

Section 07: Land-Based Outdoor Adventure Activities and Basic Trip Leading Techniques

Revised May 2024



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Camp Fitch YMCA
Adventure Programs



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Standard Policies and Procedures

The following are standard policies and procedures regarding operating a land-based outdoor adventure activity. These are to be practiced in every sub section activity listed. The following have also been adapted and edited from other adventure programs across the nation to meet the existing overall program functions of the YMCA of Youngstown, Ohio.

Lead/ Sweep Policy

During a hiking trip (both day and multi-day) staff members must use the Lead/ Sweep method. This means one staff member is in front and another staff member is in the very back. If other staff members are present, they are encouraged to space themselves in the middle.

Lost Camper

If a camper finds themselves lost and separated from the group, they stop and stay where they are. If they do remember passing a trail junction and feel confident, they can go back to it, they should try. Once at the spot, the camper is encouraged to sit down and verbally start singing a song or yelling for help. This same camper policy should take place at climbing sites, while caving, and if ever separated from the group in public.

Avoiding the F U Break

When stopping for a break. The Trip Leader in the front of the group should officially start the group break when the Trip Leader in the back reaches the group. Stopping on a hike and continuing when the last person arrives is known as a “F U break” and really picks on the tail end of the group who might be ‘slower’ than the rest. At Camp Fitch YMCA we encourage multiple breaks in a hike. Not only does this allow everybody to catch their breath, it also keeps everyone together and decreases the chance of a lost camper situation.

Helpful Strategies

- Break lasts until Trip Leader in back gives a thumbs up to the lead Trip Leader.
- Put slower campers in the front, to set the pace.
- Look at a map, consider an alternate route if the group is struggling. There might be a route that is longer, but less difficult in terrain.



Trip Leader Injury

- If a Trip Leader (A) gets injured during a backcountry hike and there is only one other staff member present (Trip Leader (B)), they must:
 - Contact the Trip Coordinator and await instruction. Push the non-emergency button on the Spot. Push the 911 S.O.S. button if it is life-threatening.
 - If no contact is made follow these procedures:
 - Trip Leader (B) will take two campers with them (following the rule of three). They will try to get to an open space and try making a phone call again and pressing the proper button on the spot again at the new location.
 - Once making contact, Trip Leader (B) will then take the entire group to an extraction site or pick up. At this moment the campers can become assistants in first aid under the non-injured Trip Leaders' orders.

Hiking and Backpacking

Fitch Adventures operates hiking and backpacking trips in various wilderness locations across the Mid-Atlantic. Sometimes these hikes take place in high mountain ranges while some of the trip's venture into deep valleys to explore hidden streams and waterfalls. It is expected for all Trip Leaders to be prepared for these outings by packing everything listed in the packing list and making sure campers are properly fitted when issuing out backpacks and other camping gear.

Popular locations in relation to specific trip:

Trip Name	Trail(s) Typically Used	Location
Allegheny Backpacking	Minister Creek	Allegheny National Forest, Tionesta, PA
Lake Erie Legacy	Erie Bluffs	Erie Bluffs State Park, N. Springfield, PA
Mountain Momma	Lookout Point	New River Gorge National Park, Lansing, WV
Legends of Lehigh	Switchback	Mauch Chunk Lake State Park, Jim Thorpe, PA
Jersey Journey	Appalachian Trail	Delaware Gap National Rec. Area. Blairstown, NJ
Gorge 2 Gorge	Gray's Arch	Daniel Boone National Forest, Slade, KY
Grayson Highlands	Massie Gap	Grayson Highlands St. Park, Mouth of Wilson, VA
Vermont Voyage/ Northeast Beast	Appalachian Trail	Green Mountain National Forest, E. Dorset, VT
Sweet Carolina	Mountains to Sea	Pisgah National Forest, Linville Gorge, NC

Blisters and Footwear

During a hike it is important to constantly check in on the group to see how their feet are doing. A common first aid occurrence is blisters forming due to the rubbing of skin against the sock and boot. To help prevent this, have kids wear two pairs of socks and make sure their boots are properly tied. If rubbing continues to cause pain, bandage with moleskin, band aids or gauze pads with duct tape reinforcing it.

