

Safety Precautions and Emergency Planning

Safety Procedures

Safety is not really about rules, though some important advice has been given as a number of simple golden rules because it is often easier to remember this way. Safety is more a way of working.

It is all about:

- Planning
- Having the right equipment
- Training and knowledge of the equipment

You can use the ‘Planning Guide and Log for Adventurous Journeys’ to assist in your planning. For a downloadable version go to <http://dukeofed.org/sk/adventurous-journey-> and select “planning guide”.

The two aspects of Expedition Training which require the greatest effort for *everyone* in the group are:

- Acquiring the **necessary level of fitness** for your Expedition
- Ensuring you have the appropriate **navigational skills**

Calling Search and Rescue teams for groups that have not made it to their destination on time is largely due to inadequate navigation or a lack of fitness. Poor navigation makes for slow progress, wasted time, and adds unnecessary mileage. Groups often over estimate their physical fitness – especially when faced with carrying a full pack uphill. It only takes one person to be unfit to slow the whole party down.

THINGS TO CONSIDER IN PLANNING:

Use of Private and Public Land

Be sure to get permission to use any private land. Check beforehand to see if there are any restrictions on the use of public land (ie: fire bans in Provincial Parks).

Duration

Don’t cheat yourself of the time required to do your Expedition. If long distances must be traveled to reach your start point, start your Expedition the next day.

Note: Suggested distances (listed on page 17 of your Record Book) are to serve as a guideline. The journey should present a challenge in terms of physical effort and fulfillment of its purpose. All participants must adhere to the minimum time requirements.

Use All the Time Available for the Journey

Divide the distance equally between the number of days to avoid having to make unreasonable physical demands on your fitness and stamina in the middle days.

Start Early in the Day

An early start will avoid the possibility of running out of daylight. It will also ensure you have plenty of time to sort things out if you have problems.

Make Major Ascents Early in the Day

If possible, plan your route so that all the uphill walking is done early in the day while you are fresh. If the weather turns nasty later in the day, you will be heading for lower ground. Up in the morning – Down in the Afternoon.

Have an Alternate Route for Bad Weather

Be on the look out for changes in the weather and never be afraid to turn back when weather conditions make it unsafe to proceed. Fall back on your alternate route to reach your destination, but **do not forget to inform your supervisor** as soon as possible.

Keep Your Pack Weight Down

Packs are nearly always unnecessarily heavy. If walking is to be enjoyed, or at least bearable, pack weights **should not exceed a quarter of the body weight**. All unnecessary items must be ruthlessly eliminated from the pack. Always weigh your pack before setting out. The bathroom scales will do just fine.

Always Tell Someone Where You Are Going

Tell a responsible person **where you intend to go** and the time **when you expect to return** or reach your destination. **Give them a copy of your route card** (see example) this must contain the names and addresses of all members of the group. It is of course, essential that you tell the person when you get back or have reached your final destination. You must keep to your route or **notify the person of any change of plans**.

Another option is to use a free online trip registry like Safe Trip (www.safetrip.ca).

Always Stay Together

There is safety in numbers and a group should **never split up or allow anyone to get left behind**. Having slow walkers in the group requires considerable self-discipline. Practice Journeys can be important in working out such problems. The only exception to this rule is if there is an emergency and someone needs to leave to get help.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an accident or injury First Aid must be rendered immediately. Following First Aid procedures should be automatic. When an accident occurs it will almost certainly create alarm and anxiety in the rest of the group. Involvement in the First Aid tasks will give the group time to regain their composure, before assessing the situation and making any major decisions. *For these reasons The Duke of Edinburgh's Award strongly recommends participants to become certified in First Aid through a reputable agency such as St. John Ambulance or the Canadian Red Cross.*

After taking time to sort things out, the situation usually does not look as bad as when it first occurred. After a rest the casualty may find it possible to struggle down to a road with a sprained ankle; or a person with a broken arm (which has been immobilized) can make it to where medical help is obtainable.

STEP 1 – PROVIDE FIRST AID TO THE BEST OF YOUR ABILITY

STEP 2 – ASSESS THE SITUATION

Ask yourself these questions to determine the next course of action:

- Can the casualty walk without causing further injury?
- Is there someone else in the area who can help?
- Will someone from your group need to go for help?

The most difficult decision arises when the injury makes it impossible for the casualty to move. The group will now have to split up because some of the members will need to go for help. Before taking this drastic step, it may be possible to obtain assistance from other people in the area.

