

For All Trail Users

Avoid Wet Trails. Minimize trail erosion and ecological impact around wet trails by walking/ biking/riding through the center of the trail, even if muddy, to keep the trail narrow.

Stay on the Trail. Do not go off trail (even to pass), create new trails, or cut switchbacks. Narrow trails mean less environmental impact and happier critters.

Respect. If you offer respect, you are more likely to receive it. All user groups have rights and responsibilities to our trails, and to each other.

Don't Block the Trail. When taking a break, move to the side of the trail.

Smile. Greet. Nod. Every user on the trail is a fellow nature lover. Be friendly and expect to see other folks around every corner.

Travel on the right side of the trail, and pass on the left.

Remain Attentive. If you wear headphones, keep the volume down, or only wear one earpiece so you can hear other trail users.

Expect the Unexpected. Humans and animals can be unpredictable.



What Does "Yield" Mean? Yielding means slow down, establish communication, be prepared to stop if necessary, and pass in a safe and friendly manner.

Resources

UConn Extension
extension.uconn.edu

Connecticut Horse Council
<http://www.cthorsecouncil.org>

Connecticut Trail Census
<https://cttrailcensus.uconn.edu>

Department of Energy & Environmental Protection
<https://www.ct.gov/deep/>

Connecticut Greenways Council
www.ct.gov/deep/greenways

Connecticut Forest & Park Association
<https://www.ctwoodlands.org>

References

Sources for this brochure included RidgeToRivers.org, RockCreekRunner.com, San Antonio Parks & Facilities, and UConn Public Safety.

This brochure was prepared by the CT PATHS Program: People Active on Trails for Health and Sustainability.

For More information
s.uconn.edu/trailsafety



Connecticut Trail Census

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Share the Trail

Trail safety and etiquette on multi-use trails for bicyclists, walkers, dogs..

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EXTENSION

Trail Etiquette

For Walkers, Hikers, Runners

- Keep dogs on a short leash. Other trail users may be frightened by dogs or be unsure how to pass safely.
- Dog poop on the trail is a major complaint among other trail users. Clean up after your dog, and take the waste home to dispose it. UConn Extension educator Dave Dickson explains why it's important to scoop poop: <http://s.uconn.edu/4gg>.
- Yield to equestrians.



For Bicyclists

- You move fast – and many other trail users will be startled, especially if you approach from behind. Greet other trail users early to alert them of your presence.
- Anticipate other trail users around blind corners.
- Yield to hikers and equestrians.

For Equestrians

- Communicate your needs. Most people aren't familiar with horses and are intimidated by them – let other trail users know what will help make the situation safer for everyone.
- Slow down to a walk to pass other trail users.
- Clean up any manure your horse may leave at trail heads and on trails whenever possible.



Personal Safety

All trail users should follow basic tips for personal safety.

1. **Be aware of your surroundings** and other people on the trails and in parking lots. Do not wear headphones or earbuds.
2. **Park in well-lit areas** and lock the doors of your vehicle, and trailer for equestrians.
3. If possible, **don't go alone**. Walk or ride with a friend. If you think someone is following you, go towards public areas.
4. Always **tell someone where you are going** and when you expect to be back. Share your route with them.
5. **Carry your cell phone**, but be aware that you might not have cell phone service in all areas.
6. **Carry a map**. Know your route, and carry the map anyway.
7. **Carry pepper spray** for protection if it makes you feel more comfortable.
8. **Wear blaze orange** or reflective material during hunting season.
9. **Carry water** and sunscreen.
10. **Pay attention** to trail markers so you can identify your location.

Leave No Trace

Seven Principles of the Leave No Trace Program

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare
2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
3. Dispose of Waste Properly
4. Leave What You Find
5. Minimize Campfire Impacts
6. Respect Wildlife
7. Be Considerate of Other Visitors

For more information on these principles and other resources visit LNT.org.