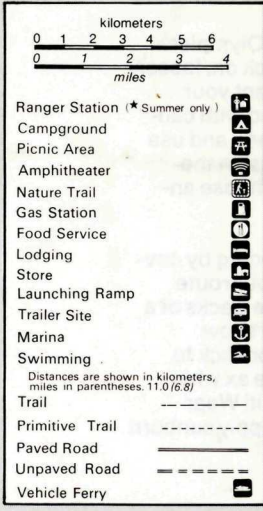


	Ranger Information	Number of Sites	Nature Trails	Visitor Center	Exhibits	Amphitheater	Picnic Sites	Trailer Permitted	Maximum Size (feet)	Dumping Station
*-No fee										
Staircase	●	63								
Dosewallips*		33								
Deer Park*		10								
Port Angeles Visitor Center	●			●						
Hurricane Ridge	●									●
Elwha	●	41								21
Boulder Creek*	●	50								
Lake Crescent / Fairholm	●	87								21
Soleduck	●	84								21
Hoh	●	95								21
Queets*	●	26								
Graves Creek	●	45								21
Ericsons Bay*	●	15								
July Creek*	●	31								21
Rialto Beach/Mora	●	91								21
La Push	●									
Kalaloch	●	179								21
Heart Of the Hills	●	105								21
Altaire	●	29								21
North Fork*	●	8								



# OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK

Stoves-only zones



# Guide to the Olympic Backcountry

As a backpacker you may encounter hazards, you might get wet, you could get a blister or two, and you will have to sweat a little to see all Olympic has to offer. But if you enter the backcountry as a prepared and informed hiker, you are guaranteed an unforgettable experience. Please help preserve the wilderness by observing the backcountry regulations and leaving no trace of your stay.

Perhaps your hardest decision is the route you plan to take—you have 1,000 kilometers (600 miles) of trails from which to choose! First consider a few things: the time you have to spend, the physical ability of each member in your group, available equipment, the time of year and weather, and the type of country you wish to see. Read and learn about your chosen area. Consult trail condition reports. Some higher elevation trails are snowbound until mid-summer.

A general park map, which is too small to be reliable as a backpacking map, is printed on the reverse side of this guide. For more detailed topographic maps and books on trails, write to or visit The Pioneer Memorial Museum, 2800 Hurricane Ridge Road, Port Angeles, WA 98362.

## Camp Lightly Please

The pioneers moving westward across the country did their best to carve out a niche and to tame and civilize the wilderness with rifle, ax, and saw. If even just a few of the thousands of backpackers try to emulate the actions of the earlier pioneers, the few wild lands we still seek will soon disappear. Each backpacker must learn to leave no trace and act responsibly to protect the remaining wilderness.

Less than 100 years ago very little was known about the interior of the Olympic mountains. Today many backpackers each year spend time in the backcountry of Olympic National Park. Across the country the number of wilderness hikers is growing five times faster than the population.

But mushrooming wilderness enthusiasm can be hard on a sensitive environment. Where the growing season is only two to three months each year, the delicate glacier lily takes five years to grow from seed to flower. High elevation trees grow so slowly their annual rings are barely discernible to the human eye. Subalpine meadows are extremely sensitive to trampling and recover very slowly. Several hikers taking the same shortcut can create a new, poorly-drained "social trail," a type of trail which often concentrates use too near a lake or meadow.

The combination of a fragile environment, great numbers of backcountry users, and the poor camping practices of a few have resulted in water pollution, litter, firewood depletion, campfire scars, and the destruction of vegetation. Do your part to preserve the Olympic backcountry by following minimum impact techniques.

**Sanitation** Use privies (pit toilets) when available. Be sure to close the lid and door to keep animals and flies away. Do not dump garbage into privies! When a privy is not available, emulate a cat; dig a small hole with your boot or a stick a few centimeters (a few inches) deep at least 30 meters (100 feet) from any water source. Do your job, put toilet paper in the hole, replace soil, and tamp down. Pack out all trash! Leave your camp cleaner than when you arrived, even if it means packing out trash left by other hikers. Burn combustible garbage where fires are permitted. Check your campfire for unburnable trash. Avoid soap; at least use biodegradable soap, again at least 30 meters (100 feet) from water.

