

APPENDIX 5

OUTDOORS

Outdoor activities are an important part of Cub Scouting. We all learn to appreciate and care for the beautiful environment all around us as we hike, explore, and investigate the world. The Cub Scouting outdoor program is a foundation for the outdoor adventure Cub Scouts will continue to experience when they move on to a troop.

All Cub Scouts should have opportunities to enjoy the outdoors. Remember: You don't need to go far to share the wonder of nature with children. There are many opportunities for everyone to have outdoor experiences—even just in the neighborhood. Also remember that Cub Scouts with special needs can often enjoy outdoor activities with only minor modifications to the activity.

WHAT TO DO IF LOST

Have everyone learn the following suggestions using the visual cue of a stop sign.

S – T – O – P!

S = Stay calm. Stay where you are. Sit down, take a drink of water, and eat a little trail food. Stay where you can be seen. Don't hide! You are not in trouble.

T = Think. Think about how you can help your leaders or others find you. Stay where you are, and be sure people can see you. Make yourself an easy target to find. Remember, people will come to look for you. Stay put, be seen, and help them find you!

O = Observe. Listen for the rest of your group or people looking for you. Blow your whistle three times in a row, then listen. Three of any kind of signal means you need help, and everyone will try to help you.

P = Plan. Stay calm, stay put! Plan how to stay warm and dry until help arrives. Don't worry, you will be found.



HEALTH AND SAFETY

The health and safety of everyone in the den must be one of the first considerations in planning any outdoor activity. Try to anticipate and eliminate hazards—or at least warn against them. Most accidents can be prevented. The *Guide to Safe Scouting* should be the primary resource for safety policies and procedures, and the most current version is available online at www.scouting.org. Additionally, see the *Cub Scout Leader Book* for outdoor safety rules, and see Safe Swim Defense (swimming) and Safety Afloat (boating) information at www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/gss/gss02.

Also, follow these tips when planning and conducting an outdoor activity:

- Always get permission from parents or guardians for activities that are held away from the regular den and pack meeting places. Parents and guardians of the Cub Scouts in your den should always be invited and feel welcomed to participate.
- Be sure to have enough adult leaders for the activity planned. Always follow the policy of two-deep leadership.
- Check out the site before the activity. Find out about gathering places, restroom facilities, and safe drinking water. Look for hazards such as poison ivy.
- If applicable, get permission from the owner to use the property.

- Use the buddy system to prevent anyone from getting lost. Coach everyone who is attending in advance about what they should do if they get lost. (Refer to the lesson at the beginning of Appendix 5.)
- Carry a first-aid kit and know how to use it. Know basic emergency first-aid procedures.
- Have adequate and safe transportation.
- When leaving the site, take everything you brought with you. Leave the site in its natural condition.

FUN ON HIKES

When did you last watch a colony of ants scurrying about as they worked hard? Or investigate a hollow tree? Or travel an unbeaten path? These are just a few things that you can do when you go hiking. The fun lies in observing everything around you as you hike, and while observing, talking about what you see. Enjoy nature—but *don't remove growing things from their natural habitats.*

You can hike in your own neighborhood or a nearby park, or you can travel to an out-of-the-way location. Or go to a nature center. Many nature centers include wheelchair-accessible trails so all can participate.

There are many types of nature hikes, some of which include nature activities. Several nature hikes are described here. See the *Cub Scout Leader Book* for other types of hikes and for hiking safety rules.

Note: Always use the buddy system on hikes for safety and to prevent anyone from getting lost. Buddies should remain together at all times.



TYPES OF HIKES

◆ SEASONS HIKE

Materials: Pencils and crayons, notebooks for data collection, field guides

Choose a hiking area that you can hike in each season of the year. Each season, Cub Scouts make a list of things they see along the way. Have them draw a particular area along the trail and how it changes. Which things remained the same each season? How many things changed as the seasons changed? (It's a good idea to collect and keep these notebooks between seasons.)

◆ WEB OF LIFE

Materials: Pencil, paper

Animals, plants, and habitats rely on each other and form a "web of life." The soil nourishes the tree; the tree shelters the animal; the animal dies and adds nutrients to the soil. Everything in nature is affected by the many other things living around it.

Have the Scouts in your den draw 12 small circles on paper where the numbers would be on a clock face. In each circle they draw or write the name of something they see along the hike. Encourage them to include different types of things: rocks, animals, plants, river, etc. Then have them draw a line from one circle to everything it affects or is affected by it. Continue doing the same with the other 11 circles. They have now created a web of life for this area. Was there anything that didn't have lines and didn't affect anything else? What would happen if you covered up one of the circles and it was gone from your area? How many other things would its absence affect?

