



Skills Session: Leave No Trace

Time Frame

30 minutes

Materials

Outdoor Code poster

Resources

- *Boy Scout Handbook*—chapter 1, “The Adventure Begins”; chapter 8, “Hiking”; chapter 9, “Camping”
- Principles of Leave No Trace

Goals

By the end of this session, participants will be able to

- Explain the principles of Leave No Trace.
- Explain the meaning of the BSA’s Outdoor Code and how it affects users of the outdoors and camping ethics.
- Commit to Leave No Trace and to apply these principals to all outdoor adventures.
- Explain the BSA concept of the levels of outdoor program and where their Scouting units likely fit into this scheme.

Assignments

Although none of the rank requirements encompasses Leave No Trace per se, much of what Scouting is all about does. All Scouts should take pride in being responsible users of the outdoors because leaving no trace is everyone's responsibility.

Before You Begin

Present this session at the end of the course as a wrap-up to reinforce Leave No Trace principles and review opportunities for low-impact camping presented in earlier skills sessions.

In order to reinforce understanding and subsequent use of Leave No Trace by participants in all activities and everywhere in their lives, including established Scout camps, wilderness areas, parks and their own neighborhoods, continually mention the principles and applications throughout the course in all skills areas.

Lesson Plan: Leave No Trace

Think of Leave No Trace as an attitude, not a set of rules. It applies as much in your backyard and local park as it does in the backcountry. Make Leave No Trace a habit; practice Leave No Trace principles wherever you go. Scouting's Outdoor Code serves as an added reminder.

The Outdoor Code

The Outdoor Code reminds us all of the importance of caring for the environment. The code has special meaning whenever we camp, hike, and take part in outdoor events. By embracing the ideals of the Outdoor Code, we can enjoy the outdoors without harm to the environment.

THE OUTDOOR CODE

As an American, I will do my best to—

Be clean in my outdoor manners,

Be careful with fire,

Be considerate in the outdoors, and

Be conservation-minded.

Leave No Trace

Leave No Trace reminds us to respect the rights of other users of the outdoors as well as future generations. Consider the combined effects of millions of outdoor visitors and you will appreciate the significance of a poorly located campsite or campfire. Think of how thousands of such instances seriously degrade the outdoor experience for all. Each Leave No Trace principle addresses a special area of camping and hiking and helps us remember that, as visitors of the outdoors, we must travel lightly on the land.

1. **PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE.** Planning ahead helps prevent unexpected situations and makes compliance with area regulations more manageable.
2. **TRAVEL AND CAMP ON DURABLE SURFACES.** That helps prevent soil erosion and keeps damage to land in check.
3. **DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY (PACK IT IN, PACK IT OUT).** Accept the challenge of taking home everything you bring.
4. **LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND.** Allow other visitors a sense of discovery, and remember that good campsites are found, not made.
5. **MINIMIZE CAMPFIRE IMPACTS.** Use lightweight camp stoves whenever possible—they make camp cooking much easier and more desirable than harmful campfires do.
6. **RESPECT WILDLIFE.** Considerate campers help keep wildlife wild.
7. **BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHER VISITORS.** Thoughtful campers are considerate of other campers and respect their privacy.

Activities

1. In camp and along the nature trail and walk for the Plant Identification and Animal Identification skills sessions, point out opportunities to practice Leave No Trace principles.
2. Have a discussion so that participants can critique their own implementation of Leave No Trace in their campsite and share tips for Leave No Trace that they practice back home.