge is to keep the party moving and yet keep it together. It is the leader's option to keep the group close together or allow the group to spread out. Make one stop early to remove excess clothing and adjust equipment. After that, try to keep stops to no more than one per hour. Though rest stops should be brief, encourage everyone to eat and drink. A tired hiker is often more hungry and thirsty than she or he knows or is willing to acknowledge.

THE DESCENT: The descent is part of the experience and need not be merely an anti-climax. Demonstrate plunge-stepping or glissading on an easy snow field where the run-out is safe. These adventures can broaden the experience and enhance everyone's enjoyment of the trip. Take extra care on the descent as hikers may be tired and less alert.

SENSITIVITY AND TACT: The most important aspect of leadership judgment is knowing when to quit. Remember that Mountaineers hiking trips are recreation, not contests. The primary goal should be to come back safely, the second is to have fun, and a distant third is to reach the destination. It's not worth racing a storm, flogging your stragglers, or risking serious rockfall to make the summit. When the leader feels the party must retreat, explain the reasons that led to the decision. Ask for thoughts and opinions from the group, but be prepared to make the decision yourself--that is your job and should not be delegated.

SHARE INFORMATION: Show people where hazards are and why you do things the way that you do. On changes of route or schedule, ask for other opinions. When you safely can, delegate responsibility: have someone else count heads, ask someone to find the lunch spot, or on safe terrain, let others lead. The more you involve others in the trip responsibility and sharing of opinions, the fewer conflicts you will have and the less likely you will be to overlook a problem.

TIPS FOR STRENUOUS/VERY STRENUOUS TRIPS

DEFINITION: Strenuous trips generally have a maximum round trip length of 14 miles, and elevation gain from 2,500 to 3,500 feet. Very Strenuous trips are over 14 miles round trip and / or more than 3,500 feet of gain. Most of these trips go far into the backcountry where help is many hours or days away. Leading such a trip requires careful planning to be safe and enjoyable. In addition to the general guidelines, the following suggestions apply to strenuous trips.

CO-LEADER: If you decide to appoint a co-leader, choose someone who is strong, with whom you work well, and whose abilities you know. You want someone who can take over if you are incapacitated and who is patient enough to follow behind the stragglers.

SCOUTING: Your preparation should begin by doing the route. Then consider how long it will take the group. A rule of thumb is 1-1/2 miles plus 750 vertical feet per hour. For a strong group, perhaps 2 miles plus 1,000 vertical feet per hour. Add more time for special terrain problems such as bushwhacking, stream crossings, loose scree, or snow. And try to schedule some leeway before dark for route problems or emergencies. Better to schedule an earlier departure than to plan a trip that will return to the trailhead at dusk *only* if all goes well.

YOUR OWN READINESS: You must be strong enough for the trip yourself, with plenty of reserves to help others in an emergency. You should be familiar with map, compass, and route finding. You may consider taking the MOFA course, or winter travel course if your trips bring you into snow conditions. You should have done several such trips before under similar conditions. And you must be ready to lead, to make hard decisions, constantly be alert for possible problems, and in a pinch to know what to do and be able to do it with a clear head.

WEATHER CHECK: Get the most recent forecast by television, telephone, weather radio, or computer. In winter and spring, you may be able to get a recent report on snow conditions from other leaders or the appropriate Ranger Station, Forest Service, or Park Service.

CANCELLING A SCHEDULED TRIP: While it is sometimes necessary to cancel a trip, it should be done only as a last resort. Even though our leaders are volunteers, once a trip is scheduled it becomes an obligation. Canceling trips after they appear in the website or Go Guide creates an extremely awkward situation for everyone involved.

For trips listed through the Seattle clubhouse, trip cancellation will be handled as follows:

Trips that are canceled *before sign-up* opens:

- Try to find a substitute Leader. (Call the clubhouse and ask them to send you a copy of the substitute leader list.).
- If no leader can be found, cancel the trip.

Trips that are canceled *after sign-up* opens:

- Try to find a substitute Leader. Ask the Clubhouse to check the Trip List for hike leaders. If no hike leaders have signed up for the trip, ask them to send a copy of the substitute leader list. At the same time, tell them to stop taking sign-up for the trip.
- If no leader can be found, cancel the trip. Email and call each participant who has signed up and tell him or her that the trip is canceled.

