

## MOUNTAIN SKILLS & SAFETY

### Before You Go

Always have a hearty breakfast!

### Planning

Choose a walk which is appropriate to you and your group's experience, fitness, navigation skills and knowledge of the area and for the weather conditions. Consider turning back if someone in your group is tiring or getting cold.

### What to Take

**Carry Food and Drink** - Take ample food and drink. High energy foods such as chocolate and dried fruit are ideal. Always carry water even in cool weather, it's easy to become dehydrated.

A mobile phone and GPS are useful tools but don't rely on your mobile to get you out of trouble - in many areas of mountains there is no signal coverage. Note: GPS is only of use if it is properly set up with the correct map and grid data.

Be aware that in cold conditions batteries can drain in a short time, so phones and GPS may no longer operate.

**Equipment** - Always carry a map and compass - it's vitally important that you know how to use them correctly. O.S. 1:50:000 or 1:25:000 are recommended.

Carry equipment for use in an emergency such as a torch, whistle, first aid kit and emergency shelter. These are inexpensive and readily available from all outdoor shops. The emergency signal is six blasts on the whistle or six flashes with the torch in a minute. Stop for one minute then repeat.

**Footwear** - Your footwear should provide good ankle support and have a firm treaded sole with a secure grip. Hillwalking boots/shoes are strongly recommended and possibly crampons in the winter.

**Clothing** - Should be warm, wind-proof and water-resistant layers work best. This should include gloves, hats and a spare set, including an extra fleece just in case. Remember it will get colder and windier the higher you climb.

## In case of an accident

### Essential information to have at hand

- The location of the incident (ideally a six figure grid reference and a named feature) or the what3words location.
- The number of casualties.
- What is wrong with the casualties?
- Are the casualties deteriorating?
- Details of the equipment in the group i.e. group shelter.

**Dial 999 or 112 and ask for Police Scotland, then Mountain Rescue**



### FIFE COAST & COUNTRYSIDE TRUST

#### Fife Coast and Countryside Trust

The Harbourmaster's House, Hot Pot Wynd,  
Dysart, Fife, KY1 2TQ

Tel: 01592 656080 Email: [ask.us@fifecountryside.co.uk](mailto:ask.us@fifecountryside.co.uk)  
Website: [www.fifecounsidetrust.co.uk](http://www.fifecounsidetrust.co.uk)

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# Stay Safe in the Hills



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## DEVELOP THESE SKILLS

- **Mountain skills and experience** so you can judge potential hazards.
- **Learn to read a map and use a compass**
- **Improve your ability** to consider the equipment, experience, capabilities and enthusiasm of your party.
- **Learn the basic principles of first aid ABC** - airway, breathing, circulation and recovery position. It could make the difference between life and death.

### Scottish Mountain Rescue

Our local mountain rescue teams are

#### Ochils Mountain Rescue Team

<http://www.omrt.org.uk>

#### Tayside Mountain Rescue Team

<http://www.taysidemrt.org>



**SCOTTISH MOUNTAIN RESCUE**  
Any Hour, Any Day, Any Weather...

## BEFORE YOU GO



### Charge your phone

Many accidents occur towards the end of the day when both you and your phone are low on energy.



### Choose your route

Consider the time of the year, terrain and the nature of the trip and choose your route accordingly.



### Check the weather forecast

Obtain a weather forecast including Avalanche Forecast (SAIS). Accuweather, the BBC and MWIS usually provide an accurate forecast for most mountain areas.



### Leave your route plan

Information should include start and finish points, estimated time of return and contact details.



### Eat well before you start out

## ON THE HILLS



### Keep an eye on the weather

Be prepared to turn back if conditions turn against you, even if this upsets a long planned adventure.



### Take good care of everyone

Keep together, allow the slowest member of the party to determine the pace and take special care of the youngest and weakest in dangerous places.



### Watch for signs of hypothermia

Disorientation, shivering, tiredness, pale complexion and loss of circulation in hands and toes, discarding of vital clothing. Children and older people are especially susceptible.



### If you are out alone

Be aware of the additional risk. Let people know your route, stick to it as far as you can and notify them of any changes.

### Dangers you can avoid

- Precipices and unstable boulders.
- Ice or steep snow slopes, snow cornices on ridges or gully tops.
- Very steep grass slopes, especially if frozen or wet.
- Gullies, gorges and stream beds, and streams in spate.
- Exceeding your experience and abilities and loss of concentration.

### Dangers you need to monitor

- Weather changes - mist, gale, rain and snow may be sudden and more extreme than forecast.
- Ice on path (know how to use an ice-axe and crampons).
- Excessive cold, heat, or exhaustion (know the signs, rest and keep warm).
- Passage of time - allow extra time in winter or night time.

