

Footloose303 – Advice for walkers

If you are to enjoy your walk in comfort and safety it is important that your clothing and equipment are suitable and you are fit enough for the walk (and this is your responsibility). We advise:

Low level walking (*countryside not moorland or coast*)

- **Walking boots with ankle support** – best that they have been worn before. We would emphasise that trainers and any footwear with poor grip is not suitable.
- **Comfortable outdoor clothing** - not jeans which hold the wet and can be very cold.
- **Fleece & warm clothing** - several thin layers are better than one thick layer.
- **Waterproof jacket** - wind and rain proof with a good hood.
- **Waterproof over-trousers**
- **Woolly hat and gloves** - in summer a sun hat is important.
- **Water bottle** - bring enough water, especially in summer.
- **Thermos** - great in the winter.
- **Food** - for lunch and a snack on the way.
- **Rucksack** - with polybag liner to carry spare clothing in, food etc.
- **Small first aid kit** - including sun screen, insect repellent etc., should you need it.
- **Torch** – Important to have as back up in the winter when dusk comes early.

Remember conditions can change during the day. Never make a judgment based upon the weather at the start of the day, be prepared for sun, rain and cold.

Mountain, moorland and coast

Do not forget that conditions can become very harsh, very quickly so go equipped for the worst! If you are poorly equipped (or are not fit) you can put both yourself and others at risk. Wind chill can be a particular problem. It does not take long to become very cold. Do not forget that a nice spring day in the valley does not mean the same will be found on top or on the moor ... and conditions can change rapidly!

In addition to the equipment listed above you will need:

- **Extra layers of warm clothing** - Do not forget that when you stop it can get very cold very quickly. If you are injured you must be able to keep warm for several hours.
- **Warm neck protection**
- **Emergency survival bag**
- **Foil emergency blanket**
- **Whistle**
- **Emergency food** - e.g. high energy chocolate bars
- **Spare gloves** – Most wet gloves are not good insulators
- **Extra water** - On hot days you will be amazed at the amount of water you can get through.

Work on the basis of the worst that could happen, and be safe and sound!

Other guidance:

- **Be fit** - Check how far and how hilly and long the walk is, and judge if you are fit enough for it.
- **Walk as a team** - Keep an eye on others in the party.
- **Keep together** - If you need to stop for some reason make sure that the walk leader knows - do not get left behind!
- **Use gates and stiles** - Do not climb fences or push through hedges.
- **Close gates** - If you are at the back of the party make sure gates are closed (unless they were already open).
- **Do not drop litter** - This includes banana skins and orange peel, which take many months to rot away.