

Upper Blue Mountains Bushwalking Club: Guidelines for Walkers

Introduction

1. Every person participating in an activity organised by the UBMBC does so at his/her own risk and by participating acknowledges that neither the UBMBC, its office bearers or its activity leaders have accepted any responsibility or liability for any damage to property or for any death or injury suffered.

As a bushwalking club, UBMBC has a duty of care to its members. Bushwalking Australia defines "duty of care" as "What a reasonably prudent person would do to take reasonable care to avoid exposing fellow participants (having regard to their knowledge, age, experience and skill) to unreasonable risks of injury or loss."

We expect that activity leaders and participants will take responsibility for their own welfare and safety in a manner consistent with their knowledge, age, experience and skill. All participants and leaders need to take reasonable care to avoid exposing any person including other participants to unreasonable risk of injury or loss.

2. When participating in club activities, members of UBMBC are covered by insurance policies through Bushwalking NSW and Bushwalking Australia. We have Personal Accident and Public Liability Insurance. <http://www.bushwalkingaustralia.org/insurance/insurance-overview>

3. We follow ethical practices in relation to the conservation of flora, fauna, rock formations and archaeological sites. See <http://www.bushwalkingnsw.org.au/bushwalkers-code/>

Before a Walk

1. The club activity program is emailed to members and can be accessed on the club website ubmbc.org.au. We use the Bushwalking Australia grading guide (details are on our website <http://www.ubmbc.org.au/activities/act-grading.html>) to give walkers an idea of the difficulty. If you are uncertain about your ability to participate in an activity, please discuss with the leader

2. New club members with limited walking experience should attempt a grade 2/3 walk for their first activity . This enables them to become accustomed to the club and allows leaders to assess their ability.

3. Joining a walk. The leader's contact details appear in the program. Members should ask to join the walk. For new walkers the leader will ask questions about fitness, recent walking experience and equipment. The leader is entitled to refuse participation in an activity.

4. Tell someone where you are going and when you expect to return. It is not possible for the walk leader to give an exact return time. There are many reasons why a group maybe overdue, weather conditions, injuries, change of route, vehicle problems may occur. This rarely happens with UBMBC.

5. Meeting Arrangements. Clarify the time and meeting place with the leader. Be on time. If you are delayed contact the leader's mobile. If you have booked in for a walk and are unable to attend please inform the leader. The leader will wait no longer than five minutes if you are late.

6. Your Emergency Contact form, downloaded from the club website (<http://www.ubmbc.org.au/downloads.html>) should be in your first aid kit in your backpack. This form will only be accessed in case of an accident or medical emergency.
7. Advise the leader in advance if you have a medical or physical condition that may affect your performance.
8. Advise the leader if you have skills such as first aid, navigation or knowledge of the area.
9. Make sure that you are fully equipped for the activity. A list of what to take on a walk is on our club website, ubmbc.org.au, at <http://www.ubmbc.org.au/about/faqs.html>
10. First Aid Kit. Members are required to have their own first aid kit in their backpack. This enables first aid kits to be combined in the case of multiple injuries or injuries to several people. If the group is separated or someone is lost it means that everyone has a first aid kit. Suggestions for items in your first aid kit on the club website at <http://www.ubmbc.org.au/about/faqs.html> The UBMBC subsidises first aid training for members.
11. Guests. Visitors may take part in activities subject to the leader's prior approval. Visitors must complete a Temporary Members form which can be downloaded from the club website at <http://www.ubmbc.org.au/downloads.html> . Juniors (under 18) must also be approved by the leader, complete a Temporary Members form and be accompanied by a parent, guardian or grandparent who is responsible for the junior.
12. Advise the leader if you would not like to be photographed during the walk.

During the Walk

1. Please assist the leader by being co-operative and enthusiastic. Follow the leader's instructions and accept the leader's judgement. Our leaders are experienced walkers who are volunteers.
2. Be prepared to car pool with others and to make a contribution for fuel.
3. Treat other group members with respect. UBMBC is a very friendly club where members help and support each other. Be prepared to learn from other members.
4. Advise the leader if you have any concerns. Eg the pace is too fast, you are feeling unwell, you have run out of water.
5. Do not become separated from the group. Call out if gaps get too large. A whistle can be useful.
6. Members are encouraged to carry a map and compass and to become proficient in using them.
7. Leave sufficient distance between yourself and the walker in front of you so that you are not injured by branches or walking poles.
8. Be aware of loose rocks. If a rock is dislodged, call "Rock!" to alert the group.

9. Emergency Procedure. If you have phone coverage, phone 000 (triple zero) Ask for police and be prepared to give map name and grid references for your position. If phone contact is not possible then activate the PLB.

After the Walk

1. Let the leader know that you have completed the activity
2. Thank the leader and offer feedback on the walk.
3. Advise your emergency contact person that you are home.
4. To inhibit the spread of plant diseases and seeds, wash footwear, trousers and other equipment before your next bushwalk.

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