



# TRAIL MARKERS

## 2024 PHILMONT TREK TIPS

### SHIP 1610

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#### NEWS

As published in the November 2022 [Philmont Ambassador](#) newsletter, there were some health advisories and some changes coming in crew requirements in 2024:

- Starting in 2024, four WFA-trained crew members will be a requirement. These can be youth as well as adult leaders. We'll put a certification class on our schedule.
- Starting in 2024, three advisors per crew will be a requirement. Ship 1610 crews have 3 advisors each - we are good.

Philmont's health medical requirements are strictly enforced, yet some Advisors think that they will be permitted in the backcountry once they arrive with their crew. They are wrong. They will spend their time at Base Camp while their crew treks. Sometimes an advisor's medical condition like high blood pressure may not manifest itself until they are at Philmont's altitude. Each participant who is 18 years of age or older will have his or her blood pressure checked at Philmont. Those individuals with a blood pressure consistently greater than 150/95 may be kept off the trail until the blood pressure decreases. "Again, we will provide a Ranger, male or female as needed, as a replacement advisor to get the crew on the trail," said Steve Nelson, Camping Director. "I would guess that we had to deny participation to approximately 25 to 30 adult leaders this past summer."

#### PROGRAM

##### Chuck Wagon and Mexican Dinners

Chuck wagon and Mexican dinners are a program choice on some itineraries that offer the crew a cooked meal, in place of the usual backpacking dehydrated fare.

Philmont staff will provide the ingredients and cooking equipment, the crew will help prepare the meal and do cleanup. This is a meal you don't need to carry. Also, the staff can accommodate any food restriction.

Chuck wagon dinner is available at Beaubien, Clarks Fork, and Ponil. Mexican dinner is available at Abreu.

There may be a few itineraries where programs are listed with an "OR" condition. For example, "Side hike Tooth of Time OR Chuck Wagon Dinner & Horse Rides." Crews must select the program they wish to take part in during Trip Planning in Logistics (either the Tooth of Time side hike OR the Chuck Wagon Dinner & Horse Rides in this example). It is not possible or practical to do all the programs listed and selection of one choice will permit the proper meals to be scheduled and picked up.



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#### PHYSICAL READINESS

##### Dehydration

Dehydration is a lack of total body water, with an accompanying disruption of metabolic processes. It occurs when water loss exceeds water intake, usually due to exercise or high environmental temperature. A body water loss of 1-2%, considered mild dehydration, is shown to impair cognitive performance. Given that humans have 40-45L, then problems start when you are only 1L behind.

In warm or humid weather, or during heavy exertion, water loss can increase markedly through sweating. Whole-body sweat losses can exceed 2 L/h during competitive sport, with rates of 3-4 L/h observed during short-duration, high-intensity exercise in the heat. When such large amounts of water are being lost through perspiration, electrolytes, especially sodium, are also being lost. The inclusion of replacement drinks has benefits and poses little or no risk.



The hallmarks of dehydration include thirst and neurological changes such as headaches, general discomfort, loss of appetite, confusion, unexplained tiredness, decreased urine volume, dark urine color, purple fingernails, and seizures. Dehydration can cause hypernatremia and in presence of extreme physical exertion lead to rhabdomyolysis.

#### THE PHILMONT WAY

##### Crew Equipment

In addition to personal gear, each crew has equipment that is necessary. Items are assigned to a scout and are carried for entire trip. When arriving at camp, setup tarp and gather all crew equipment under the tarp. Smellables go into bear bag.

##### EQUIPMENT PROVIDED BY THE SHIP

Equipment	Qty	Weight	Comments
Sewing Kit	1		
Stove repair kit	1	0.25 lb	MSR Whisperlite
Tent Stakes	10 / person	0.5 lb	Aluminum gutter nails
Water containers	2	1 lb	2.5 gallon, collapsible
Backpacking stove	2	2 lb	MSR Whisperlite
Fuel bottle	2	2 lb	1 quart size, MSR Whisperlite



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Equipment	Qty	Weight	Comments
Fuel funnel	1		
First aid kit	1	2 lb	
Duck tape	1 sm roll	0.25 lb	
Waterproof ground cloth	1 / tent	0.25 lb	5' x 7'
Nylon cord	3	1 lb	50' x 1/8"
Sunscreen	3		6 oz tubes, SPF 50
Insect repellent	2		Small bottle, no aerosol
Water filter	1	0.5 lb	Backup for purification tablets
Multi-tool	1	0.5 lb	
Trowel	1	0.5 lb	
Carabiner	2	0.25 lb	Climbing strength, for bear bags

EQUIPMENT ISSUED BY PHILMONT - All items are picked up on day 1 and returned on day 12. Must pay for damage or loss.

Equipment	Qty	Weight	Comments
Dining fly	1	4 lb	12' x 12'
Collapsible poles	2	1 lb	Use trekking poles?
Philmont tent	1/buddy pair	6 lb	
Cook pot w/ lid	1	1.5 lb	8 qt
Wash pot w/o lid	1	1.25 lb	8 qt
Large spoon	1	0.25 lb	
Hot pot tongs	1	0.25 lb	Use multi-tool?
Plastic trash bags	10	0.25 lb	
Salt/pepper			
Cleaning kit		0.25 lb	Dish soap, scrubber
Plastic strainer & scraper	1	0.5 lb	
Toilet paper		2 lb	resupplied
Bear bags	6	1.5 lb	
Nylon rope	3	3.5 lb	For hanging bear bags
Water tablets			Micropur, resupply

Not including the tents and ground cloths, this amounts to about 30 pounds of gear. With the current crew size of 9, that's about 3.5 pounds per person.



