

Shorewalkers Hike Leader Training

Hike Leader Committee

Laura Clark, Maureen Barodin, Brigitte Stark-Merklein

November 2023

Planning and Scouting a Route

➤ Review the Hike Leader Guidelines for suggestions on choosing a route.

➤ Scouting:

- *Do as much reconnaissance as you need to become comfortable with the route before you lead the hike (review the Guidelines for suggestions).*
- *Keep these considerations in mind:*
 - All Shorewalkers hikes must be accessible by public transportation. (A brief taxi ride at the beginning or end of a hike is acceptable.)
 - Don't choose a route that's longer than you can handle. You want to have plenty of reserves in case an emergency requires additional effort.
 - Do be sure to find restrooms along the route, and especially at the start.
 - Do make note of potential dropout points in case a walker can't finish.
 - Do build safety into your plan – limit street crossings; respect traffic signs and signals; use crosswalks; avoid busy intersections, construction sites, and steep and slippery paths.

Describing a City Hike

- Review the Hike Leader Guidelines for all the information to include in your hike description on Meetup. Especially important are:
 - *Meeting date and time.*
 - *Length of the hike in miles and hours.*
 - *Meeting and ending place, with transportation options.*
 - *Availability of dropout points.*
 - *Terrain: sidewalks, park paths, trails, stairs, etc., and whether it's flat, hilly, rocky, sandy, uneven.*
 - *Pace: slow, moderate, or brisk.*
 - *What to bring (including sun protection or rain gear, depending on weather forecasts).*
 - *Your contact information.*

Describing a Trail Hike

- For trail hikes, include this **additional** information:
 - *Elevation gains on moderate and difficult trail walks.*
 - *Specific details about difficulty:*
 - Easy – carriage roads and some hills.
 - Moderate – maybe some rock scrambling; high exposure.
 - Difficult – steep hills; rock scrambling.
 - *Specifics about what to bring and wear. For moderate and difficult hikes:*
 - Hiking boots.
 - Two liters of water; food; snacks.
 - Hiking poles if you recommend them.

Leading a Hike

➤ Safety is paramount.

- *Arrange a sweep to make sure no one is left behind (see suggestions in the Guidelines) and be sure you have each other's phone numbers.*
- *Check in participants using the organizer app (the black app) or use pen and paper and update the information on a laptop or desktop after the hike.*
- *Don't relegate the responsibility of keeping the group together to the sweep. Always keep the sweep in view and, if they're dealing with slow walkers, make frequent stops to allow them to catch up, even if you're being pressed by faster walkers.*
- *Obey all traffic rules.*
- *For trail hikes, screen hikers at the trailhead. Turn them away if they're not properly equipped.*
- *If someone is ill or injured, provide basic care, such as an electrolyte replacement for dehydration or a bandage for a blister, if you have these. If necessary, help the walker get transportation. If the situation is beyond your ability to provide basic care or arrange transportation safely, call 911 immediately. Let leadership know about the injury by emailing Shorewalkersny@gmail.com.*

Leading a Hike

- After safety, the most important thing is fun.
 - *Chat with the hikers and share what you know about what is along the route.*
 - *If you want to draw attention to points of interest or offer other commentary, be sure to wait for the group to come together before you do, so everyone can hear what you have to say.*

Concluding a Hike

- Communication and housekeeping after the hike.
 - *Update attendance via the organizer app (the black app) or a laptop/desktop. Change the walker status for those who were absent from “went” to “did not go,” if excused, or “no show,” if they didn’t let you know that they weren’t coming.*
 - *Monitor comments on Meetup, thank the walkers and sweep, and post your photos.*

Participating in a Hike

- As a hike leader, you may be welcomed on others' hikes, even if the hike is full. If it's not full, simply add yourself as an attendee. If it is, check with the hike leader to see if you can go (there may be circumstances in which the numbers have to be tightly controlled and the answer will be "no").
- As a participant on someone else's hike, consider yourself a helper. Offer to sweep or keep a headcount. Generally, help with safety and other issues by staying alert and privately communicating with the leader if you spot trouble.