**Campsites** Choose a site with care, one which you can leave just as you found it. Camp in an established site if one is available. Avoid areas marked for restoration, where jute netting and small plants have been placed to help revegetate damaged soil. When hiking on the coast, camp on the beach rather than in the forest, tides permitting. And avoid camping in fragile subalpine meadows. Camp at least 30 meters (100 feet)

from any body of water. Do not gather moss or cut tree limbs for shelters or mattresses. Tie your shelters, do not use nails. A few three-sided shelters exist along park trails for emergency use. Hiking maps are not always up to date on their location or existence. Don't count on shelters. Carry your own tent or tarp.

**Fires** As the number of backpackers grows, campfires can become a problem. In very popular backcountry areas, natural processes cannot supply dead wood fast enough to feed campfires. Persons have been known to chop down their own wood if none is readily available. Heavily-used areas are often littered with abandoned fire rings. The scars from a campfire in a fragile environment can remain 15 to 25 years.

Because of these conditions, it became necessary in 1974 to prohibit open, wood fires in certain fragile or damaged areas of the Olympic backcountry to allow these sites to heal and return to their natural state. Research has shown that natural revegetation is either very slow or unlikely in these areas. Added protection is greatly needed.

In these and other areas, the use of a lightweight backpacking stove is advised. A stove eliminates the wood gathering scramble when you arrive in camp after a long day of hiking. Stoves provide good heat for cooking, perform well in the rain, and cause the least impact possible on the environment. Make your stove, not a fire, your social gathering point. Substitute a candle for light!

If you still want to build a fire, first ask yourself if a fire is really needed, not just desired. Build it below timberline in an existing fire ring. Keep any fire small and use only dead, down wood. On the coast, build your fire on the beach with driftwood, but away from piles of driftlogs. If a beach fire is not feasible, use an established fire ring in the woods.

**Stoves-Only—No Open Fires Areas** In Olympic National Park, certain areas are set aside for use of stoves-only.

West of the Elwha and North Fork of the Quinault Rivers, fires are prohibited above the 1,067-meter (3,500-foot) elevation level. East of the Elwha and North Fork of the Quinault Rivers, fires are not permitted above the 1,220-meter (4,000-foot) elevation level. Because of overuse, certain areas have lower stoves-only boundaries than listed above. Before your trip check at the nearest visitor center or ranger station for exact information.

Besides the stoves-only areas, a limited number of established and managed fire rings are located at selected sites in the following areas: Upper Bridge Creek Crossing on Soleduck River below Soleduck Park, 2 fire rings; Mink Lake, 3; Long Lake, 1; Soleduck Lake, 1; Lower Badger Valley, 1; Low Divide, 5; from Marmot Meadow north to Low Divide Summit, 6. If all of the fire rings are being used, any extra fires are prohibited. If you have any questions, a backcountry ranger is always glad to help.

## Clear Cool—Contaminated?

Organisms that cause disease have been found in the streams and lakes of the Olympic Peninsula. Even though the water looks cool and refreshing, it can make you miserable. Symptoms may include chronic diarrhea beginning from one to two weeks following contamination and may last for many weeks thereafter. Acute symptoms may be explosive diarrhea, excessive gas, dull pain, poor appetite, and loss of weight. Either pack in your own water, boil stream and lake water vigorously for one full minute, or check with rangers regarding chemical treatment.

## Regulations

Observe park rules. Help eliminate the need for more restrictions by hiking and camping responsibly.

Firearms of any type are prohibited in the back-

country. Firearms may be transported on park roads if they are sealed or packed to prevent their use.

All vehicles are prohibited in the backcountry.

Pack stock use is limited to eight animals per group for overnight trips. Carry your own stock feed. Do not picket stock in meadows or tether them to trees. Keep animals away from camp areas. Contact the nearest ranger station for more information on trail conditions; snow and fallen trees on some trails may limit your choice.

Fishing within Olympic National Park boundaries does not require a state fishing license. A punchcard, however, is required for salmon and steelhead. For current information on seasons, limits, and regulations, check park visitor centers and ranger stations. Because fish parts decompose slowly, bury them away from bodies of water. Entrails left near campsites can attract bears.

Quotas have been established for two areas in the park because of extremely heavy use and impact. From June 15 to Labor Day, Lake Constance (Dosewallips area) is limited to 20 persons per day, and Flapjack Lakes (Staircase area) is limited to 30 persons per day. Telephone reservations may be made for half of the daily quotas for each area by calling Staircase, 206-877-5569, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. The remainder of the reservations are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Reserved permits must be picked up by 11 a.m. on the day of entry at the ranger station nearest your destination.