◆ TRACKS AND SIGNS

Be a keen observer whenever you are out in nature. Look for all types of signs of animals and birds. Identify bird and animal tracks. Make plaster casts of animal tracks.

◆ MICRO HIKE

Materials: Strings 3 to 5 feet long, magnifying glasses (if available)

Lay strings out along an area to study, and provide everyone with a magnifying glass if possible to add to the experience. The Scouts inch along the string trail on their stomachs, with their eyes no higher than 1 foot off the ground. They may see such wonders as grass blades bent by dewdrops, colorful beetles sprinkled with flower pollen, powerful-jawed eight-eyed spiders, and more. Ask questions to stimulate their imaginations: "What kind of world are you traveling through?" "Who are your nearest neighbors?" "Are they friendly?" "Do they work hard?" "What would life be like for that beetle—how would it spend its day?"

◆ NATURE SAFARI

Materials: Field guides, pencils, paper

This hike will help everyone learn to identify animals. See how many different species each Cub Scout can see on this local safari.

◆ SENSE OF TOUCH

This hike will illustrate the many textures of nature. Make sure that Cub Scouts are instructed to examine the objects they find, not take them. Examples of what the Scouts may look for:

- The hairiest leaf
- The roughest rock
- Something dry
- The softest leaf
- The roughest twig
- Something warm
- The smoothest rock
- Something cool
- Something bumpy

Ask questions such as: “What did you find that was dry? Why was it dry?” “How might it be different tonight? Next summer/winter?” “How did it get there?” “Does it belong there?” “Did people have anything to do with it being there?” “Has it always been the way it is?”

◆ NATURE BABIES

Look for “nature babies”—birds, ferns, leaves, snails, insects, etc. How are the babies protected? How are they fed? Do not touch baby birds or animals. Look only from a little distance. Most babies that seem abandoned by their parents really aren’t. Mother or father may be nearby.

◆ NATURE NOISES

This is a great way to help everyone on the hike notice and enjoy the sounds around them. Stop along the hike at different points. Have everyone sit or stand very still and listen. As they hear a new sound, they raise their hand as a signal. They can “collect” different sounds on their fingers, holding up a finger for each sound they hear. Can you count to 10 in between sounds? Listen for birds, animals, wind in the trees, falling leaves, or rushing water.

◆ COUNT THE COLORS

Materials: Crayons, paper, pencils

Each Cub Scout selects five crayons and colors an area on a piece of paper with each crayon. Take the paper on a hike and write each object found that matches the colors. Write them under the colored area on the paper. Ask how many colors they can see without moving from where they are.

◆ INCH HIKE

Materials: Small rulers

Find as many objects as possible that are 1-inch high, long, etc. Use the small rulers to measure. This helps Cub Scouts notice the small things that they might otherwise overlook.

◆ A-B-C HIKE

Materials: Pencils, paper

Write the letters of the alphabet vertically on a piece of paper. On the hike, find an object, sound, or smell in nature for each letter and write it down.

◆ STRING-ALONG HIKE

Materials: 36-inch piece of string

Take the piece of string on your hike. Every now and then, place the string in a circle on the ground. See how many different things you can find enclosed in the circle. Then stretch the string in a line and see how many different things touch it.

◆ SURPRISE BREAKFAST HIKE

Materials: Breakfast fixings for everyone

Make arrangements ahead of time with the parents of your Cub Scouts to go on a “surprise” hike. Everyone meets early in the morning and heads out on an early morning hike, cooking (or providing) breakfast outdoors.

◆ NIGHT HIKE

In areas where it is safe to walk at night, try a hike after dark. This activity works best during a bright full moon. See how different things look, smell, and sound at night. Don't use flashlights, as they will lessen your ability to see and reduce your awareness of what is happening in the dark. Carry flashlights for emergency use only.

◆ SILENT HIKE

This hike can be difficult to accomplish but powerful in helping everyone on the hike appreciate the world around them. Have the Cub Scouts in your den sit alone and a few feet apart for a short period of time. On the den leader's signal, the group begins to move along the trail tapping shoulders and pointing to share the sights and sounds of the hike. No talking!

HIKING GAMES

While out on a hike you might want to stop to have a rest, enjoy lunch, or play a game. Here are some ideas for activities while taking a hiking break.

