

## Backpacking Guidelines

Hike in groups of 4 to 8. Groups over eight should be split. This will make a smaller trail presence. A minimum size of four allows two to go for help and one to remain if someone gets injured.

Hike on the trail. You may accidentally start a new path if you hike off the prepared trail. Do not cut across switchbacks as that will start erosion where you disturb the soil.

The group should always be within sight and hearing of everyone in the group. If the group starts to get stretched out, the leader is going too fast.

Rest stops should be taken whenever necessary, especially if someone in the group is getting a hot spot or already has a blister. The stop need not be long, just long enough for everyone to get the weight off for a few minutes and refresh. Everyone must take a drink of water at every rest stop. (Dehydration can sneak up on you when backpacking.) Check your feet! Apply moleskin if necessary. Changing socks and applying foot powder will keep the feet dry. Dry feet are less likely to produce blisters. Many backpackers will eat a small amount of trail food during the rest period, keeping a constant energy level.

Camp sites should be at least 200 feet from any body of water. For environmental reasons all clean up must be performed away from these water sources.

Fires are to be built only in provided fire rings. Everyone is responsible for gathering twice his fair share of firewood.

(note: twice an individual Scout's fair share is equivalent to everybody else's fair share.)

## SAFETY

Stoves should always be operated under the direct supervision of an adult leader. This also includes refueling.

Always yield the right of way to horsemen. A horse may not recognize the figure of a man with a pack on his back and their natural instinct is to flee. Move at least ten feet off the trail and allow the horsemen to pass. If possible, move to the downward side so that you will appear smaller to the horse. If trail conditions do not allow these safety precautions ask the horsemen for directions as to what action you should take.

Use the buddy system at all times. Do not leave the group without permission from the SPL, SM, or ASM.

Whenever near water unhook hipbelts. This will allow quick exit of the pack should someone fall in the water.