

Welcome to the Needles District

Desert Seekers:

Welcome to the Needles District of Canyonlands National Park. We hope you enjoy the park and all it has to offer. Please keep in mind the fact that many others wish to enjoy the park, too, and that those who follow you will be seeking the same kinds of experiences that attracted you here. We need your help in preserving the features that make this area a national treasure: scenery, peace and quiet, prehistoric structures and rock art, relatively undisturbed countryside, and many intangible things.

Visiting a National Park should be like a game, a competitive sport in which the players try to surpass each other in leaving no evidence that they were ever here! The role of the National Park Rangers is to offer coaching advice and, occasionally, to serve as referees. We very much prefer the job of coach, and have the following suggestions as to how you can prevent other visitors from knowing you were here.

Keep vehicles and mountain bikes on the roads and your feet on the trails. With a little care and effort it's possible to hike off the trails without leaving evidence. Walk on slickrock and in dry washes, avoiding areas of cryptogamic crust. If you drive a vehicle off-road (which is illegal) or walk on cryptogamic soil (which is irresponsible), you will leave evidence of your presence that may last a decade. All vehicles and drivers, incidentally, must be licensed for regular highway travel, including motorbikes.

Killing, maiming or molesting wildlife of any kind is evidence of your being here. The wildlife lives here; you're a visitor. Guns and any other weapons are prohibited.

Camping activities can produce a lot of evidence of your being here, but all can be avoided. Collecting firewood in the park is illegal. Vehicle campers who wish to have campfires must bring fuel with them and may build fires only in fireplaces. Backpackers should camp well out of sight of roads and trails and at least 300 feet from any water source. Vehicle campers must use only designated campsites. Leave campsites cleaner than you found them. At backcountry sites, pack out everything you brought in. Remember, it's the little things that count: pop-tops, cigarette butts, food scraps, tissues, and other little things that "don't amount to much."

Pets may not be taken on any hiking trail or into the backcountry. They may be taken by vehicle into designated backcountry four-wheel drive corridors but must stay with the vehicle. Pets must be leashed at all times.

There isn't much water around here, so it's a precious resource. Washing your clothes, yourself or utensils in streams or potholes releases soaps, oils, food scraps, and other contaminants that disrupt the lives of organisms living there. That is a very strong indication that you were here. Carry water at least 100 feet from any water source (including spigots in campgrounds) before washing and dispose of waste water carefully. There are toilets at many locations which provide a good place to hide some of the evidence that you were here. Do not, however, use them to dispose of trash and garbage. Where toilets are not available, bury human waste six inches deep in soil at least 100 feet from trails, water sources, etc. Pack out toilet paper.

The absolutely worst evidence of your presence here is your name, initials, other words, designs or scratches on rocks, trees, and other park features. Less obvious, but also very damaging, are the oils, salts, and acids deposited on ancient rock art by people touching it. Resist the urge; the pigments and even the rock surfaces are gradually being destroyed by what we call "innocent vandalism". Indian ruins, historic structures, cultural artifacts (arrowheads, potsherds, etc.) and other evidence of the area's prehistory and history should be left undisturbed. Look at them, enjoy them, ponder their significance, but don't remove them.

Theft from or damage to archeological sites is a Federal crime. The National Park Service has been given the responsibility of protecting our nation's cultural history. If you observe a violation, please report it to a Ranger as soon as possible.

If you play the "no evidence game" and are good at it, no one will be able to tell you were here. However, there are two ways you can prove you were here without detracting from your success as a no impact visitor. If you're an overnight backcountry user, get a free backcountry use permit at the visitor information station. While there, you can also write in the visitor register book to record your name and any comments about the park, or your visit.

Enjoy your stay here and help us keep the park pleasant for the thousands that follow.

THE NEEDLES DISTRICT

Canyonlands National Park



SAFETY TIPS

Carry plenty of water - 1 Gal. per person per day during summer months.

Unfenced overlooks and hazardous terrain occur throughout the area. Climbing slickrock can be hazardous. Footholds and handholds often break off easily.

Obtain a free Backcountry Permit before starting overnight backcountry trips.

Report any accident to a Ranger.

Flash floods may occur without warning. Never camp in a dry wash.

Parents: please do not let your children wander away from your party.

If you are lost, stay put. Make your location obvious to searchers.

	PAVED ROAD
	GRADED DIRT (2WD)
	4 WHEEL DRIVE ROUTE
	PRIMITIVE FOOT TRAIL
	MILES BETWEEN DOTS
	CAMPGROUND
	PRIMITIVE CAMPGROUND
	NATURAL ARCH