



*The true wilderness experience  
is one, not of escaping,  
but of finding one's self  
by seeking the wilderness.*

Howard Zahniser

**Yosemite National Park *Wilderness***

# Hiking & backpacking in the Yosemite Wilderness

Visit [www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/backpacking.htm](http://www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/backpacking.htm) for more information.



Almost 95% of Yosemite National Park is designated Wilderness. Wilderness areas are designated by Congress to protect places that are wild and free for future generations. The Yosemite Wilderness has over 700 miles of trails.

Some basic planning will help make your trip safe and enjoyable while protecting Yosemite's trails.

**Plan ahead and prepare.** Choose a reasonable route for your group's abilities. Think about what type of wilderness experience you would like to have, and be aware of trip length and elevation changes. Plan your route with the help of topographic maps, guidebooks, [www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit](http://www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit), and wilderness centers in the park. For both day and overnight trips, don't leave the trailhead without the "10 Essentials." This includes a map & compass, sun protection, extra water, rain gear and clothing that insulates from cold, headlamp/flashlight, first aid kit, matches in a waterproof container, pocket knife, extra food, and an emergency shelter such as a tent or extra-large garbage bag. Be prepared for bad weather and emergencies, and inform someone of where you're going and when you plan to return.



PREVENT NEW TRAIL RUTS  
BY STAYING ON THE TRAIL

**Stay on the trail.** Don't shortcut switchbacks—it causes soil erosion, trail destruction, and hazardous conditions such as new, unintended trails which may confuse other hikers. Keep your group size to 15 people or less, and hike in single-file lines on trails. Walking next to one another widens trails and increases erosion.

**Trail Etiquette.** Leave dogs and bicycles at home—they are prohibited in wilderness. Be courteous and yield to others visitors, horses, and mules on the trail. Be aware that sound carries in Yosemite, and respect the quiet atmosphere of the wilderness so that other visitors can also enjoy the sounds of nature. If staying overnight, camp away from trails so that views are clear of tents. Leave rocks, plants, and other objects as you found them for others to discover.

Present this postcard for 10% off any purchase at any Yosemite Association bookstore in Yosemite National Park. Not combinable with other offers. Not applicable to bear canister rentals or memberships. Learn more about us at [www.yosemite.org](http://www.yosemite.org)!



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