



MEETING PLANS & IDEAS: OUTDOOR ETHICS

Outdoor Ethics	Information	Troop Meetings	Main Event
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OBJECTIVES

This month's activities should:

- Demonstrate the need for outdoor ethics
- Lead to greater appreciation for the outdoors and a strong determination to follow the Outdoor Code
- Teach the seven principles of Leave No Trace
- Introduce the principles of Tread Lightly!
- Help Scouts develop outdoor skills that minimize impacts
- Help Scouts grow in skill and confidence in their ability to enjoy the outdoors responsibly

LEADERSHIP PLANNING

As a leadership team, you may want to discuss the following items when choosing outdoor ethics as your program feature during your planning meetings.

- What is our unit's current skill level?
- Which members of our unit have taken Leave No Trace or Tread Lightly! training?
- Who in our unit has been on a backcountry adventure and practiced Leave No Trace?
- Do we know any experts in outdoor ethics?
- What will we do for our main event to practice outdoor ethics?
- Has our unit experienced problems in the past related to outdoor ethics?
- Where will we do our main event?
- How can we involve the parents?
- What should be changed on the sample meeting plans to meet our needs?

Click above for fillable troop meeting planning form.

PREOPENING IDEAS

[Preopening Ideas on Troop Program Resources](#)

OPENING IDEAS

[Opening Ideas on Troop Program Resources](#)

GROUP INSTRUCTION IDEAS

Outdoor Code

- A youth leader recites the Outdoor Code. After each principle is stated, one of the other youth leaders reads the explanation of that principle: As an American, I will do my best to:
 1. Be clean in my outdoor manners. (I will treat the outdoors as a heritage. I will take care of

it for myself and others. I will keep my trash and garbage out of lakes, streams, fields, woods, and roadways.)

2. Be careful with fire. (I will prevent wildfire, I will build my fires only when and where they are permitted and appropriate.

When I have finished using fire, I will make sure it is cold-out. I will leave a clean fire ring, or remove all evidence of my fire.)

3. Be considerate in the outdoors. (I will treat public and private property with respect. I will follow the principles of Leave No Trace for all outdoors activities.)

4. Be conservation-minded. (I will learn about and practice good conservation of soil, waters, forests, minerals, grasslands, wildlife, and energy. I will urge others to do the same.)

Leave No Trace

- Play the [National Park Service Leave No Trace video](#)

Leave No Trace Skills

- Teach the [Leave No Trace](#) principle related to proper waste disposal.

Tread Lightly!

- Review the principles of Tread Lightly!

SKILLS INSTRUCTION IDEAS



Outdoor Code

- Plan a hiking activity
- Identify the impacts the group might cause while on this activity.


- Plan a camping activity
- Identify the impacts the group might cause while on this activity.

- Plan a backpacking activity
- Identify the impacts the group might cause while on this activity.


Leave No Trace


- Plan a hiking activity. Doing the following:
 - Make a list of what planning and preparation is needed for your activity.
 - Make a list of what personal and group equipment is needed.
- Discuss how the principles of Leave No Trace should affect your planning.


- Plan a camping activity. Doing the following:
 - Make a list of what planning and preparation is needed for your activity.
 - Make a list of what personal and group equipment is needed.
- Discuss how the principles of Leave No Trace should affect your planning.

-  Plan a backpacking activity. Doing the following:
 - Make a list of what planning and preparation is needed for your activity.
 - Make a list of what personal and group equipment is needed.
- Discuss how the principles of Leave No Trace should affect your planning.


Leave No Trace Skills


-  Lay out a 200-foot course to demonstrate how far catholes should be from water, camp, and trails.
 - Have Scouts walk the course counting their steps.
 - Demonstrate how to dig a cathole.
 - Have Scouts practice digging catholes.
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-  Teach backcountry kitchen cleanup techniques.
 - Discuss how to wash and sterilize food service items.
 - Demonstrate filtering gray water with a nylon screen.
 - Demonstrate how to create a natural sump for filtering.
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-  Teach techniques for backcountry laundry and bathing for long treks.
 - Demonstrate how to make and use a plastic garbage bag bathtub.
 - Discuss pack-it-out techniques for human waste.

Tread Lightly!

-  Make a list of approved Scouting activities that apply to Tread Lightly! principles.
 - Review what the Guide to Safe Scouting says about these activities, who can participate in them, and what rules apply.
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-  Discuss how the Tread Lightly! principles apply to motorboats, snowmobiles, personal watercraft (e.g., Jet Skis) and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs).
 - List any recent unit activities involving these devices, and discuss how well Tread Lightly! principles were followed.
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-  Discuss the Tread Lightly! principles for shooting sports.
 - Discuss how the principles of Leave No Trace and Tread Lightly! compare.

BREAKOUT GROUP IDEAS

Discussion Topics

- Combine Scouts together from different skill levels and have them share ideas representative of their skills instruction topics.

Getting Ready for the Main Event

- Menu Planning (if applicable)
- Duty Roster Planning (if applicable)
- Patrols discuss what special items they will need for the main event.

Preparation for the meeting's game or challenge

GAME AND CHALLENGE IDEAS

- [Web of Life](#)

- **What Bothers You the Most?**

– *Materials:* Set of 27 index cards; each card shows a negative impact that could be found when camping and hiking (trash on the trail, half burned firewood, initials carved into a tree, etc.)

– *Method:* Lay out three cards and ask, “What bothers you the most?” Instruct Scouts to stand next to that card. Each group should then defend its choice. Put the card with the most support in a winners’ pile. Continue until all 27 cards have been used, then conduct subsequent rounds with the remaining cards. Play a final runoff round with the three remaining cards. Ask everyone which impact bothered them the most and why.

- **Trash Timeline**

Materials: As many items of trash as you can collect from the biodegradation chart (see box), sticky notes for each patrol

Biodegradation Rates	
Glass bottle: 1 million years	Monofilament fishing line: 600 years
Plastic beverage bottles: 450 years	Disposable diapers: 450 years
Aluminum can: 80–200 years	Styrofoam cup: 50 years
Tin can: 50 years	Leather: 50 years
Nylon fabric: 30–40 years	Plastic film canister: 20–30 years
Plastic bag: 10–20 years	Cigarette filter: 1–5 years
Wool sock: 1–5 years	Plywood: 1–3 years
Waxed juice carton: 3 months	Apple core: 2 months
Newspaper: 6 weeks	Orange or banana peel: 2–5 weeks
Paper towel: 2–4 weeks	

Source: U.S. National Park Service; Mote Marine Lab, Sarasota, Florida

Method: Line up the trash items in random order. Have each patrol place a sticky note next to each item that includes their patrol name name and an estimate of the time (a couple of days to a million years) it takes for the item to biodegrade if left behind during an outing. Have each patrol defend its estimates. Lead a short discussion and reveal the actual biodegradation rates. according to the U.S. National Park Service chart.

CLOSING IDEAS

- [Leader’s Minutes](#)
- [Ceremony](#)

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TROOP LEADER RESOURCE LINKS

[Advancement Resources](#)

[Awards Central](#)

[Boy Scouts](#)

[Guide to Safe Scouting](#)

[SCOUTBOOK](#)

[Scouting Forms from the National Council](#)

[ScoutCast](#)

[Scouting Magazine](#)

[ScoutStuff.org \(Retail Site\)](#)

[ScoutingWire](#)

[Sign in to MyScouting.org](#)

[Take Youth Protection Training](#)

[The Outdoor Adventure Planning Guide](#)

[Troop Leader Guidebook Appendix](#)

[Uniforms](#)