◆ KNOW YOUR ROCK

Materials: Tape, pencil, rocks found on your hike

Each Cub Scout finds a fist-sized rock, remembering where they found it so they can return it after the game. All sit in a circle with eyes shut, holding their rocks. Tell them to “get to know” their rocks by the feel, texture, smell, etc. After a few minutes, collect the rocks, mix them up, and redistribute them. The Cub Scouts pass the rocks around the circle and try to identify their own rock with their eyes still shut. To help prevent any disagreements, affix a small piece of tape to each rock with the owner's initials. Be sure to remember to remove the tape when you leave the rock behind!

◆ KNOW YOUR LEAF

Materials: Leaves

This is similar to Know Your Rock. With eyes open, Cub Scouts each get to know a leaf by its shape, size, color, veins, etc. Then put all leaves in a pile and let Scouts try to find their own leaves one at a time, explaining to the group how they did it and what they looked for.

◆ GRAB BAG

Materials: 15 items from nature, 15 small paper bags

Collect 15 items from nature, such as pinecones, nuts, shells, etc., and place each in a small paper bag. Pass the bags around the circle of Cub Scouts and let them try to identify the object by feeling the outside of the bag.

◆ NATURE PHOTOGRAPHER

For this activity, Cub Scouts work in buddy pairs, with one acting as the “camera” and the other as the “photographer.” The photographer guides the camera, who has their eyes closed, to an interesting nature picture. When the photographer is ready to “take the picture,” they tap on the camera’s shoulder to signal them to open and close their eyes. The photographer can “adjust” a camera to take tight- and wide-angle shots and to use interesting angles and perspectives. The camera and photographer should talk as little as possible to enjoy this experience. The photographer should also remember to guide the camera safely. After several pictures have been taken, it will be time for the photographer and camera to switch positions and begin again.

◆ NATURE KIM’S GAME

Materials: Nature items, towel or jacket

Gather nature items such as pinecones, leaves, twigs, rocks, etc. Place them in an area for the Cub Scouts to study. After a few minutes, cover the items with the towel or jacket and have them try to remember all the now-hidden items.

◆ CAMOUFLAGE TRAIL

Materials: 15 or 20 human-made objects

This game can open doors to a discussion about how an animal’s color can help protect it. Along an area of trail, place 15 or 20 human-made objects. Some objects should stand out and be bright colors. Some should blend in with the surroundings. Keep the number of objects a secret. Cub Scouts walk along the section of trail, spotting as many objects as they can. When they reach the end, they whisper to you how many they saw. Invite them to go back and see whether they can spot any that they missed. Be sure to track the objects you have placed and collect them all when the game is finished.

◆ NATURE SCAVENGER HUNT

This hunt is intended to test everyone’s knowledge of nature in an exciting competition. It is run like any scavenger hunt—each group gets a list of objects from nature with the goal of finding as many as possible within a given time limit (10 to 20 minutes). Set boundaries for the hunt, and list 20 to 50 objects from nature that can be found within the area. Objects should be common enough that a Cub Scout can identify most of them. Make sure that they are marking these items off their list and leaving the items themselves undisturbed. Your list will reflect nature items that can be found in your locale, but here are some common suggestions:

Anthill	Oak leaf	Maple leaf
Dandelion	Insect	Cocoon
Spider web	Animal track	Bird’s nest
Needle from an evergreen	Barrel cactus	Acorn

BSA OUTDOOR ETHICS PROGRAM

Wilderness conservation depends on understanding and respect for wild places. It also supports the idea that that we do not inherit wildlands from previous generations, but instead we are borrowing these places from our children. What we use now—and what we use up now—will be compromised for future generations.

The Boy Scouts of America has long had a commitment to outdoor ethics and conservation practices.

The Cub Scouting program includes outdoor stewardship and care for the environment as demonstrated through the BSA's Outdoor Code and the Leave No Trace Principles for Kids. These guiding principles serve as part of an overall program supporting ethical decision making in the outdoors and are an appropriate place to start with Cub Scouts.

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* PRINCIPLES FOR KIDS

Know Before You Go

Choose the Right Path

Trash Your Trash

Leave What You Find

Be Careful With Fire

Respect Wildlife

Be Kind to Other Visitors



**The member-driven Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics teaches people how to enjoy the outdoors responsibly. This copyrighted information has been reprinted with permission from the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics: www.LNT.org.*



BSA resources for outdoor ethics are available here:
www.scouting.org/outdoorprogram/outdoorethics.aspx