



Cork Mountaineering Club

Cumann Sléibhteoireachta Chorcaí

Guidelines for Walk Organisers and Participants

This document is not exhaustive; please adopt the spirit of these guidelines and apply it to your own activities and area.

BEFORE the WALK

- Choose a route suitable for the category of walk.
- Plan the route. It often helps to prepare a route card. This will enable you to identify possible escape routes and/ or alternative routes if needed on the day.
- Recce the route, preferable in the company of others, in order to familiarise yourself with the terrain and to fine-tune your route plan. This may also help to identify potential access concerns.
- Identify a suitable parking place for the start of the walk, not blocking entrances or gates. If necessary, identify a separate meeting place, to facilitate car-pooling. You should identify these locations using a six-figure grid reference. Be aware that car splits involve extra time which must be allowed for.
- You will need to be fit enough for your walk, and competent with map and compass.
- If you are not able to lead on the day, see if you can find a replacement. If this fails, contact a committee member as soon as possible.
- Be ready for queries from participants regarding the length of the walk, the amount of climbing, difficulty of terrain and duration. If necessary you should ascertain that the person's experience and equipment are sufficient.
- Get the weather forecast for the day itself and be aware of how it might affect your route.
- Ensure that you have the Safety Kit (First Aid kit, Group Shelter and Sign-In Book) for your walk.
- If there is a second CMC walk in the same area, get in touch with the Leader and try to arrange that both groups meet socially after the walks, *eg* for coffee. We would encourage you to support the local rural economy by using local pubs, shops, petrol-stations.

The DAY of the WALK

- As a general rule, you should try to keep the number of cars used to a minimum.
- You do have the right not to accept someone on your walk who is ill-equipped. Obviously this has to be done with a modicum of sensitivity. Use your judgement and ask another experienced walker for help if necessary.
- Dogs are completely forbidden on CMC hillwalks.

AT the STARTING POINT

- Make sure that everyone coming on the walk signs the log book
- Ensure that the First Aid kit and Group Shelter are carried
- It is a good idea to introduce yourself and say a little about the walk. You may want to emphasise participant responsibility.
 - 1: "Keep me in sight"
 - 2: "Let me know if you have a problem"
 - 3: "Let someone know if you are stopping for any reason so the group doesn't leave you behind"
 - 4: "Do not damage any property or the environment/ adhere to Leave No Trace principles and MI Guidelines on minimising erosion"
- Ask someone if they will act as back marker, in order to make sure that no-one gets left behind
- Before the walk, take a count. Ask someone to check.

DURING the WALK

- Try to maintain a steady pace during the walk and do not allow your group to become very strung out. Stop and regroup often if necessary and keep counting. This is especially important in fog. Be aware of your progress in comparison to your route card. When you do give instructions or ask a question, make sure everyone hears you. You are the person in charge of the walk.
- Be aware of your group. How you feel is not necessarily how the people in your group feel, *eg* cold, hungry, dehydrated.
- You must factor in food stops.
- Keep a close eye on the weather and be prepared to cut the walk short or alter your route if conditions deteriorate a lot, or if they are worse higher up.
- If a person or persons want to separate from the main group, then make it clear to them that they are no longer part of your walk. For safety reasons, it is best if individuals do not go off alone.
- If a group or individual has a problem and needs to leave the walk, you should ensure that they can do so safely. This may involve cutting short the walk.

AFTER the WALK

- Ensure that you get the First Aid kit and Group Shelter back from those who have been carrying them.
- Pass the full Safety Kit on to the organiser of the next walk, or to the committee.



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