

Hiking Safety

Each year, thousands of people discover that walking and hiking on California State Parks trails is safe and healthy fun, if you follow a few tips:

- Hike with a friend or family member. It is fun, and you can encourage one another to meet your fitness goals.
- Take plenty of drinking water. Leave stream, river and lake water for the park wildlife. Although it looks clean it could make you ill.
- Let someone know where you are going and when you plan on returning. Take a cellular phone for emergencies.
- Don't walk off-trail. Also, cutting across switchbacks erodes the hillside and eventually destroys the trail. It increases your chance of suffering an injury or getting lost.

- Wildlife lives in all of our state parks. Although rare, black bears, mountain lions and rattlesnakes may be seen. Remember to keep your distance and back away slowly. Report your sightings to a State Park Ranger.
- Poison oak is a common plant throughout much of California. Learn to identify its shiny, three-leaf pattern and avoid touching it. If you do, wash immediately with water and mild soap.

Keep Your State Parks Beautiful

- Dogs frighten wildlife and may destroy sensitive habitat. Do not take your dog on trails.
- Litter can contaminate waterways, injure people and wildlife, and it looks ugly. Many parks offer kids the chance to be Litter Getters and earn rewards for helping the environment.
- Please do not pick wildflowers in state parks. Allowing flowers to finish their reproductive cycles will ensure there will be more on your next visit.
- Don't feed the animals! Feeding wildlife makes them dependent upon people for their food.

Make Hiking a Habit

Now that you know how enjoyable walking can be, keep it up! Make time in your schedule to walk at least three times a week.

Physicians recommend 60 minutes of physical activity everyday for school-age children.

Our Mission

The mission of the California Department of Parks and Recreation is to provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.



California State Parks does not discriminate against individuals with disabilities. Prior to arrival, visitors with disabilities who need assistance should contact the park at the phone number below. To receive this publication in an alternate format, write to the Communications Office at the following address.

CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

P. O. Box 942896

Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

For information call: (800) 777-0369

(916) 653-6995, outside the U.S.

711, TTY relay service



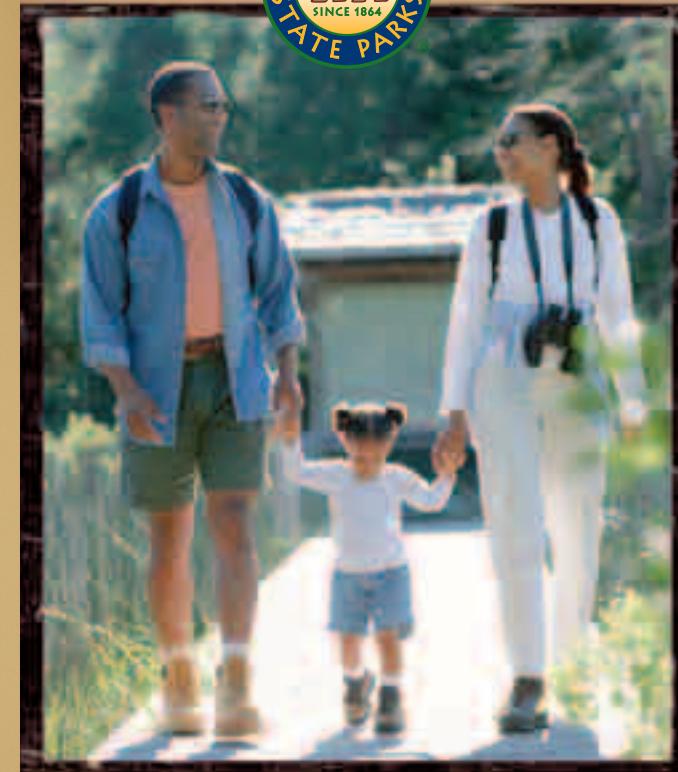
California State Parks Take a Hike!

**Is a program of California State Parks
and is endorsed by the Governor's
Council on Physical Fitness and Sports.**

For information on specific hiking trails in California State Parks visit www.parks.ca.gov/takeahike.

Take A Hike! In California's State Parks

Walk the Trails • Get Fit • Experience the Great Outdoors



Where will the hundreds of California State Parks take you today?

Discover the many states of California.

parks.ca.gov

WALKING is the most popular exercise and recreational activity in California. It's a low-impact exercise that will help you ease into a greater level of fitness. It also helps to reduce the risk of heart attack, stroke, and Type 2 diabetes, while aiding the management of blood pressure, weight, and stress levels.

HIKING in your state parks is more than just a walk in the park. It's an exciting and affordable way to improve your health, and enjoy the magnificent beauty of California.



Hat A hat protects your face and head from sun, shields your eyes from glare, and helps you stay warm when it's cold.

Packs Use a backpack to hold your water bottle, lunch, trail maps, insect repellent, and a first aid kit. For shorter hikes, try a hip pack that can hold the bare essentials.

Skin Protection Use sunscreen, even on cloudy days. Insect repellent is essential in many areas for protection against mosquitoes and other insects.



FAMILY hikes are great! No TV, no telephones, no computer or video games. Hikes are a perfect time for families to communicate.

TEACH children about the joys of hiking and encourage their participation in planning the hike.

EXPERIENCE the wonders of nature and leave the city behind. Ask your State Park Ranger for a schedule of guided hikes.

Let's Take a Hike!

Where to Start?

Many State Park trails have been rated for distance or degree of difficulty to help you to identify one for your fitness and experience level. Trail maps may be available at the trail head, visitors' center, or ranger station, or can be printed out at www.parks.ca.gov/takeahike.

What to Wear?

There's no need to buy anything; you can get started with things in your own closet. Some important pieces of gear to bring are:

Shoes Sturdy walking shoes or athletic shoes are fine for most Beginner and Moderate trails. Hiking boots or trail shoes with thicker soles and good ankle support will make travel safer and easier.

Clothing Wear loose-fitting, comfortable clothing. It is best to dress in several light layers so that you can shed or add clothing items.

Trail Ratings



Beginner

1-2 miles with easy terrain and little elevation gain.



Moderate

2-4 miles with moderate terrain and some elevation change.



Difficult

4 or more miles or with varying terrain.

On the Trail

- Start your hike slowly. Allow your muscles to warm-up and become flexible. Increase your pace after five to ten minutes.
- Walk at a pace that allows you to talk easily. If you are too out of breath to speak, you are probably working too hard.
- Pay attention to your body. Stop walking if you feel out of breath, dizzy, nauseated, or have pain.
- Toward the end of your walk, slow your pace to allow your pulse to return to its normal resting rate.
- If you are new to exercise, check with your doctor before starting a program.

EXPERIENCE

the wonders of nature and leave the city behind.