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Estimating pack weight:

Personal gear	15 lb
Tent (1/2 of tent)	3 lb
Crew gear	3.5 lb
Food (4 days)	10 lb
Water (3 qts)	6 lb
TOTAL	37.5 lb

#### **LEADERSHIP**

##### Introduction to Time Management in the Philmont Backcountry

A Philmont trek is not a lazy day at the beach. You're not going to suddenly decide to pop-in to Philmont next week for a 12-day hike. It's an adventure that requires careful planning, preparation and teamwork. Your crew has places to be and many, many things to do. While you don't have time to do everything on your trek, some effective time management will help your crew maximize the fun while you prepare for the unexpected.

Your scouts might think that following a schedule and managing your time on a trek sucks the fun out of the trip. Instead, it gives your crew more time to do fun activities and can allow you to quickly recover from the inevitable setbacks.

##### What is Time Management?

Time management is simply your crew's plan on how you will divide your time between specific activities in the backcountry. Good time management lets you get more done in less time and it allows your crew better to overcome any unexpected obstacles to your plan. Just stating that Tommy Tenderfoot will set-up the bear bag in 15 minutes, doesn't make it happen. Your crew needs to practice and be prepared.

##### Your Busy Itinerary

A typical day at Philmont is more than just backpacking. There are lots of things to see and do. Some camps offering shooting sports, rock climbing, fishing and more. There are often one or two staffed camps on the way to your overnight camp. If your crew is prepared and manages your time wisely you just might squeeze it all into your day... and that's if everything goes as expected.

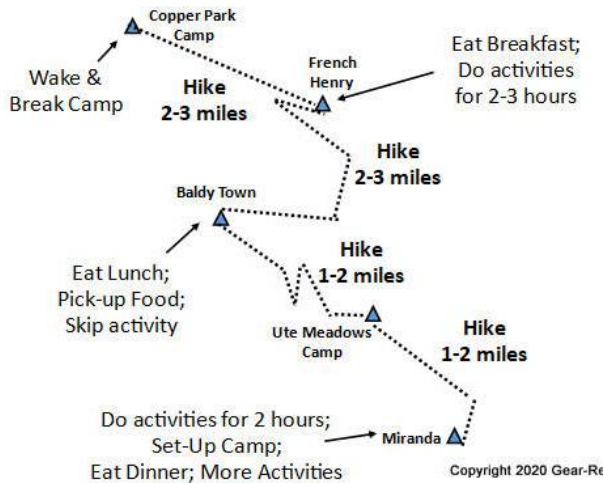


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#### Typical Travel Day in Philmont Backcountry



...And the staff at those camps aren't just sitting around waiting on just your crew to show up. They might have over a dozen crews to guide on a single day. If your crew sleeps-in and arrives at the next staffed camp late in the morning, you will likely be waiting around behind several other crews.

Early is on time.

You also need to consider the time needed to hike between camps, prepare meals, treat water and set-up & break down camp. You don't want to spend hours breaking camp when there are other fun activities to do.

One crew hit the time-suck trifecta in a single day with health problems, extremely hot weather, and orienteering issues. As a result, the crew did not reach their destination camp that night and ended up camping in the forest. They did not reach that camp until the next morning. It took a day or two of careful time management to catch up before they had time to do any camp activities.

#### Selling Time Management to Your Crew

Sticking to a schedule and routine can be a tough sell to teenagers. Possibly one or more of these "Reasons Why" your crew should train and do time management will resonate with your crew:

- I want to climb Baldy - Usually lightning storms roll into Baldy around noon. Without an early start and an effective time management plan in camp and on the trail, you may not make it.
- I want to do activity X, Y and Z and the staffed camps - Guess what? All the other crews want to do those activities, too. If they arrive first, you might be waiting around for a couple or hours before you get a turn or not get to do the activity at all.
- This is tough, I'm not sure I can do this - The mental challenge of backpacking 50-100 miles can be every bit as hard as the physical one. Having a structured routine for your day and falling back on your familiar training will help your crew get over the mental challenge... I did this yesterday. I made it and had fun. Maybe I can do



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it again today.

- It's only a 7-mile hike today, we have plenty of time - No, you do not. Bad weather, bad navigation, bears, burros and blisters are just a few of the many challenges that will eat into your time. Manage your time wisely so that your crew can overcome these obstacles.

#### When You Might Want to Alter Your Time Management Plan

There are several times that you will need to put your time management plan on pause. Mostly this involves health and safety of your crew and you will have to recover as best as you can later. These include:

- **Severe Weather** - If you get caught in a lightning or hailstorm find a safe area as soon as possible and hunker down. Usually, these will blow over in about 30 minutes and you may not have time to set-up your rain fly. No, rain is not severe weather - Hike On.
- **Hot Spots and Blisters** - Stop and address hot spots and blisters as soon as possible. A 20-minute break now to fix this issue, will save your crew hours of slower-paced hiking later.
- **Sick or Injured Crew Member** - Depending on the severity, this can delay your crew for hours. Get to the closest staffed camp as soon as possible, even if it is not on your route or even if you must backtrack. After an evaluation, your crew member may be pulled from the trail and taken back to base camp. This type of delay may mean that your crew can do nothing else that day but get to your next destination camp.
- **Mental Fatigue** - For many scouts (and Scouters) a Philmont trek might be the biggest challenge of their lives. The day-to-day effort can be a huge physical and mental challenge. Sometimes your crew just needs a break to push on through the next challenge. Breaks are also good to help celebrate a particularly tough challenge. For example, your crew took a couple of packs-off breaks descending Baldy to enjoy the scenery before our next challenge, a storm.