STEP 3 – CALL FOR HELP

The International Distress Signal (see also **International Ground to Air Signals**)

This consists of:

- 6 long blasts on a whistle *or*
- 6 shouts *or*
- 6 waves of a piece of bright coloured clothing *or*
- 6 flashes of light (use a flashlight in the dark, or a piece of mirror in the daylight)

follow each set of 6 by a pause of one full minute

The Reply:

- 3 long blasts on a whistle *or*
- 3 shouts *or*
- 3 waves of a piece of bright coloured clothing *or*
- 3 flashes of light

each set of 3 should be followed by a pause of one full minute

When using flares:

- **Red** means *Distress* – Please send help
- **White** means *Message Understood* – Help is on the way

If you cannot attract attention to yourselves, and the casualty cannot move, you will need to send someone for help.

STEP 4 – BEFORE GOING FOR HELP

Do not let anyone go running for help right away. Think it through first! Splitting up the group is a drastic process and there are certain steps that should be taken.

Decide on who is going to go for help. It is best to send *two* people: the *best navigator* and the *fittest member of the group*. If at all possible, never send someone to get help alone.

Redistribute group equipment. Leave any communal camping gear (ie: tent, poles) behind. Ensure that a stove, fuel, and an ample supply of food is left with the injured person and the rest of the group.

Retain personal equipment. Those going for help should make sure they have their own personal emergency equipment.

Know your position on a map. Look at the map and locate your position exactly; everyone should know this position.

Plan your route. Decide where you will seek help from and plan a route; everyone should know which route you will be taking.

Take a written message. The police and/or Rescue Crew will need to know the following:

- The exact position of the injured person(s) – including the grid reference and a description of the place
- The number of injured and their name(s)
- The nature of the injuries
- The time of the accident

**Remember to always carry a cell phone, coins, or a prepaid phone card in your emergency gear. After getting help, call your supervisor or the responsible person you left your route card with and tell them what has happened.*

STEP 5 – WHEN GOING FOR HELP

- **Look carefully at the landscape and memorize details.** You may need to lead the rescue party back to the scene of the accident.
- **Note the time when you set off.**
- **Look back often to memorize the route.** This is especially important if you are not following a clearly defined path.

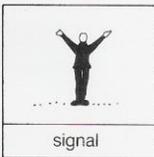
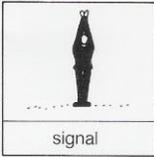
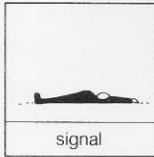
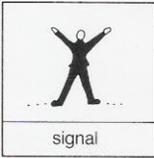
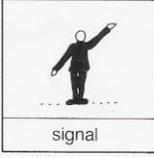
- **Head for a house, farm, or road.** Go anywhere you might find people or a phone.
- **Call Emergency Medical Services.** This will put you in contact with the local police. They will be able to contact a Search and Rescue Team. *Always carry a cell phone, coins, or a pre-paid phone card!*
- **Call your supervisor.** Be sure the person you have left your route card with is aware of the situation.
- **Remember to thank those who have helped you.**

WHEN WAITING FOR HELP TO ARRIVE

The person, or persons, left behind have a very important role. Group members should:

- **Set up a tent or create another form of shelter.**
- **Keep the casualty warm and insulated.** This will help treat for shock and provide comfort. Use your judgment, if the casualty is clearly suffering from heat exhaustion then treat them accordingly (see First Aid section).
- **Give the casualty something to drink.**
- **Make the site visible.** Attach brightly coloured clothing to a branch or wall where it may be seen. Lay out brightly coloured clothing or tarps to be seen from the air.
- **Remember, help usually takes longer than you think.** Don't panic if you end up waiting for a few hours. Keep busy and *stay put!*
- **Watch for your rescuers.** Find a lookout point and watch for your rescuers or passersby.
- **If you see someone approaching, wave or blow a whistle.**
- **Most importantly, reassure and care for the injured person!!**

*See also "Priorities of Survival" in the First Aid section.

Y		= YES we need HELP
letter	signal	
I		
letter	signal	
= Serious injuries. Require doctor		
X		= Unable to proceed
letter	signal	
N		= NO we do not need anything
letter	signal	

International Ground to Air Signals

These shapes can be made from clothing (or anything else) and laid on the ground *or* by a person making the shape of the letter with their body either standing up or laying down.

A red flare, a red square of cloth, or a fire are also International Alarm signals in the mountains.

When a helicopter is obviously searching in your vicinity, and you do not need help, just carry on with what you are doing and *do not wave* at the crew.

