

GUIDELINES FOR LEADERS

WALK PLANNING AND PREPARATION

1. Choose your walk, considering the distance from Melbourne, expected length, elevation changes, season and probable degree of difficulty. Avoid high mountains in winter.
2. Source track notes, maps and other useful information such as park notes. Also, the Activities Catalogue for Leaders in OnTrax.
3. Do the recce (walk preview); make note of travel distance; travel time; road conditions (4WD required?); parking; amenities; mobile coverage along the route; likely morning tea & lunch spots; points of interest; track conditions; possibility of mud in wet conditions; navigational requirements; time to walk each section; total walk duration; shelter; emergency marker numbers; likely risks or hazards; alternative routes and escape routes; CFA Fire Ban district. For base camps, also note camp and water sites.
4. Obtain permission if entering restricted areas or private property.
5. Evaluate the recce: is the walk actually worth doing? Are risks acceptable, or should the walk be changed? Should walker numbers be limited?
6. Grade the walk, referring to the KBC Walk Grading descriptions published on OnTrax
 - do NOT under-sell it.
 - There will always be a slight degree of subjectivity in grading a walk – an easy or medium walk for you may be a difficult walk for others. Using the club guidelines will help you accurately reflect the walk for members, giving them confidence in the grading and ensuring consistency between various leaders.
7. Nominate the walk on OnTrax and provide full details.
8. Prepare instructions for drivers if required, including your mobile phone number.
9. Assess walker capabilities, especially for harder or hazardous walks. Screening walkers ensures a safer and happier walk, members won't get stressed, and it minimises the likelihood of problems:
 - Try to determine the physical capabilities and walking experience of visitors and new members, before deciding whether or not to accept them. DO NOT be afraid of politely rejecting walkers thought to be incapable of completing the walk.

- Remind visitors to wear thick socks and shoes or boots with tread, to have appropriate clothing and wet weather gear, and sufficient water for the expected weather conditions.
- Accept only the number of walkers you feel capable of managing, particularly if you are an inexperienced leader, or you're leading a difficult walk.

10. In the days leading up to the walk, check weather & burn-off reports regularly. Consider cancelling or varying activities due to forecast fire danger, high wind, blizzard, flood, smoke etc. The leader is responsible for obtaining advice and deciding what to do.

11. Any change to a walk plan should be advised to the Walks Coordinator or, in his absence, the President, or, in his absence, the Secretary. All members registered for the walk should also be informed, especially if the walk will be made harder or longer, so that they can cancel if they wish.

AT THE MEETING PLACE

1. Welcome non-members and ask them to sign the form "KBWC Acknowledgement of Risk form for Temporary Members/ Visitors". Collect a \$5 fee per person, per trip (up to a maximum \$10 per family) to be passed on to the Treasurer/ Secretary.
2. Greet each individual. Double check the numbers and names of walkers. Ensure each is adequately equipped with food, water, protective clothing, appropriate footwear, first aid kit and emergency data capsule. Ask members to wear name badges.
3. Remind walkers of the expected conditions and terrain – this gives them a chance to pull out if unwell or ill-prepared.
4. Arrange car-pooling where necessary. Brief all drivers on the destination & route. If appropriate, arrange a follow-the-leader routine to keep in convoy. Exchange mobile numbers.

AT THE START

1. Number off and state names.
2. Provide specific details of the walk. You may choose to give maps to interested walkers.
3. Appoint a whip to monitor the rear of the group. If the group is large, it may be appropriate to appoint a second whip for the middle of the group. It is your

responsibility to maintain contact with the whip. If contact cannot be assured, provide a map and directions for the whip.

4. State walk reminders:

- All walkers must watch for and wait at all track junctions if they are ahead of the leader, and wait for the whip before continuing.
- Leave pack on track if leaving track for a nature break.
- Mobiles should be carried but preferably turned off.
- Check if any walker does not wish to be included in photographs.

