

Trail Blazer Try-It

PURPOSE:

To familiarize girls to correct hiking gear and skills by exploring cool trails, courses and games. Girls must participate in at least one hike or trail course.

Complete four of the following requirements.

1. Finding Your Directions

Learn how to use an orienteering compass. Practice these compass skills:

- Learn the basic points of the compass and how to hold it level. What happens if you don't hold it level? Would that be important?
- Start by facing north. Try turning left or right. Which way are you facing now? Try it again. Try playing Simon Says with your friends and calling compass directions.

2. Mind Your Map

Explore a map of a park, road, or topographic map by trying an activity below.

- On a local map, find your house and a route to your school or park. Can you find symbols for buildings, roads and bridges? What other symbols can you find?
- Try this trick for topographic maps. Take a fist-sized rock that's pyramid shaped and dunk it in water partially, each time marking the water line, until completely submerged. This can show the girls how the rings on a topographic map mirror the rings on the three dimensional landscape.

3. Keep In Step

For orienteering and some letterbox courses, you need to count your steps to get an accurate measurement for following maps and directions. For this activity you will need masking tape (or other marker) and a measuring tape.

Use measuring tape to mark 200 feet. Place tape down at starting mark and finishing mark. Walk from start to finish twice, counting your steps on your right leg only each time. Now have a leader or adult help find your average steps taken and divide 400 feet by the number of steps you counted. This is how far you walk taking a left and right step.

4. Hiking Manners

Many animals and insects depend on fragile plants. Learn about Leave No Trace practices through the internet or local park rangers. (See below for Leave No Trace practices.)

5. Hurt Hiker

Have a professional nurse or a certified first-aider show you what to do for the following:

- Bee sting
- Twisted ankle
- Blister
- Sprained/injured arm

How important is it to always hike with a buddy?

6. Treasure Course

Research and participate in one of the courses below. (Many local groups including Girl Scouts 11-17 may offer a course for you to try, or, with the help of an adult, check www.geocaching.com for courses near you.

- String course
- Letterbox course
- Orienteering course
- Geocaching course

7. Making Trails Beautiful

Take a hike at a local park. Can you think of a way to improve the current trail? Talk to the caretaker. You may be able to put in a letterbox course, clean the trail, or harvest seeds for the next year.

8. Walk and Wear

Draw a picture of what you would wear on a hike. Discuss which outfits are appropriate. Try different seasons. What else could you bring on a hike?

This Try-It was developed by Dakota Service Unit's Day Camp Committee.