

# HSS Safety Share

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## Safety Reminders for Hikers and Outdoor Enthusiasts

Hikers and Outdoor Enthusiasts need to remember that they are sharing the forest, grasslands, desert and other environs with hunters, motorcyclists, campers, ATVs, as well as, with the wildlife common to those regions. They need plan well and be cautious of others in the area.



For example, hikers should make sure they tell someone who is not traveling with them, where they are going and when they expect to be back. In this day of instant communication and text messaging, they need to remember that there are not very many remote areas that have cell service.

The most effective way to prevent mishaps is to adequately prepare for the trip. Knowledge of the area, weather, terrain, limitations of your body, plus a little common sense can help to ensure a safe and enjoyable trip. Here are some tips:

**Travel with a companion** - You don't want to be by yourself in case of an emergency. Leave a copy of your itinerary with a responsible person. Include such details as the make, year, and license plate of your car, the equipment you're bringing, the weather

you've anticipated, and when you plan to return.

**Wear appropriate clothing** - Wear appropriate clothing for the trail conditions and season. Be aware of the predicted weather conditions and have clothing appropriate for those conditions.

**Check your equipment** - Keep your equipment in good working order. Inspect it before your trip. Do not wait until you are at the trailhead. Be sure to pack emergency signaling devices.

**Learn basic first aid** - Learn basic first aid so you will know how to identify and treat injuries and illnesses. Carry a first aid kit with you.

**Make camp before dark** - Traveling after darkness has resulted in many accidents from falls, so travel only during daylight. Set up camp well away from the edge of cliffs, and learn the terrain during daylight.

**Carry "Insurance" Items** - Travel with a first aid kit, map, compass, whistle and guidebook. Carry extra warm clothing and gloves. Keep high-energy foods like hard candies, chocolate, dried fruit, energy bars or liquids accessible.

**Avoid Dehydration and Hypothermia** - Adults require a half gallon (two liters) or water daily, and up to a full gallon (four liters) for strenuous activity at high elevations. To avoid dehydration, drink water as often as you feel thirsty.

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Hypothermia is the number one killer of people who recreate outdoors.



Combinations of cold, wetness and wind cause hypothermia and it is aggravated by exhaustion.

Have appropriate clothing and changes of clothes, as well as, tarps, tents, sleeping bags, etc. if you are planning extended stays in the outdoors.

Hiking and other outdoor activities provide us with many opportunities to enjoy and explore nature, but to ensure your outdoor experiences are memorable ones, remember to plan for your trip. For additional information and assistance in planning, see the U.S. Forest Service web site at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/safety/outdoor/>