

Hike Preparation

Planning

- Availability of leaders (male & female preferred – if boys & girls are hiking). If leaders aren't available there won't be a hike.
- Date for hike – set a date, the Scouts can never sort one out
- Location of hike – within 50km is reasonable, but closer is better. Don't get too ambitious or no-one will go.
- Check 'availability of hike' – has there been a bushfire through there recently? is a car rally going to be there?
- How to get there
 - Car pooling – for the Scouts parents to arrange. Petrol money and entrance money, if appropriate, should be shared.
 - Shuttles – on a linear hike it might be sensible to leave cars at each end. But be very careful there are a lot of break ins to unattended vehicles so it's better to have someone drop off and pick up (so don't have the hike more than 60km away!)
- Where to start – has to be easily recognizable. A major car park is best. Prepare a mud map for the A2 form.
- What time the hike starts. This is NOT when THEY are to arrive this is when YOU start walking – make this quite clear.
- Where to finish – again should be easily recognizable. Easiest to finish where the hike starts.
- What time for pickup. Allow an hour beyond what you think. The kids are usually happy to 'muck about' for a bit but a parent gets really worried if you're 2 minutes late.
- Prepare maps – scan and print maps for everyone. Most end up as scrap but keep referring to them during the hike so that the kids get used to using them. Add
 - Safety directions – 'go north if you get lost and haven't seen anyone for 1 hour'
 - Safety locations and phone numbers:
 - CALM office – most times you'll be walking in CALM areas.
 - Hospital – hope you never need it
- Mobile coverage – coverage is different for CDMA and GSM. GSM does have the advantage of the 112 number (112 will use ANY GSM network not just the one you pay for and connect to the local emergency service) on the other hand CDMA has better coverage in the bush. Useful for emergencies and to call parents if there's a major change in finishing time.
- A1 form (2 weeks in advance) – or Branch will be upset.
- A2 form – you MUST have this from each Scout (unless their parents are walking too).
- A4 form – you must have this from each Scout (unless their parents are walking too).

2 Days Before

- Check forecast – just so you can warn the Scouts that they need 'rain gear' or whatever.
- Check availability of hike – any last minute hitches.
- Inform CALM – if you're in a National Park. A call to them letting them know your intention does no harm and they may know something that you don't (such as a prescribed burn in the area).

Before starting

- Check forecast – it's too late to cancel but at least you will be forewarned to check the Scouts have the correct kit.
- Lodge plan with at least one 'sensible person' who is not hiking – if they're really sensible they will, of course, be on the hike themselves.
- Inform CALM using 'walksafe' – if you're in a National Park. Try to start from a car park near the Ranger Station that way the Scouts can come along and see what they should be doing.
- Remind the Scouts how to find direction from the sun and from that how to walk on the safety bearing. It takes 10 minutes and it gets them thinking 'safety'.

At the car

- Dry shoes – don't carry them they'll just get wet too.
- Dry socks – driving home with wet feet is not fun.
- Spare pair of pants – driving home in wet pants is even less fun.
- Copy of hike plan – if you're lost they'll find the car before they find you.
- GPS your starting point – that way you can be sure of getting back to a known location.