Trips that are canceled *before activities are entered into the database*:

- If the trip is canceled before the sign-up opens, you can update the trip under your user profile by logging into The Mountaineers website or if computer access is not available to you, call the clubhouse and make sure they cancel the trip.

For trips that are listed through a Branch, the leader should try to find a substitute leader before canceling the trip. When a trip must be canceled, the leader should call each participant and notify him/her of the cancellation.

Any cancellation of a published trip is inherently confusing, but we hope that by following these procedures, we can reduce, if not eliminate, most of that confusion.

WILDERNESS POLICY: In consideration of the wilderness and other wilderness users, no pets, firearms, radios (Walkman/iPod types) or other entertainment devices are allowed on trips. Cellular phones are allowed, but should be turned off. Hiking groups in wilderness areas are strictly limited to no more than 12 participants. Fines for larger size groups can exceed \$100 in some wilderness and national park areas. Do not allow more than 12 hikers, including leaders, on your trips.

GUIDELINES FOR TRIP LEADERS

Leading safe and fun outings cannot be proscribed through rules. It requires participants and leaders who are prepared for the activity, as well as the experience, judgment, and sensitivity to adapt to unforeseen or changing circumstances. The following guidelines offer examples of problems that you should consider in advance, how to address these problems, and suggestions for planning and conducting safe trips.

SIGNING UP TO LEAD TRIPS: Each Hiking Committee will have its own set of procedures and deadlines for listing trips and maintaining a leaders list. As these may change from year to year, leaders should maintain regular contact with the appropriate Committee.

SCREENING TRIP PARTICIPANTS: The leader may screen trip participants or hold a pre-trip meeting, if necessary. Many of the Branches have participants sign up through the leader, which allows the leader to talk with potential trip participants about equipment, trail conditions, and readiness for the particular trip. Many a trip has been made or broken by how well the leader has evaluated the skill of a potential hike participant prior to the trip.

Questions may include:

- Are you a member of The Mountaineers? What Branch? How long?
- Have you gone on Mountaineers trips before?
- How long and/or difficult were previous trips?
- Are you aware of the distance, elevation gain, and difficulty rating of this trip?
- Do you have and plan to bring the 10 essential systems on this trip?
- Are you properly equipped for bad weather?
- Do you have physical conditions or disabilities that may cause you or the group any problems?
- Are you willing to drive and how many passengers can you take?
- Do you have a scheduled time you need to be back by?

By asking these questions and (politely) insisting on complete answers, the leader can make an initial assessment about the appropriateness of the trip for each participant. If in doubt, recommend something more suited to the person's skill level, or refer them to the Seattle clubhouse where sign-up personnel will gladly suggest a suitable trip.

TRAILHEAD CHECK: In addition to the suggestions in the general guidelines, share your plans with the group--the route in general and where rest stops are planned, points of interest along the way, and the location of the lunch stop.

PACE: Keeping the group together is advisable, especially on easy hikes, where participants' abilities may vary widely. Slower hikers might benefit from tips on hiking technique such as breathing and the rest step.

REST STOPS: Ideally, rest stops should be chosen in advance, strategically spaced about an hour apart, allowing time for a drink and a snack to replenish the body's energy supply. Stopping places should offer a place to sit down plus some added attraction--a sparkling stream or a beautiful view. If it's cold, find a sunny spot. If it's windy, look for a sheltered area. On the ascent, stops should be brief--between 5 and 10 minutes. But the faster members should wait until the slower hikers have caught up and had a chance to rest as well.

DESTINATION: If weather permits, plan to spend about an hour at the destination, which is usually a summit or a scenic lake. This is the climax of the trip, and the hikers have earned the right to enjoy the fruits of their labors. Encourage exploration of the vicinity, if it's not dangerous.

THE DESCENT: The descent is part of the experience and need not be merely an anti-climax. Demonstrate plunge-stepping or glissading on an easy snow field where the run-out is safe. These adventures broaden the experience of beginners and enhance everyone's enjoyment of the trip.

NEW LEADER TALENT: People of considerable experience and maturity often join moderate trips. Consider inviting them to talk with the Committee about opportunities to lead trips. Inform the Committee of possible new leaders. The Club is always seeking to renew its supply of competent, enthusiastic volunteer leaders.

