

HIKING SAFELY THIS WINTER

Hiking the Bruce Trail in the winter can be a beautiful way to explore the Niagara Escarpment, stay active, and find solace in the colder months.

Winter hiking normally involves a bit of extra planning. This year, with COVID-19 concerns, this is especially true. Here are a few important ways you can stay safe while hiking this winter.

Stay local

- Avoid travelling outside your municipality or region.

Stay home if you are unwell

- If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, stay home.

Check for Trail Closures or Restrictions

- Check for Trail closures or restrictions at brucetrail.org/trail-changes and the websites of parks and other public landowners.

Plan for earlier, shorter days & changeable weather

- Check weather conditions before heading out and be prepared for them to change.
- Choose a route that is familiar to you. When trails are covered in snow, it can be harder to find your way. Be extra attentive in looking for trail blazes.
- Choose a shorter distance than you would normally cover in summer conditions. Snow and ice will slow your hiking speed.
- Nightfall arrives earlier in winter months. Start early in the day and plan to be off the trail before dark.

Pack for the winter

- Wear layers and pack extra layers. Staying dry is key to staying warm in the winter and layers will help you do both.



- Avoid wearing cotton since it holds moisture. Opt for synthetics or wool. This goes for socks too.
- Keep your footing with sturdy waterproof boots, icers (removable traction devices for footwear) & poles.
- Pack a flashlight or headlamp, with fresh batteries.
- Fuel your body and stay hydrated.

Practice Physical Distancing

- Avoid hiking alone in the winter, for safety.
- Keep 6 feet (2 m) apart from anyone not in your household.
- Move aside to allow others to pass.

Expect No Facilities

- Do not expect public washrooms or indoor spaces to be open.

Leave No Trace

- Pack out everything you bring on your hike - including disposable face masks, food waste, and dog droppings.

Organized Group Hikes with our Bruce Trail Clubs

Bruce Trail Club organized hikes are currently open for BTC members and guests only. Registration is required. Group size is limited to 10 and wearing masks on hikes is strongly recommended.

The following Bruce Trail Clubs have paused their hiking programs until further notice: Toronto Bruce Trail Club, Caledon Hills Bruce Trail Club, Blue Mountains Bruce Trail Club, and Beaver Valley Bruce Trail Club.

See the Hike Schedule and Group Hike Guidelines at hikes.brucetrail.org

Please Note: These guidelines are in place at time of printing (December 2020) and may change in response to the evolving COVID-19 pandemic and guidance provided by Canada's and Ontario's public health officers. Visit brucetrail.org for updates.

Remember: the Bruce Trail is not maintained in the winter

Trail conditions vary according to season and the weather. The Bruce Trail is not maintained during the winter months. Hazards exist along the Bruce Trail. You are responsible for your own safety.