

## Student Resource: Trail Etiquette

- Expect to meet others on the trail and respect their privacy and right to enjoy the natural surroundings.
- Avoid speaking in loud voices, making noise or playing music. Try to use cell phones only when needed such as an emergency.
- Normal levels of conversations will be loud enough to alert wildlife you may want to avoid.
- If you bring your pet, keep them on a leash and clean up after them.
- Many trails cross or are next to private property. Respect the privacy of people living along the trails and hike only on marked routes.
- If you are traveling in a large group, split into smaller groups and meet up at the end of the trail.
- Walk in single file in the middle of the trail and keep a respectful distance from other groups of hikers.
- If you want to pass a group, pass on the left side. If a group wants to pass you, stay to the right so they can pass on the left.
- If you meet others on a hill, the group climbing up has the right of way.
- Take breaks in an area where other hikers can pass you. Never sit down or have lunch in the middle of the trail.
- Leave flowers, wood, rocks, and plants behind in their rightful place for others to enjoy.
- Pay attention to the pace of your group members. Some people hike faster, some hike slower. This situation can lead to an expansion and contraction effect in the group. When the fast hikers wait for the slow hikers, they get a rest and often take off again once the slow hikers catch up. This situation doesn't give the slower hikers a break. Take scheduled breaks as a group to help prevent this from becoming an issue.
- Reduce the amount of packaged food you bring and pack everything out with you so you don't leave a trace that you were there. Try to repack food into small bags at home and use only plastic containers.

Avoid bringing cans or glass.

(Student Resource: Ontario Trails Council, 2026)

## Reference

Ontario Trails Council. (2026). [Trail Etiquette](#).