

Walk Leader's checklist



Each year, Ramblers volunteers lead over 50,000 group walks – every one unique. Here are our tips to help your walk run smoothly.



ramblers
at the heart of walking

before the walk

Choose the route

- It may be one you know, taken from a map, a guidebook or Ramblers Routes.
- Consider the location, length and timing, whether linear or circular.
- Consider season, terrain, climbs, likely ability and fitness of the group.
- Consider points of interest.
- Check public transport options, car parks, refreshments and toilets.

Reccce the route (preferably with your backmarker)

- Note critical navigation points, hazards and problems, adjusting if necessary.

- Check timings, rest and toilet points, escape or alternative routes, any access restrictions and mobile phone coverage.
- Report any path or access problems to the relevant group officer or online via www.ramblers.org.uk/pathproblem

Publicise the walk

- To be covered by Ramblers insurance, a walk **must** be a recognised Ramblers activity.
- Submit your walk to your group walks programme coordinator with the correct level, informative description and identified leader for it to be publicised in advance online, on the Group Walks and Events Manager (GWEM) and/or in print.

For more information visit www.ramblers.org.uk/walkleader
or email volunteersupport@ramblers.zendesk.com

the day before the walk

- Check weather forecasts: www.metoffice.gov.uk or www.mwis.org.uk for mountainous areas. Adjust the route or cancel as necessary.
- Recheck public transport and forewarn cafés/pubs if you plan to visit.
- Check phone (and GPS) are charged.
- Check personal gear and first aid kit. For first aid advice see www.ramblers.org.uk/advice/safety/introduction-to-first-aid
- Be prepared to answer queries from potential attendees.

at the start of the walk

- Arrive early and be welcoming – particularly to newcomers.
- Appoint and brief the backmarker (if you don't already have one).
- Make sure you know who is starting your walk. Ensure you know how to access their emergency contact details.
- Ensure those accompanying under-18s or vulnerable adults know they have responsibility for direct care and supervision.
- Where appropriate check the equipment of the party and be prepared to turn people away if circumstances demand.
- Give an overview of the walk, how long it will take, points of interest, refreshment stops, and any places where particular care is needed.
- Outline your expectations of walkers. Invite anyone with concerns to speak to you in private, for example about medical conditions.

on the walk

- Set a pace to suit the party's capabilities and advertised walk grade.
- Stay in sight or communication with your backmarker at all times. Allow for regrouping and head-counts as required.
- Regularly check your route, using a map and/or compass if necessary.
- Help the group across stiles, roads, gates and in poor weather as required.
- Keep an eye on the weather and change your plans if needed.
- Be alert to any problems with individuals and chat to newcomers.
- Provide membership forms to non-members and explain the work of the Ramblers.
- If there is an emergency, dial 999 or 112 and ask for Police/Mountain Rescue.
- Importantly – enjoy the walk!

at the end of the walk

- Check everyone has returned and can get home and thank them for coming.
- Encourage newcomers to join the Ramblers.
- Report incidents/near misses to Ramblers GB as soon as possible via the Incident Report Form.

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VERSION 1.4 SEPT 2017

