

## Short and Snappy – Introduction to Leave No Trace



### Objective

To introduce the seven principles of Leave No Trace, and urge participants to use these principles whenever in the outdoors.

### Length

25 minutes

### Materials Needed

Pencils and paper

### Information to Share (spend 10 minutes on this section)

Leave No Trace is a movement for protecting the natural environment by teaching people how to enjoy the outdoors responsibly. It involves seven principles, which are explained below:

1. Know Before You Go –
  - a. Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you will visit.
  - b. Travel in small groups. If you have a larger group, split into smaller parties of 4-6.
  - c. Use a map and compass to eliminate the need for cairns or ribbons.
  - d. Use reusable containers for your food.
  - e. Prepare for all types of weather and emergencies.
2. Stick to Trails and Camp Overnight Right –
  - a. Stay on the designated trails, walk in the middle of the path, and do not cut off switchbacks.
  - b. Do not alter your campsite; choose an established, legal campsite that will not be damaged by your stay.
  - c. Camp at least 200 ft. from lakes and streams to avoid polluting the water.
3. Trash Your Trash and Pick Up Poop –
  - a. Pack your waste out – including food waste and pet waste. If your campsite has an established waste receptacle and pickup policy, follow the policy.
  - b. Wash dishes 200 ft. away from water sources, using small amounts of biodegradable soap.
  - c. Use a site with an established toilet. When not available, deposit human waste in a 6-8in deep hole, located at least 200 ft. from water sources. Cover and disguise your hole when finished.
4. Leave It as You Find It –
  - a. Do not damage historical structures; do not remove artifacts; do not remove leaves, rocks, or plants; do not introduce non-native species; and do not build structures or dig trenches.
  - b. Do not carve or write on trees or rocks.
5. Be Careful with Fire –
  - a. Use an established, legal, designated fire ring when making a campfire and keep fires small.
  - b. Burn all wood and coals to ash, then put out your fire completely and scatter the cool ashes.

## Information to Share (continued)

7. Keep Wildlife Wild –
  - a. Never approach wildlife! Never feed or leave food for wildlife.
  - b. Store your food and trash securely. If you have a pet with you, keep your pet under control at all times.
8. Share Out Trails and Manage Your Pet –
  - a. Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.
  - b. If you have a pet with you, keep it in control and clean up after it.
  - c. Yield the trail to others; take breaks on durable surfaces only; and keep your noise level to a minimum.

## Activity (spend 15 minutes on this section)

### Leave No Trace Ethics Game:

1. Tell participants that two offensive or inappropriate outdoor practices will be read aloud. One will represent the right side of the room, and one the left.
2. When read aloud, ask the participants to move to the side of the room that represents the **more** offensive or disturbing option.
3. Ask each group formed to share why that is more disturbing to them than the other.

### Disturbing/Offensive Outdoor Actions:

- (R) Someone is playing loud music in the campsite next to you.
- (L) Someone drove a 4-wheeler through your camp, paying no attention to you.
- (R) You found litter left behind in your campsite.
- (L) You found litter on or beside the trail.
- (R) Someone is hiking with a small radio playing music.
- (L) Someone refused to move to the side of the trail to let you by and you had to completely move off the trail on a steep slope.
- (R) There is horse poop all over the trail, but you are expected to clean up your dog's poop.
- (L) Someone has left their dog poop, even though it is off of the trail.
- (R) Someone is hiking with their dog off-leash, but there are no signs saying that off-leash is ok.
- (L) Although this area does allow dirt bikes on the trail, a man just sped past you on one and you had to jump out of the way to not get hit.
- (R) Even though there are plenty of campsites available, a group just showed up and picked the campsite closest to yours. They are speaking loudly.
- (L) Your campsite is next to the river, where fishing is allowed. A person walks right into your campsite and begins fishing from the bank next to your tent.
- (R) You are hiking and you come across a poorly constructed fire ring, where the coals are still smoking.
- (L) You are hiking and you see banana and orange peels tossed on the ground next to the trail.

### Follow up questions:

Each of you discussed why these actions are so offensive/wrong/inappropriate in the outdoors.

1. Which Leave No Trace Rules are being broken by the examples?
2. Have you ever been guilty of any of these situations before?
3. Have you personally come across others in nature doing these things before?
4. What did you do? Was it a good reaction?
5. What are some possible solutions? (Come up with specific solutions for the situations discussed earlier in the game.)