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Keine Stimmen

Hiking / Trekking



Youth group camps often include hikes lasting one or more days. This article explains how to plan and carry out such a hike.

General

The leader in charge of a hike bears a great deal of responsibility. If possible, inexperienced leaders should not take on this task alone but should plan their first hike together with an experienced leader.

It is often advisable not to simply go on a straight-forward hike but to incorporate a specific type of trekking . This can significantly boost participants' motivation under certain circumstances.

Procedure

* Preliminary Planning
* Route Planning
* Reconnaissance
* Execution
* Evaluation

Preliminary Assessments

First, you should get an overview of the situation. You need to determine the type of terrain you'll be traversing (no exact route yet), as well as the ages of the participants and the time frame for the tour.

Once this is done, you should ask yourself a few fundamental questions:

- Do I have sufficient skills to plan and lead a hike? Do I need assistance?
- Does the program meet the participants' needs? Is it age-appropriate?
- Under what conditions (regarding the group and the environment) can I lead this hike? How likely is it that these conditions will (or will not) be met?
- What will I do if the conditions aren't met (e.g., bad weather)? Are there alternative routes?

Route Planning

Once the preliminary research is complete, you can proceed with route planning. Generally, this requires maps and the creation of a hiking schedule that includes estimated walking times. Information on this can be found in the relevant articles.

If you need assistance, you can turn to local contacts, guides, or trip reports. The latter can also be found online, for example, on hikr.org.

Reconnaissance

Especially in unfamiliar areas, hikes should be scouted out beforehand. This should be done under the same conditions as during the camp (with gear, etc.).

The following questions should be answered during the reconnaissance:

- Can the trails be traversed as planned?
- Is the estimated walking time accurate?
- Is cell phone reception guaranteed at all times?
- Where can water bottles be refilled?
- For multi-day hikes: Where and how can you spend the night (e.g., by camping)?
- Where and how could the hike be cut short in case of bad conditions?

After the reconnaissance hike, the information gathered should be processed as quickly as possible (so that nothing is forgotten). Areas without cell phone reception and water sources should be marked on the map. The walking time table and route selection may need to be adjusted if necessary.

Planning

Conditions

Before the hike, check the weather forecast several times and, based on that and your own observations, decide whether or not to go on the hike.

Updating the WalkingTimeChart

On the**walking**time**chart**, actual times should be continuously compared with target times. If you fall significantly behind the target times, you'll notice this immediately and can shorten the route or take other measures.

Pacing and Speed

During the hike, short stops (applying sunscreen, taking photos, etc.) should be avoided as much as possible. The goal is for the group to move at as steady a pace as possible and for everyone to adhere to the scheduled break times. Too many interruptions can negatively impact endurance performance. When hiking with children, it's a good idea to take a 5- to 10-minute break after every 50 minutes of walking. The pace should be set by the slowest hiker**. The** leader's skill lies in identifying children who are struggling early on and, for example, lightening the load in their backpacks.

Mental Aspects

For children, their mindset plays the key role in determining whether they can keep up during a hike and have fun—or not. You should inform the children about the route before a hike and also keep them updated on the upcoming terrain during the hike (e.g., uphill sections).
You can also incorporate other ways to break up the hike; for example, many participants enjoy

shortening a section of the trail (in the forest) by taking a shortcut across country.

Evaluation

A hike should always be evaluated. Group-specific findings (walking speeds, etc.) should be recorded so that the leader planning the next hike can refer to them. Especially when the group changes only slightly (e.g., from a PFILA to a SOLA), the group's performance typically changes only marginally.

Mountain Trekking Safety Activity

For hikes in challenging alpine terrain, at least one leader should have completed the J+S Mountain Trekking Safety Module (mandatory in J+S camps).

The following activities are considered mountain trekking safety activities:

- Bivouacking above the tree line
- Leaving the trails in alpine terrain
- Routes with a risk of falling or rockfall
- Generally challenging mountain tours

Note: Mountain tours that cross glaciers may only be undertaken with a mountain guide or a J+S mountaineering instructor.
Hikes that require alpine techniques (climbing, rappelling) to overcome obstacles may only be undertaken as part of the J+S sport category "Mountaineering—Ski Touring."

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Weitere Informationen

Categories
Technology and outdoor activities

Tags
Hiking

Age
8–12 years

Number of participants
1–20
20–30
30 – 100

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Duration
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