



Outdoor Enthusiasts of Fredericton

Some things to consider when leading a hike.

Safety First & Always

- Remember that people are trusting you to get them safely there and back again.
- Don't take risks or show off. Hike for fun and exercise, not to win a battle with nature.
- Consider the road, trail and weather conditions before going on your hike.
- Consider the abilities and health of all your fellow hikers when deciding if a hike is safe.
- If in doubt consult the Event Coordinator or another OEF Executive member.
- Don't be too focused on reaching your destination. If conditions worsen or you run short of time, be prepared to stop and head home.
- Even though you are at the front of the group, think about those behind you. Maintain contact by pausing every few minutes to regroup.

Preparation

- GET PREPARED and only lead OEF hikes to places that you know well. Deep in the woods with 20 people behind you is NOT the time to explore a new trail!
- If someone else knows the trail better than you, have them help to lead the hike.
- Plan your hike in detail before you go: Start time, travel route, lunch stop, water sources, end time, return time.
- Provide details of the hike to the Event Coordinator well in advance, so the information can be shared with the club members.
- Have proper directions, maps, etc. and have them accessible during the hike.
 - *if the info is on your cell phone, make sure you can access it without cell coverage.
- Have a plan for what you will do in a medical emergency, or if the weather or trail conditions worsen during the hike.
- Gather some history, fun facts, tree and plant or wildlife knowledge before the hike.
- Watch the weather for a few days before the outing and let the Event Coordinator know if an update about the weather is needed.

Hike Day

- Check the road conditions and the weather forecast before setting out.
- If safety is in doubt, cancel or postpone the event or consult with Event Coordinator or another OEF Executive member.

- Know who is planning to attend the hike, and check for messages from any last minute joiners that morning.
- Arrive at the meetup spot a few minutes early, and leave 5 or 10 minutes after the stated time.
- Have all hikers sign a Safety Waiver before the event, and ensure that they know what they are signing.
- Remind hikers of the minimum equipment they should be carrying for that particular event, and recommend that anyone lacking water, medication or critical gear either not go or pick it up along the way. Examples: Water, snack, insect repellent, hunter's orange, special medication, Medicare card, ID.
- Plan an easy to find rendezvous spot with bathroom facilities near the end of the drive.
 - *meet up there, and then finish the drive to the trail head.
- Explain the driving route to the drivers before heading out on the road.
- When driving to the trail head, people should follow the lead car as much as possible.
- Carry a First Aid kit, Compass, Flashlight, Lighter and Cell phone.
- Before you start walking, take a minute and say a few words about the hike.
- When hiking, always have a reliable person at the back acting as a sweeper to make sure no one is left behind.
- As the hike leader, stay at or near the front of the group.
- Remember that everyone is there to have fun, so don't be bossy...but speak up when safety is a concern.
- Stick to your plan and resist the temptation to wander down an unknown trail.
- Know where you are in the woods at all times...it's your responsibility as hike leader.
- Stay together, never split up, and leave no one behind.
- Set a pace that all can handle and don't make newer hikers feel out of their element.
 - *since you will finish the hike as a group, your speed is governed by the slowest hiker.
- Recognise the human tendency for large groups of hikers to separate into smaller groups based on their walking speeds. This is not ideal, but seems inevitable, and is workable, as long as the groups don't get too far apart, and maintain contact with each other.
- Work to keep everyone together by stopping to regroup every few minutes and especially at all trail intersections.*These breaks along with lunch, are a good time to talk about the trail.
- When the hikers at the back of the line catch up...don't immediately start walking again, but give them time to catch their breath.
- Always be respectful of nature and other people's property.
- At the end of the hike, gather together, say a few words about the hike, and make sure everyone is out of the woods, and has a way home.