

## Why Be Prepared?

The right gear means greater comfort and a happier hiker!  
Northwest weather changes rapidly, especially in the mountains.

Accidents do happen, even to the more careful.

Even if you are with a group, it is possible to become lost.

### The Ten Essentials

Yes, on Every Hike  
Yes, Year-Round

### Navigation

(map and compass;  
Green Trails brand  
maps are fine for most  
day hikers)

### Sun/Skin Protection

(sunglasses and  
sunblock year-round;  
bug dope in summer)

### Insulation

(extra non-cotton  
clothing)

### Illumination

(headlamp or  
flashlight)

### First-aid supplies

### Fire

(firestarters and  
matches/lighter)

### Repair kit and tools

(including knife)

### Nutrition

(extra food)

### Hydration

(extra water)

### Emergency shelter

(for example, a  
“space blanket”)

### Clothing

For comfort and safety, wear no cotton! This  
includes jeans. Read clothing labels to avoid cotton.

Wool, silk, and synthetics are much better.  
Some synthetics: polypropylene, polyester and  
polyester “fleece,” and nylon. Brand names include  
CoolMax, Thermax, Thermolene, Capilene, and many  
others.

Layering is key to your comfort.

The three basic layers are:

1. Base layer next to your skin (such as long  
underwear);
2. Insulating layer (such as a wool sweater or  
fleece top and wool or fleece pants);
3. Rain/wind protection (rain jacket and pants).

You won't wear all the layers all the time, but you  
should have them in your pack.

### Boots

Should be tall enough to be over the ankle (low-cut  
shoes are not appropriate).

Boots with fewer seams are more durable and have  
greater water resistance.

Your toes should have wiggle room and should not hit  
the front of the boot, even when walking downhill.

Your heels should feel anchored in place.

Fit and comfort can be improved with special insoles  
such as Superfeet; remove the original insoles first!

Waterproofing:

Your boots will get wet and must be waterproof.

Many boots incorporate Gore-Tex liners which do the  
job. Other boots can be waterproofed at home; ask the  
seller what compound to use. Leather boots benefit  
from conditioner, too.

### Backpacks:

For comfort, the  
pack should rest on  
your hips, not your  
shoulders; a  
padded hip belt is  
best.

Day-hiking packs  
typically are about  
2,000 cubic inches  
in volume.

### First-aid Supplies

The most common  
hiking injuries, in  
order, are:  
Foot blisters (most  
frequent by far);  
Cuts and scrapes;  
Sprains and strains.

Include any regular  
medications you  
might need to take if  
you were delayed  
getting home.

*Sunshine is delicious,  
Rain is refreshing,  
Wind braces us,  
Snow is exhilarating.  
There is no such thing  
as bad weather; only  
different kinds  
of good weather.  
--John Ruskin, 19<sup>th</sup>  
century English writer*

## **Backcountry Ethics**

A great many people are visiting our wild places. This can lead to “pounding”--damage to the land and to the experience of wilderness. But some simple practices will preserve and enhance everyone’s enjoyment.

Leave No Trace: Take only pictures; leave only footprints. If you take something in, bring it back out. Do a good deed: carry a trash bag to bring out any litter left by the less-enlightened.

Stay on the trail if there is one (except for sanitation).

For sanitation, use outhouses if they are available, or go 200 feet from the trail and 200 feet from any water source.

A note on cellular phones: A phone carried “to call for rescue” is no substitute for preparation and common sense. Service is unlikely in the wilderness in any event. If you simply cannot leave your phone at home, please put it in the bottom of your pack and keep it turned off. A great benefit of wilderness travel comes from solitude, self-reliance, and isolation from the “clutter” of the city world; use of a telephone robs you and everyone else of this benefit.

## **Parking Passes for your Car**

The Northwest Forest Pass is the most-commonly-used parking permit. In the absence of needed public funding, it helps to maintain the trailheads, trails, and forests that we use. This pass is good for parking a vehicle at trailheads in National Forests (not National or State Parks!) Cost is \$5.00 for a one-day pass and \$30.00 for a one-year unlimited pass. Purchase the Northwest Forest Pass through The Mountaineers bookstore, at most outdoor-gear shops and many other stores, and at ranger stations. It is a good idea to purchase the pass in advance of your hike (not on the day of your trip). The one-day pass is undated; you can purchase it in advance and write in the date when you use it.

Northwest Forest Passes also can be earned by doing volunteer trail maintenance. One volunteer day earns a one-day pass; two one-day passes can be exchanged for one annual pass.

