

Camptown Nature 101

Leave No Trace Series – Day 1 – What is Leave No Trace and Principle 1

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1. What is Leave No Trace?

Leave No Trace is a set of ethics that work toward conservation in the outdoors. Leave No Trace protects the outdoors by teaching and inspiring people to enjoy it responsibly. There are 7 principles outlined in Leave No Trace. The principles are designed to guide people to minimize their impact on nature. The 7 principles are:

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare
2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
3. Dispose of Waste Properly
4. Leave What You Find
5. Minimize Campfire Impacts
6. Respect Wildlife
7. Be Considerate of Other Visitors

Principle 1: Planning Ahead

Proper trip planning and preparation helps backcountry travelers accomplish trip goals safely while minimizing damage to the land and having fun.

Poor planning often result in miserable campers and damage to natural and cultural resources. Rangers often tell stories of campers they have encountered who, because of poor planning and unexpected conditions degrade back country resources and put themselves at risk.

Know the experience and physical abilities of your group. Plan your hikes with your weakest member in mind. Consider things like, weather, terrain, private land boundaries (get permission to cross any private land), meals and how you will prepare and clean up, trash disposal and group size.

The number one rule for trip planning is to prepare an itinerary and leave it with someone back home. Include local emergency phone numbers, location of the nearest hospital and of course where you plan on traveling. If you need to deviate from your plan during the trip, get word back home of the change.

Activity:

1. Go outside and observe how humans have effected nature. Are there trees or plants dying? Are there any signs of humans driving or walking on grass? Can you see any trash lying around? What else do you notice? Write down your observations.
2. Write down what you think people could be doing to help stop these effects on nature. Are there any laws you would put in place? How would you plan to protect nature?
3. Let's plan a trip to your backyard/local park. What items do you need to bring? How will you get there? What will you do? When will you come back? Who will you let know about your trip? When you get back take a look at what you planned for your trip. Was there anything you forgot? What went well?