



prepare for your hike!

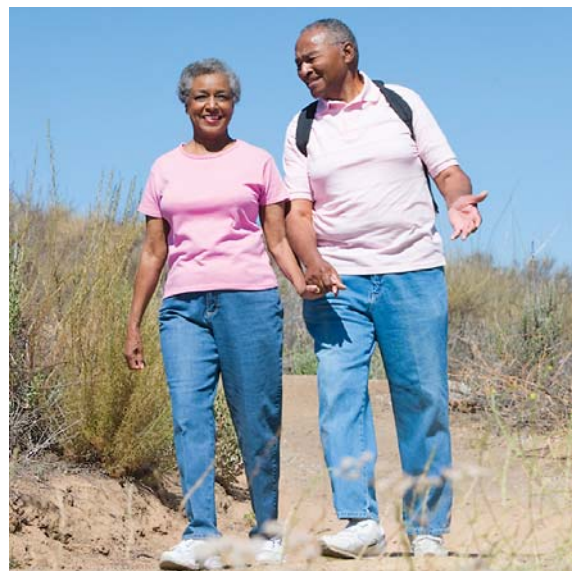
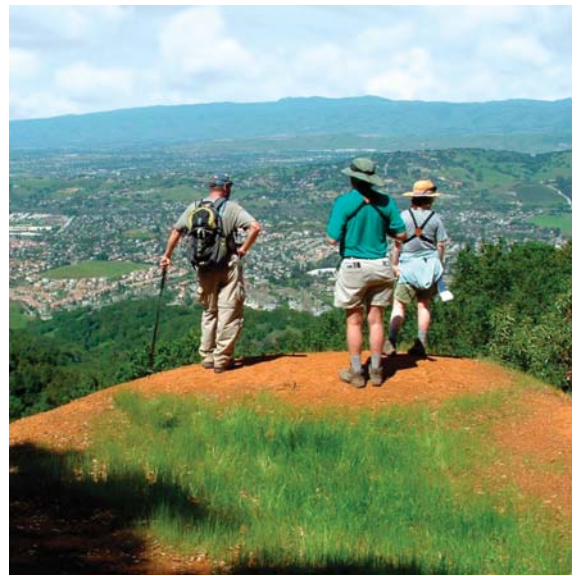
one

Safety and Health Tips

- *Avoid visiting a park alone - take a friend or family member with you if you can. If you do visit a park alone, let someone know where you're going, what trail you're taking and when you're expected to be back.*
- *Carry identification and a cell phone; however, cell phone signals are not accessible in many Santa Clara County Parks. (For emergency help, try to make calls from hill tops.)*
- *Emergency Call Boxes are available, but only in a few parks and on a few trails.*
- *Headphones are not recommended. However, if you wear headphones, keep the volume low enough to be aware of your surroundings.*
- *Take along a First Aid Kit. Include: Band-Aids of various sizes, sterile gauze pads and roller bandages, cleansing soap, non-latex gloves, tweezers, scissors, sunscreen and bug repellent.*
- *Contact your primary care physician before beginning any new fitness program.*
- *Don't try to do too much too soon. Gradually increase your time and level of trail difficulty as your body gets stronger.*
- *Use sunscreen that has an SPF 15 or higher. Wearing a hat and sunglasses with UV protection is highly recommended.*
- *Always stretch and warm up your muscles before starting out. Also, do a few stretches at the end of your trails outing to cool down.*
- *Drink water before, during and after your outing.*
- *Bring an energy snack with you: fresh fruit, trail mix, granola or energy bars.*

Tips for the Trail

- *Print out a park map or pick up one at a bulletin board or from a ranger station.*
- *Stay on designated trails!*
- *Leave no trace. Take only photographs and leave only footprints. Please do not disturb plants, trees, flowers, streams and lakes, or wildlife.*
- *Pick up and carry out garbage and pet waste, and dispose in a trash receptacle. Pooper-scooper bags and trash receptacles are available along trails in high use areas.*
- *Be courteous and yield to others on the trail. Everyone must yield to horses (let them pass). Alert other park visitors if passing on the trail.*
- *Abide by Santa Clara County Park rules and regulations. They exist to ensure your visit is both safe and enjoyable.*
- **Remember, parking fees are required at most County Parks.. Call (408) 355-2200, or visit www.parkhere.org for parking fee information.**



prepare for your hike!

