Remember

• “Leave only footprints, take only pictures.” The beauty of nature is found everywhere; the rocks, trees and streams. Do not take that beauty home!

• Tell someone where you are going and when to expect you back! If an emergency occurs, someone will know where to find you.

Sources

2. “Stop,” www.hikingdude.com

If you become lost, remember S.T.O.P.S.

Stop: As soon as you realize you are lost.

Think: How exactly you got to where you are. Try to remember specific landmarks.

Observe: Use the map and compass to determine where you are.

Plan: Based on your thinking and observations, devise a plan and act.

Stay: If completely lost, STAY PUT! Build a shelter, gather firewood, and wait for rescuers.

“I’ve never been lost, but I was mighty turned around for three days once.” – Daniel Boone

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**10 Essentials for a Safe & Secure Hiking Pack**

1. **Navigation (map and/or compass):** A map and compass will tell you where you’re going and where you’ve been.

2. **Sun Protection (sunscreen, sunglasses):** No matter if you are in blinding snow or open sun, no one is happy with sunburn.

3. **Insulation (raincoat, extra clothes):** Wear layers so you can adjust to the change in weather and climate, just in case the weatherman is incorrect… again.

4. **Illumination (flashlight, headlight):** Just in case you unexpectedly stay later than you thought. You WILL need a flashlight to see where you are and to see the map. ALWAYS bring extra batteries.

5. **First Aid Kit:** This consists of: 1) tweezers 2) safety pins 3) antibiotic ointment 4) antiseptic towelettes 5) wound closure strips 6) moleskin or duct tape for blisters 7) Band-Aids/ACE bandage 8) bandanna (for splints) 9) ibuprofen

6. **Fire (matches, magnesium starter, lighter):** If you have to stay overnight in the woods, a fire will keep you warm and keep animals away.

7. **Multi Tool Repair Kit:** A pocketknife with other tools connected to it is an ideal tool.

8. **Nutrition:** A number of things could keep you from staying longer on a hike, so always be prepared with extra food.

9. **Hydration:** Without enough water, your body simply cannot perform as well. It will not only make you thirsty, but increase hypothermia and sickness.

10. **Emergency Shelter:** In an emergency, shelter is a necessity. People who hike for days pack tents. For shorter hikes, pack a light tarp or blanket.

**EXTRAS**

1. **Toilet Paper:** YOU NEVER KNOW WHEN YOU NEED TO GO!

2. **Camera:** QUICK!! THAT’S WORTH A CLICK.

3. **Trash bag:** THE ONLY THING THAT WILL EAT PLASTIC AND WASTE…. IS A TRASH BAG!

4. **Common Sense:** IF I LIGHT THE TALL, DRY GRASS ON FIRE, WILL IT BURN?

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**Be on the Lookout**

**Watch For:**

1. **Trail Markers:**
   - **Tree Blazers:** A mark placed in a tree about eye level, usually painted.

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   Trail Blazers
   
   Trail Cairn
   
   Trail Ducks
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2. **Animals:** Stay Calm and Move On. If you don't mind them, they won't mind you.

   - **Cats** – Rounded tracks have four toes and no claws. Cougar tracks are up to 4 in (10 cm) wide.

   - **Dogs** – Tracks have four toes and show claws. Wolf tracks are up to 6 in (15 cm) long.

   - **Ungulates** – Elongate tracks have two toes. Includes deer, moose, elk, sheep and goats. Tracks are up to 6 in (15 cm) long.

   - **Bears** – Front and foot-like hind prints show claws. Fore prints to 7 in (18 cm) long; hind print to 12 in (30 cm) long.” — “Wilderness Survival” by Kavanagh/Leung

3. **Plants:** DO NOT eat unless you are positive they are safe.

   **Friend (safe)**
   - Edible roots and leaves are found in dandelions, arrowhead marsh plant, pigweeds, and sea lettuce.
   - Acorns or healthy nuts are edible when found on pine trees and oak trees.
   - Clover, watercress, and cattail plants are completely edible.

   **Foe (Poisonous)**
   - Stay away from stinging nettle and poison ivy. If poison can irritate your skin, imagine what it could do to your stomach.