NEW MEMBER TRIPS

DEFINITION: New Member Trips are just that, trips especially designed for new members of The Mountaineers. These trips are normally easy to moderate in difficulty. New hikers may be completely inexperienced in outdoor activities, previously experienced hikers new to the area (or new to The Mountaineers) or very experienced climbers or scramblers looking for less strenuous activity with the hiking group. The leader should design the trip primarily to be a pleasurable, safe, and sociable experience. In addition, New Member Trips give the leader an opportunity to educate new members on the principles and guidelines for safe outdoor activity.

TIPS FOR EASY/MODERATE TRIPS

DEFINITION: Easy trips generally have a maximum round trip length of 8 miles, and elevation gain up to 1,200 feet. Moderate trips generally have a maximum round trip length of 12 miles, and elevation gain up to 2,500 feet. Hikers could be beginners or experienced. The leader should design the trip primarily to be a pleasurable, safe, and sociable experience. In addition to the general guidelines, the following suggestions apply to easy and moderate trips:

SCOUTING: Scout the route close to the time you are leading it if you are not thoroughly familiar with it. Call a recent leader of the trip, or the appropriate park or ranger station and check their websites. Read the trail guidebooks, read current trip reports on the WTA website at www.wta.org. New roads or trails may have invaded the area you plan to visit and can be confusing. Look for attractive locations for rest stops. Note the time it takes for you to complete the trip and add more time for the group you'll be leading. Include time for brief rest stops in your calculation. Plan to be back at the trailhead well before sundown.

EQUIPMENT: The group should be encouraged to wear comfortable, non-cotton clothing and sturdy footwear, and to carry adequate wind, sun, and rain gear for the trip. The ten essential systems must be carried by everyone as well as a pack and lunch. If in doubt, an equipment check at the trailhead may be in order.

SCOUTING: It is very helpful to scout the route in advance, especially if you have not done the trip in awhile. You should be aware of current trail conditions. It is also important to check road and weather conditions just before the trip. Recent weather conditions may affect the route, especially in spring and winter. Talk with the appropriate Ranger Station, Forest Service, or Park Service personnel, or previous leaders of the trip (check old Go Guide issues) PRIOR to scouting the trip. Make note of amount of trailhead parking available, toilet facilities, cell/emergency telephone access, trail intersections, and water crossings.

CARPOOLING: Carpooling is recommended for all Mountaineers trips. See the Go Guide for current reimbursement policy. Please remember that for official (insurance and liability) purposes, Mountaineers trips begin and end at the trailhead. Carpooling is a voluntary service offered by and accepted by trip participants as private individuals. Trip leaders are not responsible for carpool arrangements.

EQUIPMENT: The Ten Essential Systems are required on all trips, plus a pack, lunch, drinking water, adequate clothing and hiking boots. Leaders should also carry a first aid kit adequate for the type of trip you are leading, the Trip List, an accident report form (which provides a useful checklist of steps to follow in an emergency and can be downloaded from the Seattle Hiking website) and coins for an emergency phone call. The leader should stress that participants must carry their own equipment. *It is Mountaineers policy that leaders leave inadequately clothed or shod hikers, or unprepared hikers at the trailhead or meeting place.*

*The ten essential systems consist of: **Navigation**(map& compass), **Sun Protection** (clothing, sunglasses), **Illumination**(flashlight/headlamp), **Insulation**(extra clothing), **Nutrition**(extra food),**Hydration**(extra water), **First-Aid Supplies**, **Repair kit**(pocket knife), **Fire**(waterproof matches/candle fire starter, **Emergency Shelter**(space blanket/tarp).

CELLULAR TELEPHONES: As more people are taking cell phones into the mountains, they are playing an increasingly prominent role in search and rescue. The Mountaineers neither encourages nor discourages their presence on a trip, but they should be switched off unless and until there is an urgent need. Leaders may wish to find out at the trailhead who is carrying a cell phone. Since they are not guaranteed to work when you need them, they should not mislead you into taking risks that otherwise would be unacceptable.

YOUR OWN READINESS AND MOUNTAINEERING SKILLS: Schedule trips that are within your ability. Be physically and mentally ready for the trip with strength to spare to help others or to meet an emergency. Be sure that your own equipment is in good repair. Keep up your mountaineering and safety skills by taking advantage of classes offered by the Red Cross or The Mountaineers such as the Mountain Oriented First Aid (MOFA) and navigation courses.

