

Safety in the Hills

Sources of information

General information about safety in the hills can be found on a number of websites including:

<http://www.safeinthehills.org.uk/>

<http://www.mcofs.org.uk/enjoy-scottish-hills-in-safety.asp>

<https://www.thebmc.co.uk/essential-hill-walking-knowhow>

Here are a few tips for people coming on GOC walks in hilly areas. Please refer to the above websites and other authoritative sources for more information.

These tips are aimed mainly at novices and do not cover winter conditions, when there is snow and ice on the ground. You should not attempt to go out on the hills in these conditions until you have substantial experience of hill walking in non-winter conditions.

Weather

The weather in hilly areas of the UK is unpredictable and can be cold, wet and windy, even in the middle of summer. It is typically 6°C colder at 1000m than at sea level and wind chill can exacerbate this effect. What seems like adequate clothing at the bottom of the hill may be insufficient for the summit, especially if the walk takes longer than planned. On the other hand sunburn and heatstroke can be a problem in summer.

Tips:

- obtain an up to date weather forecast before you set out
- take appropriate clothing and equipment (see below)
- be prepared to change or cancel your plans if the weather is poor.

Mountain weather forecasts can be found at:

<http://www.mwis.org.uk/home>

Clothing and equipment

Always bring:

- warm clothing including long trousers, a woolly hat and gloves
- a waterproof jacket and waterproof overtrousers
- proper walking boots, not trainers
- at least one litre of drinking water and/or a hot drink
- more food than you think you will need.

In summer also bring:

- a sun hat

- sun lotion
- extra water.

When the days are relatively short (October to March) also bring:

- a headtorch
- spare batteries.

Other things to think about

How would you cope if separated from the rest of the group? Consider taking a course in navigation if you are not already competent with a map and compass.

Have you got any medical condition that could be an issue? Should you bring extra medication in case you get stuck out on the hill overnight?

If in doubt about anything, talk to the event organiser or other experienced GOC members before setting out.

Please make a note of the event organiser's details and try to let him/her know if you are delayed in arriving.