two

Always remember

- Bring your PixInParks route maps and/or a park map (provided at most park trailheads and Ranger stations. Also available online at parkhere.org)
- Take extra water and an energy snack: fresh fruit, trail mix, granola or energy bars.
- Bring a First Aid Kit. Include: Band-Aids of various sizes, sterile gauze pads and roller bandages, cleansing soap, non-latex gloves, tweezers, scissors, sunscreen and bug repellent.
- Take a whistle in case you get lost - it is easier to blow a whistle than yell.
- Bring a flashlight with extra batteries
- Be aware of your abilities, your surroundings and weather conditions.
- Stay on designated, marked trails.
- Leave no trace of your visit. Take only photographs and leave only footprints. Please do not disturb plants, trees, flowers, streams and lakes or wildlife.
- Walk pets in approved areas only and keep them controlled on a 6' leash at all times.
- Smoking is not permitted in Santa Clara County Parks, including picnic areas and parking lots.
- Pick up and carry out garbage and pet waste and dispose in a trash receptacle. Pooper-scooper bags and trash receptacles are available in high use parking areas and trailheads.
- Follow all posted park regulations.
- Be aware!
- Be courteous and yield to others on the trail. Walk on the right side and be mindful of other trail users around you (bicyclists, joggers, skaters, dogs on leash, others). Everyone must yield to horses (let them pass).
- **Parking fees are required at most County Parks. Call (408) 355-2200 or check parkhere.org for parking fee information.**
- **Call 911 in case of emergency.**



Ticks & Lyme Disease

- Ticks are blood-feeding parasites which cling to their hosts using dart-like anchors below their mouths. They are found in natural areas, among grasses, shrubs, logs or leaf litter.
- Ticks are about 1/8 inch long and are reddish-brown with black legs, and are tear-drop shaped.
- Ticks do not fly, jump or drop from trees. They climb to the tips of plants and wait for an animal or human to brush by.
- Ticks can carry and transmit many diseases to humans, including Lyme disease. The symptoms of Lyme disease are a spreading rash with fever, aches and/or fatigue. Lyme disease can be treated and cured if diagnosed early.
- To avoid picking up ticks, wear long pants, long sleeves, and light colors when hiking. Stay on designated trails and avoid bushy areas. Use bug repellent on pants, socks and shoes.
- If bitten by a tick: use tweezers to grab the tick as close to the skin as possible, and try not to separate the head from the body. Pull the tick straight out, away from the skin (don't jerk, twist or burn the tick). Save the tick for identification and see your doctor if you develop a rash or believe you may have contracted Lyme disease. Wash your hands and the bite site with soap and water after the tick is removed, and apply an antiseptic to the bite site.
- Always check yourself, children and pets for ticks after a hike.

Poison Oak

- Poison Oak grows abundantly throughout the park system. It can grow as a shrub or vine, scaling the heights of trees. The plant's oils can produce an irritating rash after coming in contact with skin. Leaves are grouped in three and vary in color from green, yellow or red, depending on the season. Even leafless winter stems contain the oils.
- Oil in the leaves or on the stem of the plant is what causes these symptoms: a red, itchy rash that may produce blisters or burns (hives). The rash can appear as late as 2 days after contact.
- Avoid contact with poison oak. Remember, **"Leaves of three, let them be."** **"If its shiny watch your hiney" - Park Ranger Carlson**
- Wear socks and long pants, and do not touch plants while out on the trail.
- Keep pets close - they can transfer oils to you if they play around this plant.
- If you do come in contact with poison oak, wash skin immediately with soap and water and launder your clothes when you get home.
- The rash is not contagious, if it spreads use calamine lotion to relieve itching and contact your doctor.



Where ticks live



plants and wildlife

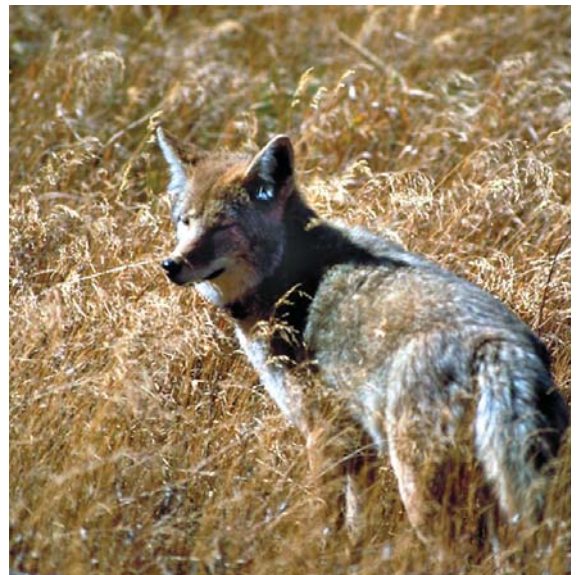
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Wildlife

- *Wildlife, although inspirational to watch from a distance, should not be approached, fed, chased or harmed. Generally, if we leave them alone they will leave us alone, as they are busily engaged in the process of survival.*
- *Never approach, feed, chase or harm any wild animal.*
- *Abnormal behavior can indicate the animal is sick. Stay away and notify park staff.*
- *Always keep dogs leashed and small children close to you.*
- *If you see a mountain lion, stay away. Appear as large as possible and do not run or crouch. Report all mountain lion sightings to park staff.*