The annual National Parks Pass is good for entry into national parks.

## **Volunteer Trail Maintenance**

We encourage all hikers to participate in trail maintenance projects; we use the trails, so we need to assist in maintaining them. Washington Trails Association ([wta.org](http://wta.org); 206/625-1367) sponsors many work parties; so do the Mountaineers. No previous experience is required. Cookies, soft drinks, hard hats and tools are provided. National Trails Day, a good day to volunteer, is in early June each year. Check websites or contact the Mountaineers or WTA for dates and to sign up for a work party.

## **Trail Reports**

The Washington Trails Association web site ([wta.org](http://wta.org)) has thousands of “trip reports” you can use to check on conditions such as snow, fallen trees, and road damage affecting your favorite trails. You can also call the ranger station for the area you’re planning to visit. Telephone numbers are usually listed in trail guidebooks such as the “100 Hikes” series.

# THE MOUNTAINEERS

## HIKING SEMINAR

### **About the Club**

The Mountaineers is a nonprofit organization founded in 1906 and dedicated to the responsible enjoyment and protection of natural areas. The club has branches in Seattle, Bellingham, Everett, Cascade Foothills, Tacoma, Olympia, and the Kitsap Peninsula.

When you join The Mountaineers, every window and door to adventure and challenge is there for you to open – from river valleys to alpine peaks. In addition to our activities and courses, you can enjoy other benefits, like check-out privileges from our extensive library collection, discounts in our bookstore, and reduced rates at our lodges.

### **Joining the Club**

You do not need to have previous experience with the outdoors to join the club. Many people join The Mountaineers to get started with hiking, backpacking, climbing, or another new interest. New members who already have strong outdoor skills will find themselves in good company.

The club welcomes new members of any gender, age, race, ethnic background, religion, sexual orientation, or political persuasion. Persons under the age of 18 must have a parent's permission to join.

You can join the Mountaineers easily online at [www.mountaineers.org](http://www.mountaineers.org). If you prefer, you may send a written membership application and waiver, as well as an initiation fee and the annual dues, to club headquarters in Seattle:

**The Mountaineers**  
7700 Sand Point Way NE  
Seattle, WA 98115  
Member Services: (206) 521-6001  
Fax: (206) 523-6763

You can also join in person by coming to the Seattle headquarters during regular hours (usually Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Member Services is closed from 3:00 to 4:00 on Wednesdays).

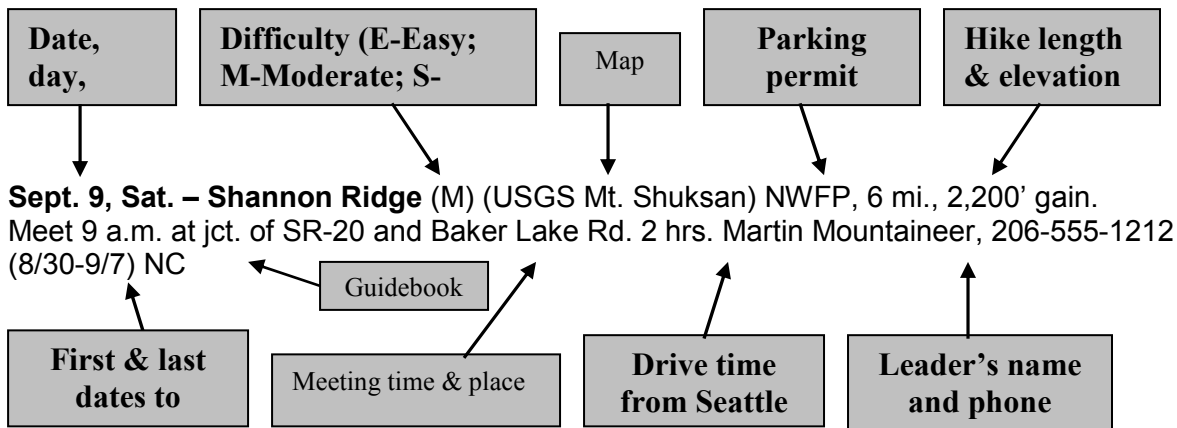
The initiation fee is a one-time charge. If you have joined in the past and allowed your membership to lapse, you can rejoin without penalty – just pay the regular annual dues.

