

Whether traveling for a few hours or a week, people should know their physical limits and plan for activities that won't exceed their experience. Before heading out, the [Oregon Department of Emergency Management](#) recommends the following best practices:

- **Know the trail and conditions** – research the trail thoroughly and get accurate directions to the trailhead.
 - [Check weather](#) and any [park alerts](#).
 - Check road conditions on [Tripcheck.com](#) or call 511.
 - Know campfire restrictions at [Oregon State Parks](#) as well as public [fire restrictions](#).
 - Download maps to a cell phone or print them in case there is no cell service.
- **Make a plan and tell someone** – make sure they know your route, the exact trail name, possible side destinations and when you plan to leave and return. This information is vital for search and rescue if they need to come looking for you.
- **Practice situational awareness** – stay vigilant and aware of your surroundings. Keep an eye on trail markers and landmarks so you can provide those details in an emergency. (This includes [Oregon Beach Access Numbers](#) on the coast).
- **Listen to your body** – know your limits when selecting hikes and when you're on the trail.
- **Watch for hazards** – if you see signs of bad weather, wildfires, dangerous wildlife activity or other potential hazards, adjust your plans. Never feel bad about turning around early. Have a plan B.
- **Stay on marked trails** – straying off the path or following social trails increases the risk of getting lost or injured. It also increases the risk of fatal falls.
- **Respect trail closures** – safety signs and barriers. They are placed there for your safety. Disregarding them can have deadly consequences.
 - Exercise caution when crossing streams or navigating steep terrain – never climb on logs or turn your back on the ocean.
- **[Pack the Day Hike 10 Essentials](#)** – include proper equipment, extra food, water and supplies.
- **Follow the seven principles of [Leave No Trace](#)** – minimize your impact.
- **Stay in touch** – There might not be cell coverage and reception on the trail.
 - [Enable Wireless Emergency Alerts \(WEA\)](#) on cell phones.
 - If you are using your cell phone, keep the battery fully charged and switch to airplane mode to conserve battery until you need it.
 - Consider a personal locator beacon (PLB) like InReach or SPOTS, if you need to call for help.
- **Prepare for the weather** – layer up, wear appropriate footwear for the terrain and carry an emergency blanket.
 - Bring sun protection and lots of water of hot days: [Tips for hot-weather hiking](#).
 - [Have an emergency kit](#) and cell phone charger in your vehicle.

- **Practice water safety** – before you go out, plan ahead and check water levels, [obstructions](#), tide information, local regulations and boating access before heading out. The Oregon State Marine Board's (OSMB) [website](#) has a lot of planning resources
 - A [map of life jacket loaner stations](#) to borrow if you don't have your own.
 - Dress for the water temperature, not the air temperature.
 - OSMB recommends people recreate with others so they can provide aid more quickly if the unexpected happens.
 - In 2023, there were 13 recreational boating fatalities where 11 victims were not wearing life jackets; seven were paddlers, one in a sailboat, and six were in motorized boats.