Rattlesnakes

- *Snakes are relatively common throughout the park system, especially in the hotter, drier parks. Poisonous rattlesnakes and harmless gopher snakes have similar coloration, so are often mistaken for each other.*
- *Rattlesnakes are relatively common throughout the park system, especially in the hotter, drier rural parks.*
- *They generally will not strike unless stepped on or handled. The rattle sound is a warning of the snake's presence, not its intent to strike*
- *To avoid a snake encounter, look ahead when you use the trail and avoid putting your hands or feet where you can't see.*
- *When encountering a rattlesnake, move away and most likely it will flee.*
- *If you find a rattlesnake in an unsafe area, such as a restroom, playground or picnic site, contact park staff so that the snake can safely be removed and relocated.*



hiking with kids

five

Hiking with kids

Note: Trail conditions, weather, and physical conditions are major considerations when hiking with kids. Start with shorter distances and work your way towards longer adventures. It takes a little more planning to have successful outdoor adventures when little ones are along.

Some tips to consider:

- *Pack patience and flexibility. Be willing to adjust your hike to the enjoyment and pace of children, even if it means you don't reach your intended destination.*
- *Dress for success. Check weather conditions before you head out. Pack layers and an extra change of warm clothes in case kids get wet. Make sure everyone has good hiking footwear and socks.*
- *Create a checklist of essentials. Make your own family list of must-have items such as a first aid kit, sunscreen, hats, sunglasses, bug spray, snacks, extra clothes, special walking stick, hand wipes, stuffed animal, etc.*
- *Know what features are ahead. For starter day hikes, choose shorter trails with less elevation gain and features like lakes, ponds or waterfalls along the way. Children are fascinated with water and nature.*
- *Take energy stops. Snacks provide great motivation to keep kids moving on the trail and a great reason for stopping to take a rest and look around.*
- *Hike with a friend. As kids get older they often prefer to spend time with friends over family. Allow your child to invite a friend along.*
- *Give kids responsibilities. Put them in charge of water, maps, picture-taking or being the "leader." When hiking with more than one child, make sure that everyone gets a chance to set the pace and be the leader.*
- *Engage kids with activities and use teachable moments. Try "I Spy" and "20 questions," or find shapes in the clouds and nature. If you see wildlife, stop, observe and discuss. Relate what you see in nature to a child's life and experiences.*



hiking with dogs

six

Hiking with dogs

Know your dog's abilities and plan the difficulty of your hike accordingly.

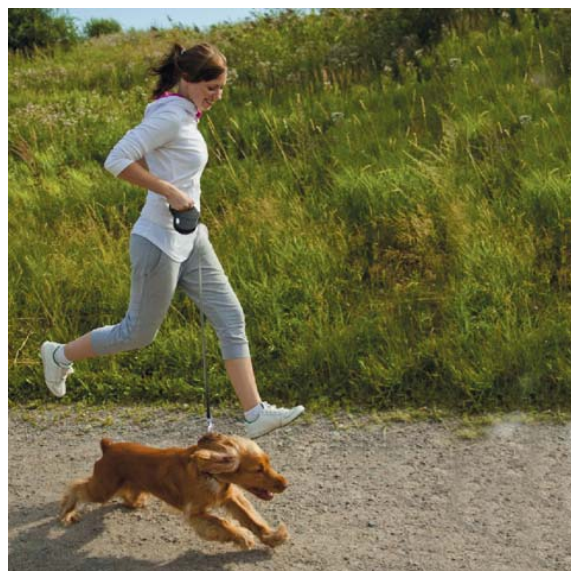
- Check the weather and avoid the hottest times of the day.
- Pack doggie waste bags, snacks, and water for your canine companion.
- Bring (and use) a six-foot leash.
- Even for short hikes, bring a first aid kit. Keep your vet or emergency vet's phone number on hand.

The Hike

- Keep your dog on-leash unless in an off-leash area. Remember that many trails need to be shared among hikers, dog-walkers, horses, cyclist, and children.
- Wildlife can be both threatened by and a danger to your dog. Be aware of what's in the area and keep your dog away from coyotes, deer, elk, rattlesnakes, raccoons, skunks, birds, and others.
- Pick up after your dog and take the waste with you – please do not leave it on the side of the trail.
- Rest often, hydrate often. Shade is your friend. Take the opportunity to check your dog's feet
- FUN: packs are a great way for dogs to burn extra energy during a hike and give them a job or sense of purpose. Make sure you get the right size, because if the pack is too large or small, it can cause discomfort and even injury.

The Recover

- Make sure your dog is properly hydrated, fed and has a place to cool down.
- Check for ticks, foxtails, and other weeds in their coat, nose, paws, and ears.



298 Garden Hill Dr., Los Gatos, Ca 95032
(408) 355-2200 Main • (408) 355-2290 Fax

Learn more at parkhere.org
or write parkinfo@prk.sccgov.org

Connect with us!