Crossing A Stream

When crossing a stream, the chest strap and the waist strap of a backpack should be unbuckled, this is to be done in case someone were to fall. They could easily remove their pack to reduce the risk of drowning.

Participants should cross a stream at the best point to cross safely. Trip Leaders are to avoid rapids in the stream and try a cross in a shallow, calm pool. It is recommended that campers cross without hopping from rock to rock.

Wildlife

It is common to find all sorts of wildlife while on a trip. Besides your common squirrels, raccoons and mice, be sure to pay special attention to those listed below:



Snakes

When encountering a non-venomous snake, give it space and time to move. If it will not move, a Trip Leader needs to either lead the group around it or move it with a trekking pole or stick.

In the case of encountering a venomous snake, the entire trip should find an alternate route around the snake if it does not move out of the trail. At climb sites, search for another climb or go on a hike and come back later to retrieve gear.

Ticks

Ticks are nasty little parasites that wait patiently on the ends of plant life, in a comatose state, ready to attach themselves to the next animal or human walking by that brushes the plant. While on a trip it is important to stay on the trails and not bushwack. If a tick is found on your body and not attached, flick it off. If the tick is attached, gently use tweezers, a credit card or some light item to slowly lift the tick's head out of the skin. If the tick has been attached for several days and is almost completely submerged in the person's skin, place Vaseline on the area to try and force the tick out and attempt to see a medical professional. There is a greater chance one might get a tick at traditional Camp Fitch than on an adventure trip due to the environmental conditions and types of plant diversity off Lake Erie.

Bears

When encountering a bear, the group must stop and allow the bear space to escape or move out of the trail. No one should approach the bear. If the bear does not move away and continues to get closer to the group, the Trip Leaders should organize the group together into one big unit and shout as loud as they can. The last resort is to throw rocks at it. No one should ever run until all options have been exhausted.

Typically, in the East, a black bear will be curious when smelling food being cooked. If a bear approaches the campsite, the trip should try the strategies mentioned above. If the bear continues to approach the group and enters the campsite, Trip Leaders should work together to evacuate the campsite or campground and return when to gather gear once the bear leaves.

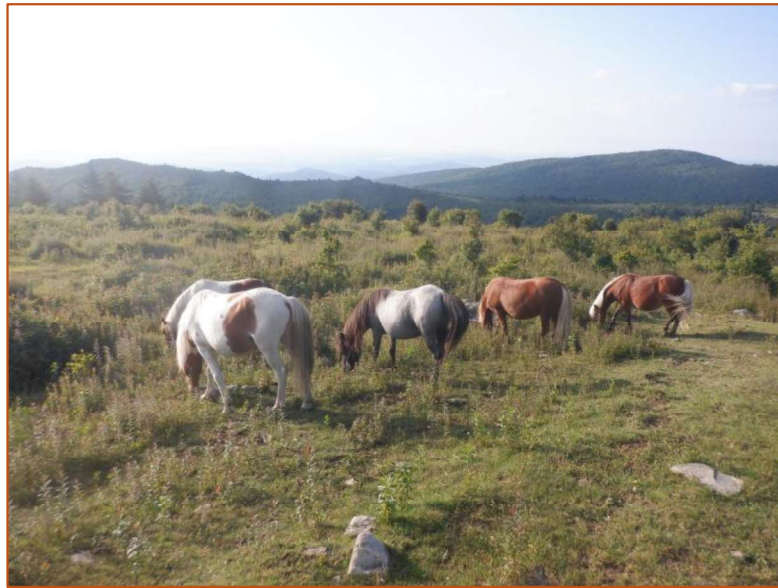
Long Horn Cattle

In the Grayson Highlands, Long Horns should be considered on the same scale as bears while on the trail.

Once a campsite has been made and a Long Horn stumbles into camp, let it be. Gather the campers and go for a short walk to purify water or do a devotion, then come back. It is common to wake up the next morning with a Long Horn sleeping in camp. Give the cattle some distance, all they want is the grass in your campsite

Wild Ponies

Just like cattle in the Grayson highlands, ponies are wild in the Grayson Highlands and will approach humans because visitors have fed them so much. Wild ponies can usually be found near wild raspberry and blueberry patches within Grayson Highlands State Park. Campers can admire them from away but never chase or attempt to ride a wild pony like a horse. Detour the ponies away from eating your lunch or backpack!



