

Leading Sierra Club Outings

Range of Light Group, Toiyabe Chapter

Revised June 28, 2006

→ Essentials

- Sierra Club outings policies: See <http://mitchell.sierraclub.org/outings/>
- Insurance
- Planning
- Publicizing
- Group Management
- Navigating
- First Aid and Safety

Sierra Club Outings Policies

→ Ancient Customs & Strict Rules

- Children & dogs only if the trip announcement says they can come
- Minors under 16 must have written parental permission
- No firearms, audio entertainment devices
- Communication, navigation radios OK
- Get releases from property owners
- Owners may want insurance or hold-harmless certificates
- People must arrange their own car pools
- No rented vehicles to be provided by leader (charter buses OK)

Insurance Considerations

→ Insurance Changes: Find Out

- Guidelines available on Club website
- Leaders are covered by liability insurance
- Includes field appointees and assistants
- Participants are not covered
- No medical insurance for participants
- Foreign or technical trips require additional insurance
- Bus companies must provide certificates of insurance

Planning

→ Plan Something You Know

- Day hikes
- Backpacks
- Ski tours

- Car camps (desert)
- Peak climbs

Things to Consider

→ Time, Distance, Food, Water

- Naismith's Rule: 3 miles, 2000 vertical feet per hour on trail
- Example: Telescope Peak 14 mi, 3000' = 6:10 plus rest stops
- Allow for rests: 3 to 5 minutes per half hour
- Food: 1000 calories per day plus:
- 100 cal per mile on trail, 200 cross-country
- 400 cal per 1000 feet gain
- Example: Mt Morrison 6 mi, 4800' = 1000+1200+1920 = 4120 cal
- Water: 1 liter per 1000 calories
- Backpacking: Increase by added percentage weight (20-25%)

Announcing Your Trips

→ Submit Writeup To Outings Chair:

- Make it fun
- When: Give date (and time if no reservations)
- Where: Give location & easy-to-find meeting place if no reservations
- What: Explain objectives, gain, mileage, on trail or not
- Why: Why should anybody want to do this?
- Who: Explain qualifications, how to contact leaders
- Screening: Have people write or call and reserve space

Using Trip Sheets

→ For Reply To Reservations

- Describe outing objectives and plan
- Name an easy-to-find, specific meeting point, not area
- Road junction, campground entrance
- Give precise mileages and landmarks for back roads
- List required experience and conditioning

- List equipment (boots, day or back pack, stove, ice axe)
- Include unique items of interest (history, geology, etc.)

Screening Participants

→ For Difficult, Strenuous, or High-Skill Trips

- Ask for advance signup and experience summaries
- Ask about similar experience, especially recent
- Ask about recent conditioning if strenuous
- Ask about equipment (beginners don't know the brands)
- Listen for macho or naive attitudes

Meeting At the Trailhead

→ Use a Checklist At First!

- Sign-in using sign-in sheet
- Appoint assistant leader(s): at least one trail sweep required
- Introductions: make it friendly
- Review plan and rules (keep together, breaks, tell a leader if leaving trail)
- Equipment check (review personal checklists, share stoves)
- Distribute community equipment (ropes, radios, shovels...)
- Take off, don't dawdle: time is safety

Carry the Ten Essentials

- Sunglasses & sunscreen
- First aid kit (at least bandaids, tape, compress)
- Map (typographic, detailed road)
- Compass (protractor type)
- Knife ("Swiss Army" or equivalent)
- Flashlight (with spare bulb and batteries)
- Matches and firestarter (redundant lighters OK, keep dry)
- Extra food (high energy)
- Extra Water (at least a liter more)
- Extra Clothing (rain/wind gear, sweater, avoid cotton)

On The Trail

→ **Keep Together!**

- Leader in front, assistant in rear (or the reverse)
- Set pace for the slowest people (or you'll have to wait!)
- Take frequent but short rests (3 to 5 min per half hour enough)
- Stop at trail junctions to show correct fork
- Watch for problems:
- Glazed eyes, lack of energy, low morale, crankiness: low blood sugar, take food and water
- Stopping too often: heart rate too high, slow down; food, water.
- Overheating: cool off (fast if dry hot skin!)
- Check for gear left at rest stops

Why Keep Together?

•→ **Some People Get Impatient, But It Saves Time**

- Nobody gets lost
- The leader knows that nobody is lost (no uncertainty)
- The leader can communicate with everybody
- People have problems the group can fix
- People need first aid or assistance
- Boot soles come off
- Ski poles break
- Stuff gets left behind
- Be smart, stay together!

Elements of Safety

→ **Stay On Schedule and Stay Awake**

- Check that everybody has the essentials
- Those sharing tents or stoves must stay together!
- Keep the group together (again!)
- Avoid delays, keep group moving at a steady pace
- Take action to recover from delays (change plans)
- Take easiest and fastest route

- Come back the same way (except for loop trips)

Camping & Wilderness Manners

→ **Obey All The Rules**

- Pick a pleasant campsite
- Maintain distance from lakes and streams
- Use camp stoves where fires prohibited
- Carry out all trash and garbage
- Do not damage trees
- Erase signs of campsite where possible

Navigation

→ **Know Your Map and Compass**

- Learn how to read a typographic map
- Plan your trip with the map: distance, gain, calories, water
- Practice with the map to locate yourself
- Take exit bearings at the cars (critical in the desert or snow)
- Keep track of time and location on trail
- Use GPS, compass, altimeter to resolve uncertainty

Navigation Tricks

→ **How to Make Sure Where You Are**

- Be wary – don't jump to conclusions
- Take cross bearing on known landmarks
- Compare terrain to map completely
- Compare compass bearing to map for:
 - ◇ Ridges
 - ◇ Canyons or gullies
 - ◇ Road segments
- Use all the clues and make sure they agree

Handling Accidents

→ **Sierra Club Leaders Must Have First Aid Training**

- Current card desirable, not required
- Wilderness first aid preferred
- Courses sometimes offered in our area
- Learn how to improvise bandages, splints, etc.
- Know how to get help (contact the sheriff)
- Keep in control, think, do not endanger others

- Report accidents involving first aid or medical treatment
- Report accidents on Sierra Club form

Search & Rescue

→ **How to Get Help**

- Notify Park Rangers in National Parks or Monuments
- County sheriff otherwise responsible in California
- Leader is responsible until official team arrives
- Send people out for help (preferably two) with list of:
- Who is lost or needs rescue
- Assistance needed (medical, helicopter, search)
- List injuries, physical condition of injured, first aid given
- Current weather conditions
- Exact location of party (use UTM grid, send a map)
- Best estimate of location of lost people
- Who is at the scene, how many helpers, gear available

Handling Car Caravans

→ **Each Driver Must Keep Car Behind In Sight**

- Give mileages on trip sheet
- Auto Club maps useful (show desert roads)
- Take tow chain, shovel, oil, coolant, duct tape, tire pump
- Be prepared to push, tow, shovel...
- Strobe lights useful to put on car