OBTAIN PERMITS: Obtain necessary hiking, parking, and/or trailhead permits from the appropriate agency (check the appropriate forest/resource offices for current policies). File your trip plan as required by any Forest Service/Nat'l Park Service agencies and leave an emergency phone number back home with someone who will know if the group is overdue.

TRAIL COURTESY: If your group is traveling on a narrow trail, please remember not to make it difficult for other hikers, climbers, or horseback riders to pass. Step aside quickly if your group is being overtaken. It is customary for the downhill hikers to step aside for the uphill hikers. Stay on the downhill side of horses/riders when it is safe to do so.

ASSERTIVENESS: Don't let any member of the party go too far ahead of the group or behind the rear guard (a.k.a. sweep) without permission. Call the shots--that's what it means to be a leader. Be prepared to modify the outing plan as necessary to avoid exceeding the group's capability and external conditions. Be comfortable with the possibility of aborting the trip objective if circumstances prevent its safe achievement.

SENSITIVITY AND TACT: The stronger, more skilled and more fearless you are as a leader, the more sensitivity you need to develop toward those who are weaker, less experienced, and scared. Be aware of the condition, skill, and confidence of all participants throughout the trip--they may change due to fatigue, weather, and the mix of personalities. Ask people how they are doing throughout the trip.

PACE: Once on the trail, your constant challenge is to keep the party moving and yet keep it together. It is the leader's option to keep the group close together or allow the group to spread out. At rest stops, allow slower hikers to rest after catching up with the faster ones.

They should note terrain, distance, and time from the accident site to the road. Send the written accident report form with them to be sure that they have all the details about the accident, the patient's condition, and the group's resources. If your contact with outside help is by cell phone, you may still need to send two people to the trailhead to guide the rescuers in.

CONTACT THE AUTHORITIES: Sometimes you can initiate a faster response by having the local county sheriff's phone number versus calling 9-1-1. If you don't have the local phone numbers, call 9-1-1 for County Sheriff in Washington or a National Park Ranger. Give them the specific details of the accident, the patient(s), and the weather and terrain conditions, the phone number (and the location of the phone) you are calling from, so they can meet you. Write down the rescuers' name and phone number information. Stay at the phone and be prepared to lead the rescue team to the accident site.

NOTIFY THE MOUNTAINEERS: After assisting with evacuation and other urgent matters, notify the appropriate Committee Chair, or The Mountaineers Seattle clubhouse via The Mountaineers Emergency cell phone (206) 335-0566.

FILE POST TRIP REPORT FORM: For both minor and serious accidents, complete the online Trip Report form. As a hike leader, there is now an online trip report available in your login profile for the hikes you lead. The trip report can be completed and submitted via The Mountaineers website. Completing a trip report is part of the responsibility of leading a hike, whether there has been an accident or not.

Complete and detailed information about all accidents is important to evaluate the accident in case of a legal challenge. It also provides opportunities to examine the causes of accidents and design safety programs and policies to avoid them in the future.

STAY CALM: As the leader, you are the most important resource to the group in case of a serious accident. Take charge of the situation and work with the designated first aid person for your hike. If you are the designated first aid person, organize and assign specific individuals to do certain tasks. Elicit individual expertise (medical, climbing, scrambling, search & rescue). Utilize the entire group. Don't let anyone leave; they may be needed later to go for help, search, etc. Remember that your obligation is to the whole group, not just the injured person. Be careful that a second accident does not occur. Use the Accident Report Form (which should be carried in your first aid kit) to help plan your course of action.

FIRST AID:

1. Take charge of the situation.
2. Approach the patient safely if the terrain is difficult, steep or hazardous. Take precautions to avoid further injury to the patient or to others in the group.
3. Perform any urgently needed rescue and/or first aid. Breathing, pulse, and severe bleeding must be stabilized quickly.
4. Protect the patient. Treat for shock if the injury is serious. Keep the patient lying down and insulated from the ground. Keep him or her warm, using their own belongings first.
5. Check for other injuries.
6. Plan what to do. The patient's condition, size and the strength of the party, terrain, time of day, and the group's location with respect to outside assistance must all be evaluated.
7. Carry out the plan. If possible, make sure everyone has something to do and no one is alone.

SELF EVACUATION OR RESCUE: Determine if your group is able to self evacuate or if you will need help from search and rescue operations. This decision will depend upon the party strength and resources, your location and condition of the trail, and the patient's condition.