CAVING

Caving is very dangerous and must only be led by adventure staff or outfitters who have been trained and possess knowledge of every pathway in the cave that is being explored. For Fitch Adventures we mainly use Worley's Cavern near Bluff City, Tennessee. A second-known trip location is Speedwell Cave near Independence, Virginia, but is hardly ever used. Bear Cave in Southern Pennsylvania is planned to be explored for future trips. While caving, the lead/ sweep procedure outlined previously must be used.



Caving Ground School

- Helmets need to be used at all times.
- Proper attire, what to wear in the cave.
- Definitions of Stalagmites, stalactites, and columns.
- Touching the cave with your bare hands and the use of gloves to lessen this impact.
- Proper Techniques such as sliding, barrel roll and climbing.
- Head Lamp Usage.
- Caving First Aid Kit and items in it.

Proper Attire

For caving it is important that all participants wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts. Due to the wetness of the cave, it is suggested that for than one top layer be worn and that a bottom layer of leggings or spandex be worn under the pants. Due to the spread of white nose bat syndrome from cave to cave, it is important to wear gloves.

In addition to all of this, cavers need to be wearing proper footwear similar to hiking. Barefoot shoes can work, water shoes used for paddling and swimming are not recommended. Usually, these shoes for campers are suggested to be the oldest pair of shoes they own and do not mind throwing away after use.

For additional protection, cavers can bring kneepads to assist in crawling.

Helmets and Headlamps

Headlamps will be attached to caving helmets via the four holding tabs that are standard on every rock-climbing helmet. Retired rock-climbing helmets are used for caving helmets. In a cave you only need protection from hitting or scraping your head against the ceiling of the cave when crawling or trying to stand up. If a camper needs to take their helmet off to scratch their head or adjust it, they must wait until the group has arrived at a big enough room to allow it. Trip Leaders must give permission for them to take the helmet off.

Headlamps usually have several different lighting settings. For caving, the dimmest setting can do. If a headlamp dies while the participant is exploring, tell them to try and through with the help of others pointing the path with their headlamp. Once in a big room, the participant may take off their helmet and switch out headlamps or replace batteries.

When looking at other people or wildlife, try to shine the headlamp off to the side. This way one is not blinded by the lights of others.



Caving First Aid Kit

For caving, a basic first aid kit is taken into the cave. There is no need for Trip Leaders to bring their personal kits or the trip first aid bag. The first aid kit will have basic necessities as well as some caving specific extra supplies:

- Band Aids
- Alcohol swabs
- CPR mask
- Extra headlamps
- Extra batteries
- Full bottle of water
- Trash bag for potential solid waste
- Life saver breath mints for the triboluminescence experiment
- Glow sticks for a dance party or emergency use

Cave Formations

While in the cave, it should be a priority to explain cave formations to the group to spark interest for future discovery and interest.

Stalagmites: A mound of solid sediment rising from the cave floor due to water with mud and rocks slowly dripping on it from the ceiling causing it to grow. The best way to remember this formation is by thinking you 'might' trip on it.

Stalactites: This cave formation is icicle-like and is formed by water mixed with mud and rock running down existing solid sediment attached to the cave ceiling. The best way to remember this formation is by thinking that they hold 'tight' to the ceiling.

Column: A column is when stalagmites and stalactites have met with millions of years of the constant dripping of the water combined with sediment.

Rifts: Rifts are formed by the water in the cave being caught in a 'pool' for several years and then something happening in the cave to causing it to finally spill and collect in another pool. This leaves a series of ridges along the cave floor, some deeper than the others.

Exploring Techniques

While exploring in the cave, to safe, participants are encouraged to use the following techniques to stay safe.

Sliding: The use of putting one foot in front of you as you slide down a decline on the rest of your butt.

Barrell Roll: Laying on the ground, one rolls in a horizontal direction (left to right) as you travel through a tight space. Yes, this is a *Star Fox 64* reference.

Climbing: Just like in rock climbing, think about your foot placement first before reaching above for a hand hold.



GPS

Global Positioning System (GPS) is used on adventure trips in extreme, remote locations when needed. Used in conjunction with a map, a GPS can help the party find a water source, dropped off gear, or a trailhead when lost. In order to help Trip Leaders learn how to use a GPS, an adaptation from the course design used for school year programs can be used as a great training tool.



