



Paarl/Wellington Section of Mountain Club S.A.

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Safety Guidelines

- Never hike alone - four is an ideal size for a party.
- Always carry water.
- Choose the route according to the ability, fitness, experience, etc. of the party.
- **Tell someone exactly where you are going** (up and down routes, as well as your expected time of return) and stick to this route and plan.
- Always go prepared for bad weather, i.e. **take proper weatherproof clothing** even on a sunny day (wind and rain proof); torches - with spare batteries and globes; good footwear - strong boots or shoes with non-slip soles; food; water; a flask of tea or some other beverage; a rucksack to carry it all in - so as to leave your arms and hands free.
- Get an update about the weather forecast before leaving camp. A cold front can move in within a few hours.
- Wear bright clothing so that you could be easily spotted should you get lost.
- On the trip/hike assign a *Tail- end Charlie* or *Trail Sweep*.
- Heed signs advising of danger and do not take short cuts or go down unknown ravines.
- Continually observe the environment and the group for any change or problems
- **Keep together** and travel at the pace of the slowest. Do not split up and go in different directions.
- Regroup periodically.
- Watch the weather and time - turn back in case of threatening bad weather, the route taking longer than expected, or the route no longer being easy to follow.
- On your return tell whoever is expecting you that you are back.

What if it happens to you...

You are with someone who is injured on the mountain:

- Should someone have an accident **keep calm**; stay together as a party until things are sorted out; ascertain to the best of your ability exactly what the injuries are and attend to them, where possible.
- Approach the patient, if safe to do so.
- Apply first aid.
- Check responsiveness, then ABC:
 - Check Airway
 - Check Breathing
 - Check Circulation and stop bleeding
- If **any** possibility of spinal damage (especially neck) - **do not move** the person unless it is necessary to do so for safety reasons.
- Do not rush off immediately and report an accident. Fifteen minutes or so spent observing reactions and making the person comfortable is time well spent. It happens quite often that even if someone is knocked out temporarily they may not be seriously injured and after a rest are able to walk down.
- Leave someone with the patient if possible - it is **imperative** that they remain with them until the rescuers arrive.
- Go for help - do **not** run if it is unsafe: **you are of no help if you do not make it to a phone!** For safety's sake, it is preferable to send two persons for help.
- On their way down they should identify landmarks so that they are able to describe the exact location of the accident or to guide a rescue party to the scene.
- Accidents should be reported to the nearest emergency services, South African Police station or relevant authority responsible for the area in which the accident occurred.

- For assistance with emergencies in the Western Cape phone 021 937 0300 or 10177. Give:
 - your phone number
 - where you are
 - where the accident occurred
 - what happened
 - the nature of the injuries
- Stay at the phone! The mountain rescue leader will contact you for further details. If necessary, send someone else back to help.
- Remain available for questioning by the rescue leader so as to be able to give full details of the accident - where, when, how and what.

You become lost or trapped while in the mountains:

- Don't panic. If you told someone where you were going and when you were returning, a rescue team will come looking for you.
- If you get lost or find yourself in an area that looks unsafe retrace your steps - do not push on into the unknown.
- If you cannot find the path you left, look for a safe route - preferably down broad open slopes - making sure that at all times you can retrace your steps.
- If trapped, seek shelter. It is important to get out of the wind, but don't hide yourself so well that you become impossible to find.
- Do not descend an unknown ravine. A cliff or waterfall may be hard to spot in dim light or rain.

Someone does not return from a hike/climb:

- Phone 10177 or 10111.
- Report the incident as being mountain related. State your name and phone number.
- Stay at the phone - someone will contact you for further details.
- Depending on the nature of the incident, a rescue operation may be started immediately or the rescue leader may decide to postpone until first light, improved weather etc.

Emergency Numbers

Program these **24-hour numbers** into your cell phone:

Emergency Number: 10177 or 112 on cell phone

• **Mountain Rescue - 021 937 0300** - for medical assistance and rescue services (direct number to Metro Control for Wilderness Search And Rescue and MCSA Search & Rescue)

NOTE: In addition to calling the Mountain Rescue number, it is advisable to call any rescue personnel member that you may personally know of, so keep a cell number or two handy. It is also often possible to get an SMS through where no call is possible, but ask for confirmation of its receipt, to be sure.

Program your fellow hikes Cell numbers into your cell phone.

Hike Leaders should have a list of Cell Phone Numbers of people on his/her hike as well as their ICE Numbers.