SEND FOR HELP: If it is necessary to send for help, send the two strongest members of the party, who know the route back to the trailhead to telephone for help (or use a cell phone if there is one in the group). Be sure they have coins for the phone and appropriate car keys. They should mark the route out on the map if it may be confusing or darkness may fall.

UNQUALIFIED TRIP PARTICIPANTS: If a participant turns out to be demonstrably unqualified for the type or level of your trip, a gentle but frank conversation after the trip may avert future mismatches. If the person appears not to hear the message or is hostile, refer the matter to the appropriate Committee. The Committee will review the circumstances of any participant about whom there are complaints. If the Committee determines that the person is unqualified to participate in certain trips, it will advise the person and the clubhouse that he or she is on probation until specific training is completed, experience is acquired or behavior modified.

SPLITTING THE GROUP: Turning a participant back once the trip has begun endangers the safety of that person and the rest of the group. If a person requests to leave the group against your advice, have him or her sign out in the presence of witnesses(e.g. by initializing their name on the trip report with date & time). Explain to any person leaving the group that he or she is now on their own and has assumed that risk. If splitting the group becomes absolutely necessary, designate a leader for the new sub-group, and carefully brief them on what to do.

TIPS FOR A SAFE TRIP

1. Obtain accurate and timely weather forecasts.
2. Consider the avalanche or rock fall hazard along the route and select the route accordingly, taking into account the time of day and time of year for the trip.
3. Take into consideration the time needed for the trip, the time of year, weather, hours of daylight, and physical condition and experience of party members.
4. In cold conditions, be vigilant for hypothermia; urge all participants to look for signs and symptoms of hypothermia in their colleagues.
5. In hot weather, monitor for signs of heat-related illnesses (heat exhaustion, heat stroke, leg cramps).

MEMBER SERVICES:

The Member Services office of The Mountaineers can provide leaders with any number of resources such as:

- Changing destination, description, meeting time, or date of a trip
- Canceling a trip (leaders must call any signed up members)
- Clarification of waiver or liability
- Trip and Carpool Lists (are also available on the web)
- Substitute Leader Lists

** Most leaders can now get this information via self-service from their user profiles on The Mountaineers website. See appendix for details.

AT THE TRAILHEAD

It is good policy to arrive at least 15 minutes early at the trailhead or carpool site. Identify yourself as the leader and check the names of hikers on the trip list as they arrive. Wait at the meeting place at least 15 minutes beyond the scheduled start/departure time for late arrivals. Identify no-shows and report them on your post Trip Report.

BEFORE THE TRIP:

- Introduce yourself and have all participants introduce themselves to the group. Also identify any guests and new members.
- Check the Trip List to see if everyone has signed the waiver. Those who haven't are NOT allowed on the trip.
- Do a quick equipment check. It is the leader's responsibility to ensure all hikers are prepared for the trip. If a person has forgotten important gear or looks unprepared, this is the time to turn them away, before it becomes a safety issue for the entire group. This may require a 10 essentials, lunch, and/or water check of a hiker (in private if possible) before the trip begins.
- Describe the trip and trail conditions, potential problems, pace, side trails, special scenery, etc.
- Establish the trip rules - be explicit about how you intend to keep the group together. Remind everyone to wait at trail intersections or water crossings.
- Designate a First Aid person. Ask to be informed of any special health concerns in private.
- Appoint a Rear Guard (a.k.a. sweep) and if applicable, a front guard.

AFTER THE TRIP:

- Make sure every hiker has returned to the cars. (No one is to leave until every hiker has returned to the trailhead.)
- Explain the official carpool policy.
- If a dinner/food stop is being planned, identify the restaurant and directions, etc.
- Make sure all cars start before leaving.
- Complete the online Trip Report under My Profile/Activity History.
- Add a recreational trip report at www.wta.org to inform other hikers of the current conditions on the trail.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

While we hope that accidents or injuries will be minimized by skillful leaders, experienced and prepared participants, and good trip planning, they may occur. Leaders are required to report all accidents - minor and serious - to the Committee via the post Trip Report form and the Accident Report Form. The Committee and other representatives of The Mountaineers will investigate all serious accidents.