Backcountry use permits are required for all overnight stays in the backcountry. They are free and can be obtained at trailheads and ranger stations. A permit filled out accurately helps locate you if the need arises, and provides important information for good backcountry management.

Group size is limited to 12 persons because the impact from large groups is tremendous. A larger group must split into smaller groups, traveling and camping as distinct groups, preferably beginning from different trailheads and camping 0.8 kilometer (0.5 mile) or more apart.

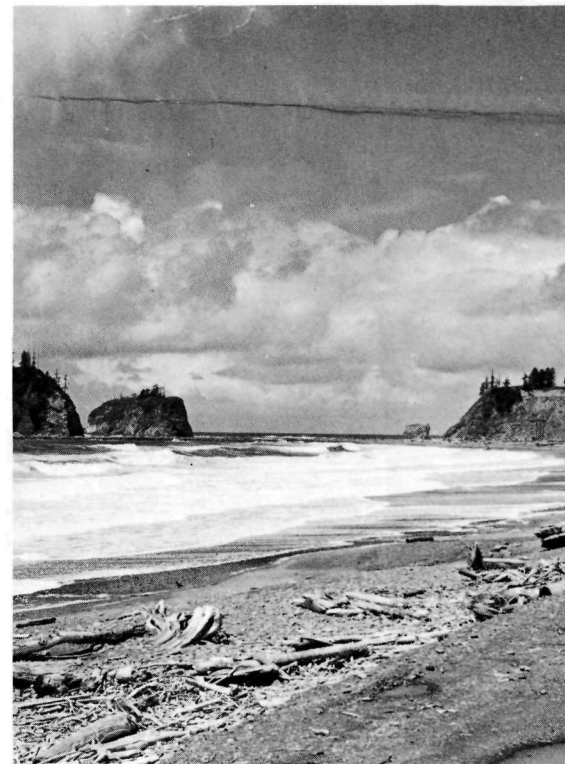
**Breaking into parked cars** is a problem in Olympic National Park. The best way to prevent a burglary in the middle of your vacation is to leave as many valuables as possible at home! Cars parked at isolated trailheads, or even campgrounds, with valuables visible on the seats are a great temptation to thieves. If you must bring valuables, lock them in your car trunk and keep a record of serial numbers. Use your driver's license number to mark items that lack serial numbers. Report all losses to the nearest ranger station.

## Chance of Rain Today

Rain, grumble, grumble, groan. But remember, precipitation is the reason for Olympic's lush rain forests and abundance of streams, lakes, and low elevation glaciers. Discomfort can be minimized, however, by preparing for all types of weather.

The western half of the park generally receives more precipitation than the eastern side, but rain is widespread throughout the park during the summer months. Summer temperatures range from 18° to 27°C (65° to 80°F) highs, and 7° to 13°C (45° to 55°F) for lows. It is cooler in winter with afternoon highs between 0° and 10°C (32° to 50°F). Rain is very frequent in the winter months, and snow is common in the higher elevations. Spring and fall weather is variable, sometimes warm, sometimes wet. Temperatures range from 2° to 20°C (35° to 70°F).

Wool clothing is a sensible backpacking item any time of year. Wool is warm even when wet, and the tight weave helps break the wind. Rain ponchos, rain pants, rain chaps, and gaiters will also help you stay dry and warm. Be sure to waterproof your boots before leaving to protect one of your most important investments. In



the Olympics a tent with a rainfly will offer better protection from rain and bugs than just a tent.

**Hypothermia** The number one killer of people in the outdoors is a mental and physical collapse when drained energy reserves gradually lower inner body temperatures. This is called hypothermia. If exposure to wet, cold, and wind continue, cold will reach the brain and reduce the power of judgment and reason. Hands and feet become numb as blood tries to supply vital organs adequately. Uncontrollable shivering, fumbling, and drowsiness may result. Without proper treatment this condition leads to stupor, collapse, and death. Avoid hypothermia. Stay dry by using raingear, seek shelter from the wind, prevent exhaustion, maintain energy by nibbling high-energy food, and stay warm by using wool clothing. By putting on a wool cap you can retain up to 50% of your body heat which could be lost through your head and neck.

