

Central Ohio Grotto of the National Speleological Society

Cave Trip Leadership Guide

Group Information

- 14 year age limit for trips longer than 4 hours
- 12 year age limit for trips less than 4 hours
- maximum group size of 16
 - 12 teens
 - 2 adult leaders (minimum of 1 for every 6 teens)
 - minimum of 2 cavers

Boy Scouts of America

- The BSA has a 14 year age limit for all high-adventure activities -- including caving
- There must be 2 BSA registered Adult leaders
- Scouts must have achieved at least First Class rank.

Assumption of Risk Form

Every teen and adult leader must have a signed Assumption of Risk form before the can be taken into a cave.

Grotto Gear

The COG has approved helmets and headlights that can be borrowed by the group at no cost. A liability waiver is required to borrow the grotto's equipment.

Individual Gear

Each individual must have the following gear. Each individual's gear will be approved by one of the trip leaders prior to entering the cave. Any individual who has incomplete or inadequate gear will not be let into the cave. Do not rely on trip leaders to bring extra gear for you.

Clothing

- Study boots that cover the ankle
- Coveralls or old jeans and a heavy shirt (e.g., sweatshirt or a long-sleeve shirt and a light jacket)
- Heavy (preferably wool) socks
- Gloves (preferably leather)
- Knee-pads
- 2 backup sources of light with extra batteries
 - No larger than a 2-D cell flashlight. Preferably 2 2-AA cell flashlights
 - Batteries must be long-life Alkaline
 - Energizer
 - Duracell
 - Rayovac Maximum
 - Kodak
 - (Panasonic Alkaline batteries are unacceptable)
- Sturdy fanny-pack or small back-pack
- Helmet with 4-point chin-strap (if not borrowing the Grotto's)
- Helmet-mounted light source (if not borrowing the Grotto's)

Remember that the gear that is worn or taken into a cave will get wet and muddy. You can't get ground-in cave mud out of your gear after a trip.

Nourishment

Every caver must provide his or her own nourishment.

- 12oz non-sugared drink (fruit juice is OK, water is preferred) for trips with a planned in-cave time of less than 4 hours.
- 1Qt non-sugared drink for trips with a planned in-cave time of between 4 and 8 hours
- Drinks must be carried in a durable plastic bottle with a screw-on top.
- Compact, high-energy snack food
 - GORP
 - Trail Mix
 - Granola Bars
 - Power Bars

Other Gear

Some other gear that can be carried into the cave includes:

- Watch
- First-Aid kit
- Point-and-Click camera with flash (Disposables are good and you don't have to worry about destroying them!)

Some gear that will not be allowed into the cave:

- Toys
- Cookware
- Video Camera

Suggested Reading

Caving; Designed for Venture crews and Varsity Teams, Boy Scouts of America, Inc. 1998
A Guide to Responsible Caving, Adrian (Ed) Sira, National Speleological Society, Inc.

National Speleological Society

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Caver Notes

1. These rules are meant to make your caving trip safer and more enjoyable and to limit your and the Grotto's liability in case of an accident.
2. It is in your best interest to make sure the scouts and adult leaders have the appropriate gear. Not only does it help reduce the chance of accidents, but also it improves the enjoyment of the group once they get in the cave. Inappropriate gear and nourishment has been brought into a cave, things I've seen include:
 - A 12-pack of 8oz juice boxes
 - A toy sword
3. Panasonic Alkaline batteries do not last as long as the suggested batteries. Experience says that they last about ½ as long.
4. The Assumption of Risk for is provided by the **National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS)** and has not been tested in court.