You are in Bear Country

National parks introduce visitors to a landscape that is uniquely Canadian. But these parks are more than scenic wonderlands. They are home to many animals who depend on undeveloped wild areas for their very survival. For some, like the grizzly bear, national parks are the critical core of a territory that can extend far beyond the parks' boundaries.

Bears are Wild Animals: Given the choice, most wild animals will stay clear of visitors. However, like all creatures, including humans, they will defend themselves, their young or their food, if they feel threatened. By understanding why bears behave the way they do and by following a few simple rules, you will increase the chances of safety for you and for the bear.

These are the two most important steps you can take to reduce the chance of a serious encounter with a bear:

- **Store food and garbage properly.**
- **Make sure bears know you're there.**

Each bear is unique. Individual circumstances will determine how you deal with a particular bear. This brochure highlights some ways people have steered clear of dangerous situations. For more information talk to park staff. They will provide details about bears in the area you plan to visit and can advise you on appropriate behavior in the backcountry.

Bears have a keen sense of smell: Always on the lookout for food, bears check out anything smelly. If you can smell it, there's a good chance a bear will pick up the scent and come to investigate. Keep yourself and your campsite odor free.

- Avoid smelly foods, try a freeze dried dinner.
- Change clothes you wore while cooking, before going to bed.
- Cook away from your tent, sleeping gear and clothes.
- Leave perfumes, hair sprays, and scented soaps at home.
- Wash and put away all dishes and utensils right away.
- In the backcountry, women should keep used tampons in sealed plastic bags.

Bears like human food: Survival in the wild is not easy. Winters are long and cold; food and shelter can be hard to find. It's little wonder animals look on people's food and garbage as an easy meal. Because of this, animals become used to humans, and problems for both visitors and wildlife are the result.

- Always put garbage in bear-proof containers.
- Lock food in the trunk of your car or in the food storage facilities provided at some campgrounds.
- Use airtight containers to store food and garbage.

In the backcountry you need to take special care:

- Cache food away from your tent; you can **hang it between two trees, at least 4 metres above the ground** or use the special facilities where provided.
- Pack out garbage - bears will dig up buried garbage.

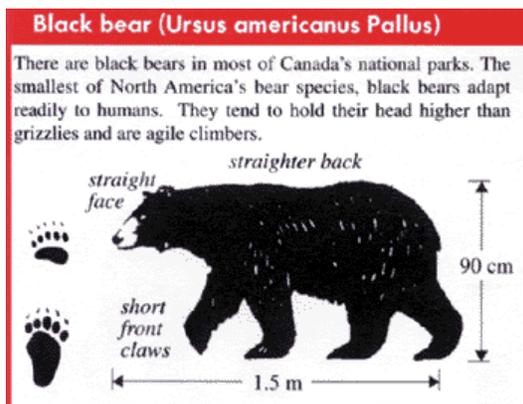
Bears don't like surprises: Most bears will leave if they know you're coming.

- Whistle, talk, sing, or carry a noise maker such as a bell or can of stones.
- Be especially careful in dense forest, near rushing water, or traveling into the wind - bears may not be able to hear or smell you.
- Carry a flashlight at night to warn animals of your approach.
- Stay in the open if possible.
- Keep children close to you.
- Watch for bear signs; if you see fresh tracks, diggings, or droppings, choose another area.
- Camp in designated campsites; in the backcountry, pick a spot away from trails and rushing water. Camp near trees you can climb if necessary.

Bears will defend themselves, their cubs, and their food:

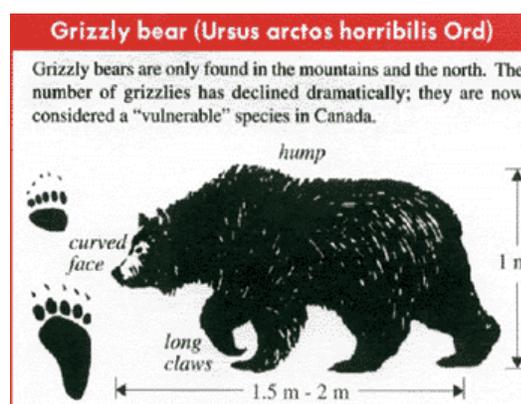
- Never approach a bear - especially a cub. Mother is usually nearby and will attack.
- Stay away from dead animals and berry patches. Report dead animals to park staff.

Bears don't like dogs: Your pet may come running back to you with a bear in pursuit. In national parks, dogs must be on a leash. It's probably best for you and your dog if you leave your pet at home. Some national parks do not allow dogs at all in the backcountry.