Treat hypothermia immediately. For mild symptoms, get the victim out of the wind and rain, strip off all wet clothing. Give him something warm to drink. Get him into dry clothes and a warm sleeping bag. If the victim is semi-conscious or worse, try to keep him awake and put a second stripped person into the sleeping bag. Skin-to-skin contact is the most effective treatment.

## Sticky Situations in the Backcountry

If you become lost, first turn to your Ten Essentials: map, compass, extra food and clothing, flashlight, matches, firestarter, candle, knife, sunglasses, and first aid kit and carefully assess the situation. If you lack a compass, turn your watch so the hour hand points at the sun. True South lies halfway between the hour hand and twelve. Show some signal in the open. Use your whistle. Develop shelter. Stay put; don't follow creeks for they are the most dangerous routes in the Olympics. In any type of emergency, stay calm and think through all sides of the situation. Many emergencies can be avoided if you hike with a companion and give someone else your travel plans.

Make an injured person comfortable with shelter and food before seeking help. Ask other groups for assistance. Before leaving the injured person, make sure you know the location as exact as possible, date and time, details of accident and injuries, first aid given, people and equipment left at the scene, the person's name, address, age, and weight, and the telephone number of whom to notify about the injured person.

For beach hiking obtain a current tide table from the nearest ranger station or visitor center. This is very important, for some steep, rocky headlands are impassable and others may be rounded only at an outgoing, low tide. Don't take a chance of being trapped between rocks and crashing surf. The impassable headlands are marked by an orange and black marker; use an overland trail in these places.

Occasionally you must ford streams in the Olympics. Remove your socks, but put your boots back on, loosen pack straps and unfasten waistbelt to prevent your pack from dragging you under, and proceed with caution. Cross diagonally, yielding to the current, and use a supporting stick. Creeks are usually lowest in the morning. Don't be afraid to turn back and choose another crossing.

A snow-covered trail complicates route-finding by covering junctions and signs. Double check your route with map and compass before following the tracks of a previous hiker. Use caution when crossing snow bridges over creeks; probe with an ice ax or stick to check the thickness. Be sure to have an ice ax when crossing steep snow and know how to use it! Wear sunglasses, a long-sleeved shirt, hat, and apply sunburn cream when hiking over snow.

## Wildlife

All animals in the park are wild and should remain so. Enjoy them, but keep your distance. Feeding wildlife has detrimental effects on the animals and can be haz-

ardous to humans. Animals can bite, kick, or scratch without warning. Be especially cautious of a mother and her young.

There is a healthy population of black bears in the park, but no grizzly bears. These animals eat mostly plants, but are easily tempted into sampling human food. Bears do not harass hikers, but are opportunists when it comes to uneaten food, discarded garbage, and unattended backpacks. Bears and small rodents can chew through packs quickly; you should unzip the empty pockets to satisfy their curiosity. Don't help create a beggar bear; pack out your garbage and uneaten food. Hang all odorous items, even cosmetics, soap, and toothpaste at least 3 meters (10 feet) above the ground and 2 meters (6 feet) away from tree trunks and away from branches. If a bear wanders into your camp, it usually can be frightened away by loud noises. Report all contacts with bears to the nearest ranger station.

The mountain goat population in the park has been increasing rapidly in recent years. This non-native animal was introduced to the area prior to the park's establishment. Goats go to great lengths to obtain salt, including chewing sweaty shirts and eating urine-soaked dirt. Try to urinate on rocks, bare ground, or something a goat cannot root up and destroy. Guard your sweaty clothes, camera straps, and boot tongues from a nearby, curious goat.

Your pet may be your constant companion at home, but in the wild it could become your biggest enemy. A dog will not offer protection in the backcountry. It could even lead a startled bear, elk, or other large animal back to your camp, when your pet seeks the security of its master. Usually shy, wild animals have been known to chase and even kill pets when provoked. The sounds of barking and whining or just the scent of your pet could ruin your chances, or the chances of nearby hikers, of seeing wildlife. Protect your pet, park wildlife, and yourself—leave your pet at home! Pets are prohibited on all park trails.

## Administration

Olympic National Park is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. The superintendent's address is 600 East Avenue, Port Angeles, WA 98362

## National Park Service

U.S. Department of the Interior