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Have Fun - WALK SAFE!

Some advice that will help you stay safe, and enjoy your adventures



Mountain Safety

British mountains can be killers without proper care. The following points cover the minimum precautions you should take if you want to avoid getting hurt or lost or, in the event of an accident, minimise further harm.

Planning and Preparation

- Plan before setting out!
- Consider the equipment, experience, capabilities and enthusiasm of the party members.
- Check the weather forecast and local conditions; Scottish mountains can be major undertakings. Night encroaches early in the winter and the further north you go!
- Learn first aid.
- Many accidents occur towards the latter part of the day when both your energy levels and those of your phone battery will be run down. Did you remember to charge your battery before setting out?

Food and Drink

- In addition to the usual sandwiches take chocolate, dates, or similar sweet things, which restore energy quickly. You may not need them yourself, but someone else may.
- Streams on hills are drinkable if fast-running over stony beds.

Party Size

- If in groups, make sure party leaders are experienced; do not let the party become separated.
- Take special care of the youngest and weakest in dangerous places.
- If you prefer to go alone, be aware of the additional risk. Let people know your route before you start, stick to it as far as you can and notify them of any changes.

Avoidable Dangers

- Precipices
- Slopes of ice or steep snow
- Very steep grass slopes, especially if frozen or wet
- Unstable boulders
- Gullies, gorges and stream beds
- Streams in spate
- Snow cornices on ridges or gully tops
- Exceeding your experience and abilities
- Loss of concentration, especially toward the end of a long day

Remember it is no disgrace to turn back if you are not certain.
A party must be governed by the capabilities of the weakest member.

For more information visit: -

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Footwear and Clothing

- Wear suitable boots with a treaded sole which provide support for ankles.
- Clothing should be colourful, warm, windproof and waterproof.
- Take spare warm clothing and perhaps a hat and gloves; it is always colder on the tops.

Equipment

- A map, compass (and the ability to use them), and at least one reliable watch in the party should always be carried.
- If you carry a GPS, at least know how to read your current position. It could save a lot of hassle in an emergency when speaking to the Mountain Rescue Team.
- In all conditions, it is wise to carry a whistle, torch, spare batteries and bulbs; but in winter conditions, an ice-axe, crampons and survival bag are essential.
- Climbers and mountain bikers are all urged to wear helmets at all times.

Mobile Phones

- Do not rely on a mobile phone to get you out of trouble. Signal coverage in mountainous areas is very unreliable. Mountain Rescue Teams have many years of experience in calls from mobile telephones and, whilst they are excellent when they work, there are many things that can go wrong. Even moving a few feet in the mountains can mean losing the signal. You will be advised of best practice when contacted. If you are able to summon help using your mobile phone

KEEP IT SWITCHED ON so you can be re-contacted!

Things to Watch

- Weather changes - these can be sudden and more extreme than forecast
- Excessive cold or heat (dress appropriately)
- Incipient exhaustion (know the signs; rest and keep warm)
- Accident or illness (don't panic - if you send for help, make sure you stay put and the rescuers know exactly where to come)
- Passage of Time - especially true when under pressure - allow extra time in winter conditions