GPS ADventure Course

Purpose: The GPS ADventure Course is designed to be a free-range activity where participants are teamed up in groups that go around camp to find points that are pre-input into a GPS unit. Upon finding a point, the team then writes down a word that is at the point. This then becomes proof that they went there. The main goal of this is to have another fun, active class in the Outdoor Education Program.

Materials: GPS units, Dry Erase Markers, Clipboard containing map, answer write in sheet, and instructions to GPS.

Teaching the Class

1. Sit participants down in a central location. Explain that this will be the location where you (the staff member) will stay during the activity and where the participants will come to when they need help or are finished with the course.
2. Talk about GPS and how it works. (Use Triangulation Sheet).
 - a. Pass out GPS units afterwards
3. Explain how the GPS works (See Instruction Sheet for more detail)
 - a. Explain all the buttons and how to turn on the GPS
 - i. Use of Toggle- not a touch screen
 - b. Tell them the order of how to use the main menu
 - i. Select Waypoint Manager
 - ii. Select Waypoint they need (all should be 'ADV#')
 - iii. Hit Go at bottom, not Map
 - iv. Hit Back Button to get back to main menu
 - v. Select Compass
 1. This allows you then to walk to the point. Point should be in feet, if it says 0.1m the 'm' stands for miles.
4. Before you send the participants off, perhaps talk about elevation and how that may play a role at Camp Fitch. You should never have to 'bushwack'. It may be shorter to do so, but if you stay on a path, you will safely get to the point.
5. Give Participants their clipboard with materials and they can get started.

GPS ADventure Course Answer Key

<u>Point</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Word Written Down</u>
€ ADV 1	Tree near Trinity by Abels Road	Goat
€ ADV 2	Tree at bottom of stairs going to Mirto	Snake
€ ADV 3	Behind Friend's Circle on a tree	Campfire
€ ADV 4	Curly's Chapel bench	Candle
€ ADV 5	Tree near stream at crossroads	Frog
€ ADV 6	Old Chapel behind Trinity, behind podium	Fish
€ ADV 7	Apple Tree Grove	Beaver

<u>Points</u>	<i>Reinput these coordinates if points get messed up</i>		
ADV 1	N	42 00 178	Elevation: 585 feet
	W	80 25 792	
ADV 2	N	42 00 254	Elevation: 568 feet
	W	80 25 634	
ADV 3	N	42 00 368	Elevation: 642 feet
	W	80 25 782	
ADV 4	N	42 00 285	Elevation: 679 feet
	W	80 25 704	
ADV 5	N	42 00 235	Elevation: 611 feet
	W	80 25 741	
ADV 6	N	42 00 220	Elevation: 605 feet
	W	80 25 786	
ADV 7	N	42 00 188	Elevation: 608 feet
	W	80 25 868	

Triangulation

GPS units use what is known as triangulation to determine a person's exact location. This is done by aligning three satellites that are in orbit.

Use of one satellite gives you:



Use of two satellites gives you a better idea where you are:



Adding a third satellite pinpoints exactly where you are.



How to work it

See GPS ADventure Course GPS Instruction Cheat Sheet for more information.

Waypoint Transfer Instructions

How to update a device through using your personal computer (PC)

- Install Garmin BaseCamp software first
 - Create 3 different folders under “My Collection”
 - ADventure Course
 - Orienteering Course
 - Survival GPS Course
 - Drag and add files to correct folders under “My Collection”
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1. Plug GPS into power cord (must enter a usb port in the back of the PC)
 2. Let the GPS load whatever files it has.
 3. When ‘Device’ is uploaded a pop-up screen will appear, exit out of it.
 4. Go to BaseCamp Software and select ‘Internal Storage’ on eTrax Unit under “Devices”.
 5. Select one point and hit Control + A to highlight all, then delete all
 6. Click on ‘ADventure Course’ under “My Collection”
 7. Go to top menu and select ‘Device’. It is between ‘Edit’ and ‘Find’.
 8. Click ‘Send to Device’.
 9. Click “Send ‘ADventure Course’ to Device”
 10. Click ‘Okay’ on the eTrax pop-up