Characteristics of the Black Bear:

- Straighter back
- Straight face
- Short front claws



Characteristics of the Grizzly Bear:

- Hump back
- Curved face
- Long claws

If you meet a bear: *Stay calm, talk quietly, don't run.* Seeing a bear is exciting, but it can also be dangerous. Try to determine what kind of bear it is - black or grizzly. This is not always easy. Even bear specialists have been known to make mistakes. It is important, though, because in the unlikely event of an attack, some techniques work better with certain species.

The three most obvious differences between the two bears are:

- the shape of the face
- the shape of the back
- the shape and size of the claws

Don't rely on color - grizzlies and black bears can both range from black to blond. Size is also misleading. Female grizzlies can be the same size, or even smaller, than male black bears. While no single method works in every situation, the following suggestions have helped people who found themselves face to face with a bear.

- ❖ **Stay calm:** Difficult as this will be, it is your best defense. Bears don't want to attack you; they just want to make sure you're not a threat. Sometimes bears will bluff their way out of a threatening situation by charging and then veering away at the last second.
- ❖ **Take a detour or leave the area:** If this is impossible, wait until the bear moves away. Always leave the animal an escape route.
- ❖ **Don't throw anything:** This could provoke an attack.
- ❖ **Observe the bear's behavior:** Any bear that approaches people, snaps its jaws, makes whooping sounds, or lowers its head and lays its ears back, is displaying aggressive behavior.
- ❖ **Back away slowly, never run!:** Bears run as fast as a racehorse.
- ❖ **Talk softly:** if a bear rears up on its hind legs and waves its nose about, it is trying to identify you. Remain still and talk to the bear. A scream or sudden movement can trigger an attack.
- ❖ **Climb if there's a tree nearby:** Try not to make a dash for it. Speak and move slowly. If you have a pack, set it on the ground to distract the bear. Climb the tree as high as you can. *This works better for grizzlies than for black bears, who are good climbers.* Adult grizzlies do not usually climb; they can however, easily reach more than twice the height of a tall person.

If a bear attacks: Attacks are rare. Most happen when a bear is surprised. Here again, no one method works every time. Your response will depend on the situation and the species of bear. Some people have found the following techniques useful in reducing their chance of injury.

Note: Look for signs marked "Caution: bears in area, travel with caution" or "Danger: Area closed due to bear. Do not enter."

If you surprise a bear and it defends itself: These bears will usually leave you alone once they know you're not a threat.

Grizzly:

PLAY DEAD. Curl up in a ball and cover your face, neck, and abdomen. Remain still until the bear leaves the area. These attacks seldom last more than a few minutes. While fighting back usually increases the intensity of such an attack, in some cases it has caused the bear to leave.

Black Bear:

Black bears are not as aggressive as grizzlies and will usually run away if you surprise them. **DO NOT PLAY DEAD.** Try to escape or scare the bear away as described below.

If a bear stalks or attacks you when you are sleeping: In this situation it doesn't matter whether it is a black bear or a grizzly. These bears are usually looking for food. **DO NOT PLAY DEAD.** Try to get to a building or car. If you can't, climb a tree, but remember the bear may follow. As a last resort, try to intimidate the bear with a branch or rock. Make yourself look as large as possible.

Bear sprays: These contain a form of cayenne pepper that irritates the bear's eyes and lungs. Wind and other factors may reduce the effectiveness. If the spray blows in your face, you will suffer the same effects as the bear. Despite this, there are reports of these sprays saving lives.

You Can Help!

Grizzly bears once roamed throughout most of western North America. Today they are extinct in Mexico. In the United States they are only found in a few areas in the northwest and in Alaska. In Canada, there are grizzly bears in Alberta, British Columbia, the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. They are considered a "vulnerable" species in much of their range. If they are to survive, we must be careful to protect their habitat and respect their right to live, undisturbed, in the few remaining areas left to them.

