

Principle 1 - Plan Ahead and Prepare

Proper planning and preparation helps Scouts achieve trip goals safely and enjoyably while minimizing damage to natural resources. Poorly prepared Scouts concerned with unexpected situations, often resort to high-impact solutions that degrade the outdoors and put themselves at risk.

Poor planning often results in:

- High impact because Scouts fail to obtain information on weather, local conditions, the environment or regulations.
 - Excessive trash and improper campfires because of failure to properly plan meals or bring the proper equipment.
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Principle 2 - Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

Damage to land occurs when plant life is trampled beyond repair. The resulting barren area leads to unstable trails, campsites and excessive soil erosion. Scout camps are by nature heavily impacted, so concentrate your activities in areas that are already heavily used rather than spreading further damage.

- Concentrate activity in existing campsites, trails and roads whenever possible.
- Choose a site large enough for your group or divide into smaller groups and use a number of smaller established and durable sites.
- Don't form new trails or damage sensitive or recovering areas. Think before you step.
- If you do travel through open woods, spread your group out so you don't create a trail where one did not exist before.

Principle 3 - Dispose of Waste Properly

Minimize the need to pack out food waste by carefully planning meals. Repackage food so most of the trash is left at home. Never put leftovers or trash down the latrine. The common saying "Pack It In, Pack It Out" is a simple yet effective way to remind Scouts to take their trash home with them. There is no reason why Scouts cannot carry out of camp the extra materials that they carried in with them in the first place. There are only two things you can't pack out:

- Waste water: To prevent contamination of natural water sources, disperse waste water at least 100 footsteps (200 feet) from springs, streams, lakes and campsites. Minimize the use of soap.
- Human waste: Proper human waste disposal prevents the spread of disease. Using existing latrines is the easiest and most practical way to dispose of feces. In remote areas of camp, the best alternative is to dig a cathole, 6 to 8 inches deep and at least 100 footsteps (200 feet) from water.

If every patrol left their site a little cleaner than they found it, imagine how nice camp would be next year.



Principle 4 - Leave What You Find

Minimize Site Alterations. Do not dig trenches around tents. Disassemble and disguise pioneering projects before leaving camp. Never hammer nails into trees or hack at them with axes or saws. In highly impact sites, it is appropriate to clean the site and dismantle any user-built facilities, such as excess fire rings, log seats, wilderness survival shelters or old pioneering projects.

Principle 5 - Minimize Campfire Impacts

Scouting continues to promote the use of campfires for both cooking and ceremonies, yet the naturalness of many scout camps has been severely degraded by overuse of fires and the increased demand for fuel. The search for firewood has led to many trees stripped of their lower branches. Using lightweight camp stoves are now essential for low-impact camping and we must encourage a shift away from campfires. Properly selected, stoves are safe, clean and easy to use. When campfires are used, use charcoal and a fire pan constructed from a trash can lid that can contain the fire and its inherent damage.

Principle 6 - Respect Wildlife

Remember that we are visitors to camp, but this is the home of native wildlife. It is exciting and fun to view wildlife, but we should do so at a distance, being careful not to get too close. Stress on an animal caused by human contact may alter its behavior or cause it to leave its habitat. Be especially careful not to feed wildlife. Animals that become a nuisance often need to be destroyed.

Principle 7 - Be Considerate of Other Visitors

Most people come to camp to get away from the crowds and enjoy nature. You will have a better experience if you respect the privacy of others. Don't cut through campsites, and keep your noise level down as you travel through camp. Coming to camp should be a time to leave the headphones behind and let the sound of nature be the one you remember when you return home.



The Boy Scouts of America is committed to implementing Leave No Trace at all levels of the program. Earning the BSA Outdoor Ethics Awareness Award could set the stage for starting on a comprehensive Leave No Trace training program for all Scouts and Scouters.

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BSA Outdoor Ethics Awareness Award



Boy Scout Requirements

1. Recite from memory and explain the meaning of the Outdoor Code.
2. Watch the National Park Service (NPS) Leave No Trace program video.*
3. Complete the Leave No Trace online course and print the certificate.*
4. Complete the Tread Lightly! Online course and print the certificate.*
5. Participate in an outdoor ethics course, workshop or training activity facilitated by a person who has completed the BSA outdoor ethics orientation course or is a BSA outdoor ethics trainer or master educator.

* Find the links at:

www.scouting.org/OutdoorProgram/OutdoorEthics/Awards.aspx

Leave No Trace Outdoor Ethics



DEL-MAR-VA COUNCIL
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA.

- **Plan ahead and prepare.**
- **Travel and camp on durable surfaces.**
- **Dispose of waste properly.**
- **Leave what you find.**
- **Minimize campfire impacts.**
- **Respect Wildlife.**
- **Be considerate of other visitors.**

Leave No Trace is an educational program that combines knowledge and judgment with ethical responsibility. It is a program designed to expand the understanding of how we can enjoy the out-of-doors while protecting the natural areas and the experiences we cherish. Scouts can do their part by learning more about the program and practicing Leave No Trace whenever they are in the outdoors.

[Prepared by Gary Lehr, Del-Mar-Va Council BSA, Outdoor Ethics Advocate and LNT Master Educator]