



## GOOD FOR YOU AND YOUR DOG!

Leave Only Paw Prints™ is a set of values and a way of life. We take a holistic approach to protecting pups and park access across California, suggesting simple tips for thoughtful dog travel.

In addition to minimizing impact on wildlife and natural habitats, we create a safety net for pups. That's especially important when you visit unfamiliar trails and beaches.

Protecting both your dog and the environment is easy. Keep in mind our six Leave Only Paw Prints values as you plan your next adventure—whether you're walking down the block or trekking in new terrain.

### 1) Plan ahead and bring plenty of fresh water:

Planning ahead helps keep travels fun and safe. Start with the basics. Make sure your dog is micro-chipped and wearing a nametag with your cell number. Bring some bags for puppy bathroom breaks. Whether you're hiking the trails or hitting the beach, pack plenty of fresh water for you and your four-legged friends. Drinking from the ocean leaves dogs dehydrated. A few slurps of water containing tiny crustaceans or algae can trigger tummy troubles—and, large amounts can be downright dangerous.

### 2) Always follow posted rules:

Respect all rules posted in parks, at trailheads and on beaches. Sure, you'll save yourself an expensive fine by following instructions. But you'll also protect local wildlife, sensitive habitats and your own family—including both people and pups. That "No Dogs Allowed" sign at the lake could be safeguarding a source of community drinking water. It might be shielding a threatened species that lives along the shore. Or, it could mean that the water is polluted with blue-green algae blooms that can be fatal to dogs.

Responsible pet parents also mitigate the risks that jeopardize our favorite recreational areas. In the western U.S., devastating wildfires can grow from just one spark on a hot, dry, windy day. Always follow park rules related to campfires, cigarettes and fire prevention.

### 3) Be considerate of others, with or without dogs:

Being a considerate dog parent means more than following rules and cleaning up after Rover. Dog travel is a privilege that we must carefully protect. Your furry friend may be a gentle soul who would never hurt a fly, let alone a human. Still, some people have had bad experiences with dogs. They might panic if an unleashed pup runs toward them. Some dogs are sensitive to other dogs, as well.



Leash up if you're sharing the trail with pups or people who seem hesitant, whether they're on foot or on wheels. (And, always use a leash around horses.) Acting with awareness and allowing others to enjoy the serenity of nature is key to preserving public access for dogs.

4) In off-leash areas, keep your dog under voice command:

Many of California's beautiful trails and beaches have off-leash areas for dogs. This is a treat for pups, and a privilege that people need to protect. Being responsible with an off-leash dog means keeping that furry friend in your line of sight at all times. Make sure dogs respond to your voice commands, as well. Leash up when moving from open spaces to single-track trails. This protects you and your dog, plus any mountain bikers or horseback riders who might be sharing the path. [Check out our blog](#) for training tips.

5) Respect and protect wildlife and natural marine habitats:

This simple Leave Only Paw Prints guideline is one of the most significant: Please respect and protect California nature. Wildlife and habitats here are incredibly rare. In fact, many of the Golden State's 770 native wildlife species and 6,300 plant species exist nowhere else.

With the exception of California State Parks and the National Park Service, which typically require dogs to stay on paved roads, you'll find thousands of dog-friendly trails and beaches across California. You can help us keep them that way. Review regional expectations and rules before you roam, and [check out this resource guide](#) for more ways to travel lightly—with or without your dog.

6) Pack in and pack out. Leave Only Paw Prints:

Why are pups so often banned from parks and beaches? Dog waste. When poop bags and piles get left on trails, people complain, and public agencies respond by restricting access. In many areas, it's common to see unwanted pet poo brushed to the side of paths. This happens even when open space districts have installed bags and waste containers at trailheads.

Yes, wild animals leave their waste in the woods. But, dogs are different. Pet food contains byproducts not found in the wild, and pathogens in poop piles can contaminate water, release bacteria into the air, and spread disease among birds and animals. You can help prevent these problems and keep parks open to all. Please clean up after your dog and properly dispose of the bags.