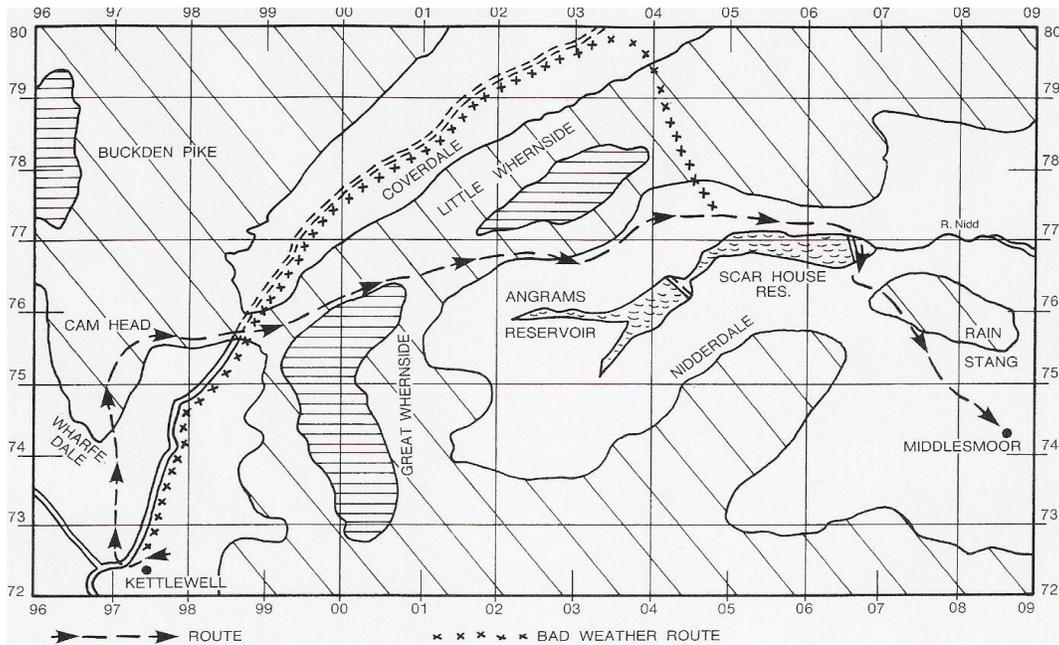
Unfortunately, bears that become used to people and their food often must be relocated or destroyed because of the threat they pose for visitors. Following the simple steps outlined above can help keep bears away from populated areas and prevent serious incidents. In this way we will help both bears and people to coexist in our national parks.



Route Card

Here is a sample of a completed route card. There are blank route cards in the 'Planning Guide and Log for Adventurous Journeys.' For a downloadable version go to <http://dukeofed.org/sk/adventurous-journey-> and choose 'planning guide'.

In addition, you may want to fill out a Trip Plan with an online service such as Safe Trip. If you venture into the great outdoors you will benefit from this free service. You can never predict when an unforeseen circumstance will occur. Be safe, file a Trip Plan. To register go to www.safetrip.ca and complete the user friendly Registration Form. This process will take only a few minutes and it will provide rescue teams with the necessary contact and personal information to assist them in your rescue.



ROUTE CARD (Use one per day)				NAMES OF GROUP MEMBERS					NAME OF GROUP OR UNIT		
Day of the week	Date	Day of Venture 1st, 2nd etc	ALISON, JUSTIN, IAN, ANGELA, STEVEN, ANDREA.					HANWORTH CENTRE.			
TUES	7th JULY '87	2						ADDRESS			
								SOLIHULL, BIRMINGHAM.			
								TEL. No. 019-375-205			
Leg	PLACE WITH GRID REF	General Direction or bearing	Distance in km/miles	Height climbed in m/ft	Time allowed for leg	Time for stops or meals	Total time for leg	Estimated Time of Arrival E.T.A.	Setting out time	Details of route to be followed	Escape to:
	START								8:30 a.m.		
1	KETTLEWELL 975-726										
1	TO TOP MERE GATE 972-755	N	3.5 km	310 m	2:00	20	2:20	10:50		Follow Top Mere track.	Back down track.
2	TO LITTLE HUNTER SLEETS 986-756	E	2.0 km	-	30	10	40	11:30		Contour above Tor Dike to road.	To Coverdale Road.
3	TO BOUNDARY WALL 009-764	76° M	2.7 km	80 m	1:00	10	1:10	12:40		Follow right of way to boundary wall.	North to road.
4	TO SHEEPFOLDS 047-773	82° M	4.2 km	-	1:15	45	2:00	14:40		Follow right of way to Sheepfolds.	Head downhill, then East.
5	TO SCAR HOUSE RESERVOIR 067-766	E	2.7 km	-	50	10	1:00	15:40		Follow Carle Fell Track, then cross dam.	-
6	TO MIDDLESMOOR 088-742	SE	4.9 km	100 m	1:50	10	2:00	17:40		Turn West to path up Scar House Pasture. Take path South past Intake Farm + Ruscoe to Middlesmoor.	Make for lower ground.
7	TO										
8	TO										
			Totals	20 km	490 m	7:25	1:45	9:10	17:40	Supervisor's Name, Location, Tel No.	
			PAUL + KATRINA. Youth Club, Kettlewell. 93-75205								