### **Guest Participation**

If you are considering joining but would like to sample our offerings first, you can sign up for two of our non-technical activities per year as a guest of the club. Non-technical activities include hiking activities. A Release and Indemnity Agreement (also available at [www.mountaineers.org](http://www.mountaineers.org)) must be signed and filed with club headquarters prior to registering for any activities. This can be done online at [www.mountaineers.org](http://www.mountaineers.org).

## Choosing a Hike

Mountaineers activities are listed online on the club's Web site at [www.mountaineers.org](http://www.mountaineers.org) or in the Go Guide, a newsletter published each month and mailed to all club members. Each branch lists its own activities for administrative purposes, but you may select any hike regardless of your branch affiliation. Hikes are listed under Hiking. A typical listing in the Go Guide looks like this:



Online hike listings have a slightly different format, but the information listed is the same.

The difficulty rating of the hike is important. Hikes are rated based on the round-trip mileage (how far), elevation gain (how steep), and subjective or seasonal trail conditions (how rough).

- (E) Easy: Up to 8 miles round-trip, up to 1200' elevation gain
- (M) Moderate: Up to 12 miles round-trip, 1200'-2500' gain
- (S) Strenuous: Up to 14 miles round-trip, 2500'-3500' gain
- (VS) Very Strenuous: Over 14 miles round-trip and/or more than 3500' gain

Novice hikers, even persons who are already in good physical shape, should probably choose an E-rated hike (typically under eight miles and less than 1,200 feet of elevation gain) for their first outing. For a new hiker, an Easy hike will be challenging and rewarding without being overwhelming. Most people find that their strength and stamina improve quickly, so that after a few Easy hikes, they are ready to move to the Moderate level and higher.

## Signing Up for a Hike

You must register for a Mountaineers hike in advance. You can do this online. In the sample listing above, registration is open from August 30 through September 7. A hiking group is limited to twelve participants (the leader plus eleven others). If the hike in which you are interested is full, you can be placed on a waiting list.

If you have questions, you may contact the leader listed for the hike. Most leaders will list an e-mail address in addition to a phone number. Please be considerate and call before 9:00 p.m.

## **Carpooling**

Carpooling is facilitated for Seattle hikes by the clubhouse. At your request, the clubhouse will try to provide contact information for someone in your area who is also registered for your hike. It is up to you to make the carpooling arrangements. For hikes listed by other branches, the hike leader can facilitate carpooling in the same way.

It is Mountaineers policy that each carpool rider pay the driver 15 cents per mile (round-trip).

## **Going on a Hike**

After registering and making any carpooling arrangements (or if you've picked a hike for yourself), prepare for your hike by packing the Ten Essentials. These are listed at [www.mountaineers.org](http://www.mountaineers.org). If you will be parking your car at the trailhead, be sure to have any necessary vehicle parking permit, such as the Northwest Forest Pass, which is required at many trailhead parking areas. The cost of the pass supports trail maintenance. You can purchase a one-day (\$5.00) or annual (\$30.00) Northwest Forest Pass at the Mountaineers bookstore in club headquarters, at ranger stations, and at many outdoor-gear shops; you should purchase the pass before the day of the hike. You can also purchase an America the Beautiful National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass combined annual pass for \$80.00 online at [http://www.nps.gov/fees\\_passes.htm](http://www.nps.gov/fees_passes.htm).

Your hiking group may meet at an intermediate location, such as a Park & Ride lot, and then proceed to the trail itself. The morning of your hike, give yourself plenty of time to arrive at the meeting spot. The group will wait 15 minutes for late arrivals. If you show up after that time, you could be left behind.

## **Cancellations**

If you register but later find that you cannot participate in a trip, or want to be taken off a waiting list, you must cancel by the Thursday before weekend trips or two days before midweek trips. You can cancel the same way you registered. If you must cancel closer to the day of the hike, it is essential that you call the leader, as well as your driver or riders if carpooling. If you have not cancelled, and do not show up at the designated meeting spot, you are considered a "no-show" and may become subject to denial of various privileges. Riders who do not cancel with their driver will still owe the carpooling fee to the driver.

Whether you are going on a club outing or choosing a trip for yourself, have fun on your hike! Washington State has some of the most beautiful natural areas in the world, and in amazing variety: ocean beaches, deep forests, alpine lakes and meadows, towering peaks, and arid deserts. A lifetime's worth of hiking is within a few hours' drive of your home.

You will also meet many great people on Mountaineers outings. Take the time to get to know them; you'll be well rewarded. And, for those who work up an appetite, an optional after-hike restaurant stop is typically part of the day.

**SEE YOU ON THE TRAIL!**