DURING THE WALK

1. Set a steady pace to suit the slowest of the walkers and allow at least a five minute break each hour for the whip and stragglers. Do not allow the party to split unless it is imperative to do so; when splitting, see that there are sufficient members in each party and that they are fully equipped to navigate and carry on. Agree upon a clearly identified rendezvous.
2. Allow ½ - 1 hour lunch break commensurate with the difficulty of the walk & weather.
3. After each stop, confirm group number with whip and check how everyone is travelling.
4. Be alert for any physical or psychological problems, especially hypothermia, dehydration, heat exhaustion, heat stroke and injuries. Be prepared to vary the walk to deal with any problems safely.
5. Facilitate first aid assistance to any walker as required.
6. Constantly monitor your position against the map. Watch out for deteriorating weather, visibility, etc.
7. At the finish, ensure the party is complete, notify walkers of travel costs and ensure all vehicles leave safely for home.

AFTER THE WALK

1. Finalise walk on OnTrax. Record any incidents or injuries sustained or caused by a participant, which may require medical attention, on the Incident Report on OnTrax. In the case of a more serious event, please refer to the document 'Insurance Claims' (in the manual and on the website).
 - Bushwalking Victoria's Personal Accident Insurance Policy may provide limited benefits. A personal injury claim form can be obtained from the Club

Secretary. Leaders are indemnified by public liability insurance if sued by walkers or others, for injury or damage caused by leaders' alleged negligence.

2. Give any Acknowledgement of Risk form for Temporary members / Visitors, plus fees, to the Treasurer/ Secretary.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

1. Minimum Numbers for a Walk:

It is club policy that there should normally be at least four walkers on a club walk for safety reasons (one to remain with an injured or ill walker, whilst two go for help or to a position where a mobile phone signal can be obtained, if necessary). Ultimately, the minimum number is at the leader's discretion and may be more or less than four as circumstances dictate.

2. Minimum Numbers for a Recce/Walk Preview:

There is a recommendation that there should be three or four walkers on a club recce, for safety reasons. However, it's acknowledged that these numbers can be hard to achieve. The absolute minimum is two, with additional walkers as required, based on walk difficulty and the remoteness of the location.

3. Insurance Cover for Recces:

All leaders who wish to have themselves and any other members and non-members on their preview trip covered by the club's insurance cover, must notify the KBC Walks Coordinator of the date and persons participating, and also submit a KBC 'Acknowledgment of Risk Form' signed by the non-members in the group.

In addition, all walk leaders are urged to make sure that their preview trips do not clash with any other club walk of a similar grade held on the same day.

4. Walking with Children:

- Children under the age of 18 may not be accepted on a regular club walk.
- If a walk is actively promoted or directed towards children (e.g. a grandparents + grandkids walk) then the walk leader DOES require a current 'Working with Children' check.

5. Extended Trips:

As the club is now planning the Walks Calendar in 6-monthly blocks, try to plan well ahead if you hope to run an extended trip (preferably not during the current

cycle). Until an extended trip proposal has been considered and agreed upon by the Walks Coordinator and Committee, trips are deemed private, not club, trips.

6. **Third Party Operators:**

Before engaging a professional organization which receives financial reward to run a walk or trip for members to join, obtain written confirmation that the firm has Public Liability Insurance covering the activity.

ESTIMATION OF WALK TIMES:

If you are using walk notes from a book, an estimated total walk time will be provided.

On the other hand, if you have devised your own walk, walking times can be estimated based on an average walker (reasonable fitness) with a medium pack, in different conditions.

Estimated speed and times to walk **one kilometre** in different types of terrain are:

Open, level track:	4 - 5 kph	12 - 15 mins per km
Track with moderate hills:	4 kph	15 mins per km
Easy scrambling:	3 kph	20 mins per km
Steep hills:	2 kph	30 mins per km
Deep sand or snow:	1.5 kph	40 mins per km
Thick scrub, steep hills:	1.2 kph	50 mins per km
Difficult terrain, steep track:	1 kph	60 mins per km

Note:

- As the terrain becomes more difficult, the estimation of speed/time becomes less accurate
- Add an extra hour for every 500m ascent
- Add an extra hour for every 1000m descent
- Add an extra hour (due to fatigue) if the walk is longer than 5 hours