Walking the Trail

Hiking in the woods can be a fun activity for the whole family. Following these simple tips will help to keep everyone safe.

**Dress for Success**
No matter what the forecast looks like, dressing in light colored layers will keep you comfortable and safe. Synthetic pants with a tank top or short-sleeved shirt will make for a great all-around base layer. Always bring a jacket and rain gear.

**Choose the Right Trail**
If you are new to trails or plan to bring children, choose one that is not too long or strenuous. Printing a paper map can be helpful. Generally, you’ll want to start with easier trails and work up to more challenging ones as you gain experience. Consider a trail with special features like castles, ponds, streams, waterfalls and other special features.

**Know When to Go**
In the summer, morning is often the best time to hike because it is usually cooler, and showers and thunderstorms often crop up in the afternoon. Generally fewer people are out on the trails in the morning. Consider installing a weather app on your phone and read the weather forecast so that you are prepared for what may be coming. Always leave plenty of time for exploring and enjoying nature!

**Fun Facts**
- Walking one hour burns 148-307 calories.
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- 1 hour of hiking can burn over 400 calories (for a person weighing 160 pounds).

Check the Trail Map for the Towns of Bozrah, Colchester, East Haddam, East Hampton, Hebron, Lebanon, Marlborough, and Salem.

Keep Safety in Mind

**Be aware of your fitness level.** Choose a trail or walk that fits your ability.

**Tell someone where you are starting.** Where you will be hiking, and your final destination.

**Be aware of your surroundings.** As you walk. The more you pay attention to landmarks like buildings, roads, hills and lakes, the less chance you’ll have of getting turned around or lost.

**Plan ahead** and pack everything you need. Staying safe and comfortable along the trail will help you have an enjoyable outing. The little things can make or break your experience.

Keep Hydration and Fuel

Pre-hydrate by drinking 4 cups of water before the hike. Usually, 16 ounces of water are needed for each hour of your hike. You’ll need more as the temperatures rise. Add some non-perishable foods that are lightweight and nutrient dense to your pack. Some examples are trail mix, nuts, nut butter packs, dried fruits or vegetables, granola, nut-based energy bars, meat jerky, or whole fruits.

Don’t Forget the Extras

Even if you only intend to be out for a couple of hours, stashing a few basic items in your pack will keep you happy and comfortable. Sunglasses and a sun hat can make all the difference in how a hike feels. Quality sunglasses protect your eyes from burn and strain and a wide brimmed hat makes for better sun protection than sunscreen alone. Use trekking poles when hiking uneven terrain to take the strain off your legs going up and downhill.

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