

# LEADING GROUP WALKS

## Your checklist



**What to do before, during  
and after your group walk**

# Introduction

**At the Ramblers, we all love walking and there's something special about sharing it with others. That's why group walks are so important.**

If you're leading a group walk, use this checklist to help you plan.

You'll have your own style and approach to leading a group walk, so once you've got the basics in this checklist covered, it's all about making it your own – you're one of the reasons people love to join your walks.

# Before the walk



## **Record your volunteer role**

- You must be recorded on Assemble as a volunteer walk leader.



## **Choose a route**

- Consider the location, length, timing and whether it will be a linear or circular route.
- Consider the season, terrain and points of interest.
- Ask yourself, do I have the knowledge, skills and ability to lead this walk safely?



## **Recce the walk**

- Recce your route close to the day of the walk, if possible.
- Check timings, rest and toilet points, escape or alternative routes, access restrictions and mobile phone coverage.

## **Complete a risk assessment**



- A risk assessment must be completed before leading a walk to record hazards and plan steps to stay safe.
- We recommend doing this as part of the recce. If that's not possible – use maps, guidebooks, local knowledge and online tools.
- Keep risk assessments for three years.

## **Advertise the walk**



- Ramblers walks and Ramblers Wellbeing Walks must be advertised publicly. Make sure the listing reflects the great walk you've planned!

## **Come prepared**



- Pack everything you need for the walk – first aid kit, fully charged mobile phone, food, drink and an online or paper map are all recommended.
- Consider taking extra layers and waterproofs in case others need them.

## **Check the weather**



- Take a look at the forecast before the walk. If you think the weather could make your walk unsafe, postpone it.
- Bear in mind conditions at low levels can be very different to the conditions on a high peak.



### **Stay connected**

- Let someone at home know your route and when they should expect you back. They can raise the alarm if needed.
- Text “Register” to 999 to get recorded with the emergency SMS service.
- Download the free OS Locate app.

## **During the walk**

### **Give a warm welcome!**



- Say hello, introduce new walkers and provide an overview of the route.
- Highlight potential hazards on the route so walkers can keep themselves and others safe.
- Where possible, appoint a back-marker and consider appointing a middle-marker if you are leading a larger group.

### **Register your walkers**



- Consider using the Ramblers app to take a register and build up a picture of your most popular walks in the Insight Hub.
- If taking a paper register, use our template.



### **Set the right pace**

- Set a pace to suit your group.
- Stay in sight or communication with your back-marker at all times.
- Take regular headcounts, be alert to any problems and be prepared to put your risk planning into action.



### **Be ready for emergencies**

- Encourage everyone to fill in an ICE (In Case of Emergency) Card.
- If there is an emergency, dial 999. Depending on where you are, an ambulance or Mountain Rescue will be able to help.



### **Look out for other walkers**

- Be considerate towards other walkers and path users.
- Always follow the Countryside Code when in England and Wales, and the Outdoor Access Code when in Scotland.



### **Have fun!**

- Most of all, have a great time with your group while out on the walk!

# After the walk

## Say thanks



- Let new walkers know when the next walk is, and how to join the group or stay in touch.
- If you're going to a post-walk social, make sure everyone feels welcome to join.

## Report incidents or near misses



- Know how to report an incident or near miss.
- Incident Report Forms should be sent to **[incidents@ramblers.org.uk](mailto:incidents@ramblers.org.uk)** within 10 days.

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# THANK YOU

Thanks to people like you, walkers across Great Britain get to enjoy more than 150,000 group walks every year. Thank you for taking the time to share your favourite routes with others.

If you need any support, please contact **[volunteersupport@ramblers.zendesk.com](mailto:volunteersupport@ramblers.zendesk.com)** or visit Assemble for more resources and stories.

