

# Wild Country Walking

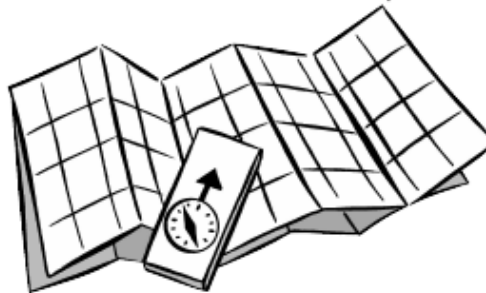
## Steps to safety

If you intend to spend a lot of time out and about in the countryside it helps to get trained.

The Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme, the award in Basic Expedition Leadership (BEL) and the Walking Group Leader (WGL) award are well worth checking out.

Contact your nearest local authority, Education Visits Adviser for details of these schemes.

Plan your route in advance and get to know the area on the map.



Plan how long it will take and have a rough idea of where you might stop for breaks.

Get the weather forecast before you go so that you know what you might expect.

Watch the weather as you walk and be prepared for changes.



Make sure that someone knows where you are and what time to expect you back.

Ring them at the earliest opportunity if you know you are going to be late.

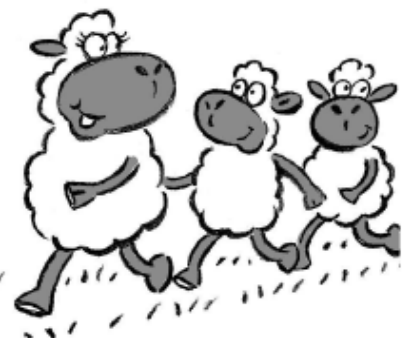


Make sure that the kit you need is in good condition and that you take it with you.

Keeping to paths helps stop footpath damage from spreading. Walking in single file across hay meadows is essential, it's also safer in mist!

On steep slopes, large groups walking in each other's footsteps can add to erosion problems.

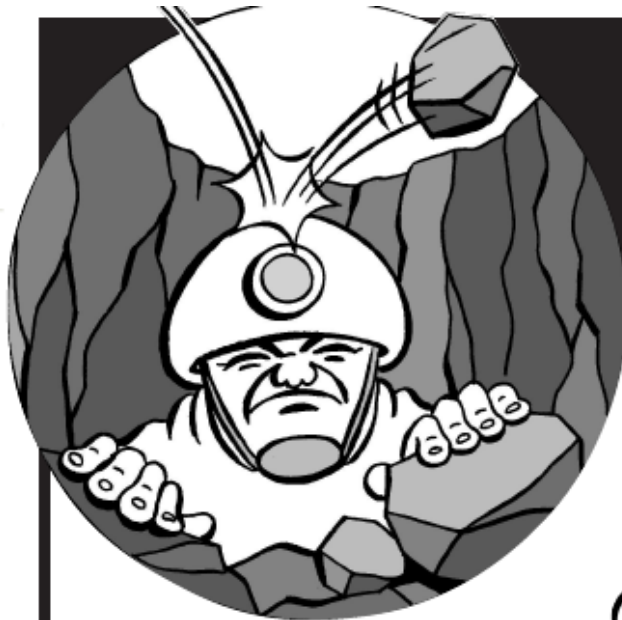
It helps to spread out a little.



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**JANUARY 2012**

Always remember: be safe, make your trip worthwhile and don't forget the reason for going - to enjoy yourself!



Never throw or roll stones, particularly down pot holes or over crags - you have no idea who or what they might hit.

Always stay clear of steep, high edges. The wind may be much stronger than you think.

When out in a group, keep a safe distance from the person in front. They may falter or stop suddenly when you are not prepared.

Take it steady going downhill. Keep the same comfortable pace and stay in control. Accidents can happen much more easily when going down slopes.

Take extra care when it's wet - mud, rocks and short grass can be very slippery.



Always have your hands free while walking. Keep everything in your rucksack or pockets, or comfortably around your waist, for example.

Remember to walk at a steady pace which is comfortable for everyone in your group, not too fast or too slow. Avoid racing off at the start.

Don't forget your Countryside Code (available in a separate leaflet).  
[www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk](http://www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk)



If you do find yourself in serious trouble and you're away from a road, call the police for a rescue team - the ambulance may not be able to reach you.



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