For Your Safety
Do not leave valuables in sight inside your car. Do not leave a note on your car telling how long you will be hiking. Pretend your car is stolen while taking you with them or hiding you in another vehicle.

Leave No Trace
Your personal commitment to ethical backcountry use is the most important factor in maintaining the park’s wilderness character. Take this trail with you and leave no trace of your presence here.

Always use backcountry use regulations. They are designed for resource protection.

• Use a stove and candle lantern to minimize the trimming and destruction of vegetation that result from lighting a firework.
• Never cook or burn food in a campfire. Food residues and odors remain and attract wildlife that will become a problem for future campers.
• Keep your group small to preserve a sense of solitude.
• Camp where your campsite already shows impacts. Don’t erect a new campsite.
• Pack out all leftover food and trash. Do not bury trash.

Avoid cutting across switchbacks to prevent destructive trail erosion.

If You Get Lost
Stay calm, do not leave the trail used to arrive at it. Prevent getting lost by planning well together, staying on the trail, and learning some basic safety skills if you are overdue.

Toilet Use
Improper human waste disposal is one of the most disgusting conditions in the park. Some of the regulations that require that human feces be disposed of properly include a six-inch-deep hole and covering whatever use may occur within 100 feet of the source or within sight of a trail, plus a toilet shelter near a spring creating very unhealthy conditions and is clearly backcountry manners. All toilet paper, sanitary napkins, and tampons must be packed out. Do not burn them. Please, take a little extra care!

Into the Wild: Visiting the Smokies Backcountry
One hundred and fifty trails extend for approximately 2,000 miles, crossing the ridges, gorges, and valleys of America’s most visited national park.

For those seeking more information, a variety of topographic maps and trail guides are available for purchase. Each state’s allowable capacities in our trail guidelines. To order a map or guide, call 865-436.7109, ext. 226, or visit https://www.fs.nps.gov/.

If Someone Gets Injured
If someone is injured and can’t be moved, watch and wait. The following provide warmth and comfort; luxuriate and do not give up hope. Ready yourself before approaching the injured person. A hallmark of backcountry experience is the ability to use what you have on hand to provide the best care you can at the place you are. Each park has a number of first aid stations at trailheads and along its main roads. Each one is equipped with some basic supplies for treating minor injuries.

Backcountry Campsites and Shelters are listed by map section. The site codes (tree, peak, and map section name) are the same on these pages and in the appendix. Note that there is no food or water available at all sites, only your horses can eat and drink. Horses should be fed before leaving your trailhead, and during the hike, they should be fed again every two hours. Horses can drink a minimum of 40 gallons per day and need 15 pounds of grain per day.

Trip Planning and Permits
Trip planning is as important as any other aspect of preparing for your backcountry experience. It can save you frustration and problems. Here are a few things to consider before planning your backcountry trip:

Hypothermia
Hypothermia is when the body temperature reduces to below what the body can maintain. Hypothermia usually results from exposure to a combination of extreme cold, heat, and humidity.

Hypothermia’s symptoms and prevention:

1. You may not stay two nights in a row in the same shelter or campsite. If you do not stay more than three consecutive nights, you may not return to the same shelter or campsite in the same week.

2. Maximum group size is eight persons, except at the sites noted in the “Camping Permits” section.

3. Open fires are prohibited except at designated sites. Use only wood that is dead and on the ground. Never cut live or standing trees. Do not leave fires unattended. Grilling is prohibited. All food for stock must be packed in, and unused food must be packed out. At designated camp sites, food must be packed by a permit holder, the number of animals in any one party is limited to one per animal on foot, one per animal on horseback, and shall not exceed a total of 10 bears for the group in any one party. Horses are not eligible for permits and be suspended at least 10 feet high and 10 feet or more from the nearest limb.

Camping Permits
Backcountry camping requires a permit which can be obtained online at https://www.fs.nps.gov/backcountry, or by visiting the Backcountry Information Office located in Sugarlands Visitor Center, two miles south of Gatlinburg, TN, on U.S. 441 (Newfound Gap Road). Permits are $10 per person, per night, with a maximum fee of $35 per group or 7 consecutive nights. You must present a copy of the permit to park personnel. Campsites are made 30 days in advance of the first day of your trip. You may not stay two nights in a row in the same shelter or campsite. If you do not stay more than three consecutive nights, you may not return to the same shelter or campsite in the same week.

Food storage:

1. All water obtained in the park so cell phones do not work. Call 865.436.9171.

2. Be pack out all leftover food and trash. Do not bury trash.

3. Make sure your pack can be carried by the horse, or wear the pack. Pack out all leftover food and trash. Do not bury trash.

4. Use a stove and candle lantern to minimize the trimming and destruction of vegetation that result from lighting a firework.

5. All water obtained in the park so cell phones do not work. Call 865.436.9171.

6. There is no food or water available at any site, only your horses can eat and drink. Horses should be fed before leaving your trailhead, and during the hike, they should be fed again every two hours. Horses can drink a minimum of 40 gallons per day and need 15 pounds of grain per day.

7. Food storage cabinet systems are available at all backcountry sites.

8. Food storage cabinet systems are available at all backcountry sites. Backcountry campers and shelters are listed by map section. The site codes (tree, peak, and map section name) are the same on these pages and in the appendix. Note that there is no food or water available at all sites, only your horses can eat and drink. Horses should be fed before leaving your trailhead, and during the hike, they should be fed again every two hours. Horses can drink a minimum of 40 gallons per day and need 15 pounds of grain per day.

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