

Trail Etiquette 101

A Guide for Canine Safety & Manners

Packing for the Hills:

The first step in a positive and fun trail excursion with your pup is to make sure you're fully prepared before leaving the house. This means bringing everything you may need, which can vary from dog to dog, but always includes the following basics:

- **Water Bottles** (one for you, one for your pups)
 - Dogs can drink fresh water from sources like creeks and rivers, but standing water like puddles or marshy water should not be allowed as they can have harmful bacteria or parasites.
 - A portable dog bowl is always an option as well, but not necessarily a necessity
- **Poop Bags**
- A favorite **toy** to chase
- **Leash & Collar**
- **First Aid Kit**
- **Dog Training Treats**, and maybe even some human snacks!
- **Bug Spray**
- **Towel** for drying water loving pups!
- **Back up human clothes:** shoes, jacket, socks, etc.

Situationally Dependent Supplies:

- **A Map** (definitely a necessity if you plan on going out of cell service in a new area)
- **E-collar or other training tools** (can be very imperative for many dogs, especially when they are young or even just need a reminder of what's expected)
- **Dog booties or coats** (it's always best to bring it and not need it, but many dogs do need that extra protection)

Car Tips

- **Seat Belts & Kennels**

Both of these are very good options in keeping your dog a bit more safe during transportation. When using a seat belt, try to make sure the clasps are metal rather than plastic, as they will be able to protect your dog much better in the case of an incident. If you use a kennel, consider how you could possibly go even one step further, and strap it down as well.

- **Combating Mud**

Using seat covers in your dog's usual riding spot is honestly the best way to protect your car's interior, but remembering an old ratty towel when you have a mud prone dog can also be very beneficial!

Crucial Safety Tips:

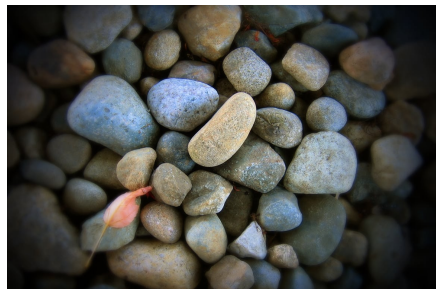
- **Always tell someone where you're going**
- **Stick Safety**
 - Don't let your dog ingest sticks, it can lead to blockages in the digestive system, or even injury.
 - Chewing sticks is completely acceptable, just make sure to check your pets mouth and gums to make sure they're not going too hard.
 - Be aware of areas with sharp sticks and other hazards off the trail, and try to keep your dog away from particularly dangerous looking areas.
- **NEVER IGNORE SIGNS**
 - Signs are placed for a reason. Most trailheads will have a bulletin board at the beginning, and it's incredibly important to look at those before proceeding.
 - Signs could have important information about what you may encounter along the way: animals (predators sightings, or even just horses), vehicles, dangerous vegetation, flood warnings, etc.
 - A lot of these bulletins may have a broad map of the area as well, which can be useful to get an idea of the area before you begin your adventure.
- **Consider your Company**
 - If your dog has a hard time with a certain group of beings, such as: Babies, Children, Strollers, Bikes, Horses, Other Dogs, Wildlife, etc. please take that into consideration when choosing where to get their exercise in, and whether you keep them leashed or not.
 - Your dog's comfortability and safety should always be the number one priority, so don't put them in a situation where they're going to be anxious and possibly end up in a compromising situation.
 - Bringing a collar and leash allows your dog much more freedom, and should always be used if you're nervous about their behavior around a certain group.
- **Toilet Paper Alternatives**
 - Let's be honest, nobodies perfect, and sometimes we forget TP when we go into the wilderness. It's important to have an awareness of what some safe options are for that dreaded moment when nature calls...

SAFE

Moss



Rocks *clean*

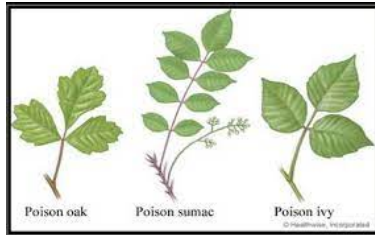


Snow



NOT SAFE

Poison Oak/Sumac/Ivy



Stinging Nettles



Queen Anne's Lace



Deadly Nightshade



Poop Protocol

- Always Bring Poop Bags!

It is your responsibility as an owner to keep our trails and fields clean for everyone else who wants to enjoy their beauty. Many trails have a poop bag dispensary at the beginning and sometimes placed throughout the walk, take advantage of these! And if you have somehow forgotten to bring a poop bag, at least try to make sure your dog relieves itself a fair distance off the trail so that others don't have to play dodge the poo while they walk.

- Be Aware of Wildlife Poop

Keeping an eye on wildlife scat can be an important tool in ensuring your safety. Being able to identify cougar, coyote, bear poop, etc. can help inform you of the types of dangers you could possibly (although unlikely) encounter during your adventure. It's also important to pay attention to how fresh those poops are, because then you can know if they're possibly still in the area.

On the other hand, it's also important for owners of dogs with a high prey drive to pay attention to things like elk, deer, bunny poop, etc. as well. If you spot some super fresh deer poop, maybe consider keeping your dog on a leash during the walk to avoid them running off.

Cougar Poop

Looks a lot like dog poop, but often has hair in it.



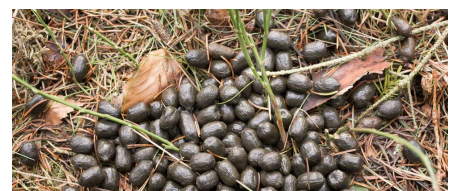
Bear Poop

Often has berry pits in it and can be "cow pie looking"



Deer Poop

Elk poop looks mostly the same, but longer/bigger.



Don't be this guy!

- **Zippy Leads:**

Zippy leads result in a lot of owners allowing their dogs more distance from their owner than they should, or even breaking off when pulled to quick and hard. This can lead to a dangerous situation if another dog is to come the other way and either dog acts aggressively and a fight begins while their owner is so far away. Now both dogs are in danger of getting hurt by the lead or possibly entangling themselves together, endangering the owner who has to release them. For owners, the main concern is getting caught up in the rope and receiving a seriously painful rope burn. This is just one example why these should not be used, but in general, a fixed length leash is best.

- **Move out of the way:**

A lot of the time you can run into other pedestrians on a trail, and it's important to know the general "right of way" on the trails. Mountain bikers, horses and other livestock, for example, are something you'd move off the trail for (with your dog firmly in your hand) to let them pass.

Another just general hiker's rule is that the person going up the hike moves out of the way of the person coming down the hike when it is not wide enough to walk side by side. It's also important to keep your dog in hand while this happens, as you do not know if another hiker has a fear of dogs or if their dog is friendly or not.

- **Always Respect the Land:**

Follow the "leave no trace" policy at all times. This means you don't bag your dog's poop and then just leave it on the side of the trail. You don't leave garbage from food, beverages, vape pens, etc. Realize that wildlife should not be eating the same food humans eat, and that you don't need to leave your scraps for the squirrels & birds. It can actually make them very sick/cause blockages if they eat certain things. Don't pull every flower you see out of the ground, rip off tree branches, or stomp through fragile habitat areas. In general, just show the animals and environment the respect they deserve. You're in their home.

And Remember! Enjoy your Walk!