LOST HIKER:

1. Determine when the hiker was last seen.
2. Plan a search party. Determine the areas to be scouted and call loudly, or use whistles. You can choose to divide the group, but designate a leader in all new groups. Never send anyone out alone, nor should anyone be waiting alone while the group searches. Don't allow anyone to go home. You may need them later.
3. Designate a time and place to reassemble all search groups whether the lost hiker has been found or not.
4. If, after this initial search, the hiker is still lost, contact the local sheriff or park ranger. Get the contact information in advance of your hike and have it with your map for the trip. Remember that you have the best chance of finding a lost hiker, as many agencies will not begin a search until a person has been gone for 24 hours.
5. After the rescue has been initiated, contact The Mountaineers via the Emergency cell phone (206-335-0566) immediately.

MINOR ACCIDENTS: A minor accident is one that in the leader's judgment has been successfully treated on the spot, does not require assistance in evacuation, and will not cause future complications. In such cases, the procedures below for serious accidents need not be followed, but the leader should inform the Hiking Committee of the incident, no matter how minor, on the post Trip Report Form.

SERIOUS ACCIDENTS: A serious accident is one that: 1) requires assistance back to the trailhead, or 2) requires assistance in evacuation, or 3) requires hospitalization, or 4) is treated by a medical professional, or 5) results in death. In the case of a serious accident, follow the procedures below.

APPENDIX

Steps to create a Hike activity online via the club website::

- 1.) Go to www.mountaineers.org and click on "Log in" in the upper left corner.
- 2.) Type in you Log in and Pass word and click on "Sign in". *If you don't have a login and password, see red text at the bottom of this page!!*
- 3.) Click on "Activities" - (Upper left corner)
- 4.) Click on "Activity Setup" (Middle left side)
- 5.) For Event Type, click on "Hike"
- 6.) For Event Category, Click on "Trip"
- 7.) For Destination Name, type in: Some word that belongs in the title of your trip. For example, for a trip on Tiger Mountain, type in "Tiger". Note that it's good to only put one word in - as the search is very literal. If you put in "Tiger Mountain" and it's in the database as "Tiger Mtn", you will not see this option. However, if you put in "Tiger", it will search the database and display all hikes with "Tiger" in them.
- 8.) Click on the Search Button
- 9.) The search results are listed below. If more than 1 hike appears, pick and click on the one that looks the closest. If it doesn't turn out to look right, you can 'backtrack' to this page again by using the "Back" Button.
- 10.) The next screen shows some of the particulars of the hike – mileage, elevation, book references. Hopefully, the mileage and elevation will be close to what your trip actually is. Listed also will be dates that this hike is already scheduled (if it is scheduled) so you don't end up picking the same hike on the same day some one else is leading it.
Note – if your hike is not listed, you need to contact Hikermountaineer@earthlink.net to get it officially in the database
Click on "Create an Event" button at bottom of page

11.) This is the Event Set up page. Please fill out

*Committee: HIKING

*Branch: Seattle

*Beginning date and end date are the same (i.e. the date of your hike)

*Be sure to fill out meeting time and place. Note that for meeting time, you need to click on 3 fields – hour, minutes and am/pm

* Event Leader Notes – is where you put in all the verbiage you want about your trip. Note – this will appear on the website and in the confirmation e-mail participants get who sign up for your trip.

12.) Check the info over carefully – and then click the NEXT button at bottom

13.) The next window is to specify when the trip sign up opens and closes. In general, opening date is 2 Wednesdays before the trip. Closing date is the Thursday before the trip. Please do not do anything with the early registration fields!!

NOTE - you will almost always have to change the default dates that are put up! Click on Next button at bottom of page

14.) The next page lists all the details of your trip. If you want to edit it, click on Edit button at bottom of page. If it looks fine, click on Submit button at bottom of page

*****NOTE YOUR TRIP WILL APPEAR ON THE WEB IN A MATTER OF MINUTES AFTER YOU CLICK THIS***** You should also receive an e-mail confirmation that you posted the trip.

Trouble shooting - This process should take less than 10 minutes. If you are have questions or concerns, please contact hikermountaineer@earthlink.net .

If you have not logged on the mountaineer website before, please follow the following instructions and then return to step #3 above.

- A.) Get your mountaineer ID # (this is the 6 digit number on the your Go-Guide above your name - usually it begins with a zero)
- B.) Go to www.mountaineers.org and click on Instructions for using our new features for the first time which is in the middle toward the bottom.
- C.) Follow instructions!!!! Then return to step #3 above

Note - this should take less only a few minutes. If it takes more than that, contact the clubhouse (206-284-8484) and they will fix or walk you thru the process.

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