



# TRAIL MARKERS

## 2024 PHILMONT TREK TIPS

### SHIP 1610

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#### NEWS

##### Philmont Gear Garage Sale

The Tooth of Time Trader's online store is selling use Philmont equipment at bargain prices.

Thunder Ridge Tents

Jansport Klamath 75 Packs

Kelty Tioga 5300 Packs

Canvas Tents (10'x12')

Kelty Tioga 5500 Packs

Trail Meals

Check it out at their website: <https://store.philmontscoutranch.org/trail-food/>

#### PROGRAM

##### Rock Climbing and Rappelling

**Rock climbing and rappelling** are fascinating and challenging sports and are favorites of all Philmont campers. You'll scale a steep pitch and rappel down a sheer cliff. Philmont has carefully selected three areas to conduct this program where the rocks are safe and practical, but a distinct "Class Five" challenge. Under the supervision of expert climbers, you will climb using your hands and feet while protected by rope, carabiners, and helmet. Rock climbing at Philmont is restricted to the three locations: Miners Park, Cimarroncito, and Chase Cow, and is only done under the supervision of Philmont rock climbing staff. Cimarroncito also has an indoor climbing gym in case the weather is bad.

**High ropes and climbing tower** using the 38 foot tall High COPE (Challenging Outdoor Personal Experience) course. Crews are able to climb on several of the sides and complete 5 obstacles (two rope bridge, cargo net, Snake, Diamond, and log bridge) 38 feet up in the air. COPE courses and climbing tower are at Rocky Mountain Scout Camp (RMSC)

**Spar pole climbing** practices the skills of loggers with the Continental Tie and Lumber Company. Spar pole climbing is available at Crater Lake and Pueblano.

If you are interested in a "**climbing trek**", then select 12-18. It visits RMSC for the high ropes course, Cimarroncito and Miners Park for rock climbing and rappelling, and Crater Lake for spar pole climbing.



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#### PHYSICAL READINESS

##### Don't Ruin the Trek

It is imperative that parents understand that they will create problems for their child if they are too involved in Philmont Trek prep. During the trek, the scout needs to be rather self sufficient. If the parent does everything for their child before the trek, then the child won't be prepared to do those things for themselves once they are on the trek.

A true story I've recently heard was that a Scout sat down on day 2, mid-way through an 8-mile hike and refused to go any further. He claimed to be having an asthma attack, but the crew didn't hear any asthma type wheezing... just that he was breathing a little heavy. The advisor had known the scout for years and told him to keep hiking. So, he worked his way to the back of the line and spent 30 minutes lobbying the Ranger about how much trouble he was having breathing before he sat down and said he was done hiking... about 4 miles into an 8-mile hike. His goal appeared to be getting sent home so he didn't have to carry his pack any longer. After calling base camp and transported the scout to the infirmary, the crew continued on their trek.

But on day 4, that Scout rejoined the crew! The advisor said, "Grab your pack. We're gonna figure out how to get your pack lighter so you can keep up, because no one is carrying your stuff for you." He had the deer in the headlights look, but grudgingly went along.

They went through EVERY little nook and cranny of his pack. He insisted that he packed everything himself, but he couldn't say what would be in most pockets or compartments of his pack, and looked surprised when some of the stuff was pulled out. They found LOTS of zip locks with stuff in them and Momma's handwriting on the outside telling her son what was in the bag. They removed at least 25Lbs of completely unnecessary stuff from his pack, boxed it up, and sent it to base camp, normally not allowed.

After lightening his pack significantly he was able to keep up with the crew most of the time and they only had a few other incidents where he markedly slowed the crew down.

I hope someone talked with his Momma about this. She needs to understand how her actions impacted not just her son, but the whole crew... who missed a really cool program opportunity since they got into camp after sunset. Oh... and by the way, That staffed camp only had 4 staff. 2 of them came to help the crew. That meant that NO CREWS got program at that camp that evening. So, Momma impacted about a dozen crews that day.

The lesson is, get into great physical shape, and keep your load small. Only pack what's needed. Don't ruin everyone's trek.



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#### THE PHILMONT WAY

##### Personal Electronics

In an age of technology, smartphones are a common tool used in everyday life. While backpacking in the wilderness of Philmont is an experience best enjoyed without the distractions of technology, Philmont recognizes that their use is more common than ever. Photographs and videos can be taken on these phones, and solar chargers are widely available, as well as several useful outdoor apps. Cell phone service is very limited in Philmont's backcountry - it is generally available in the base camp area.

If it is imperative that a smart phone be taken on the trail, please ensure that it is being utilized in a way that enhances the Philmont experience and does not detract from the adventure for your crew or that of other crews on the trail. Download apps that will help the learning experience. Find a good stars/constellation app, an animal tracks/scat/calls app, or compare bird calls you hear on the trail with a bird call app. Reserve texting and phone calls for emergency use only. Also, keep in mind that there are NO OPPORTUNITIES on the trail or in any backcountry camp to ever recharge a smart phone, camera, or other electronic device.

Cell phone service and power are very limited in most of the Philmont backcountry. If a participant relies on a phone call, text, or games as a coping mechanism during stress those may not be available at Philmont. Learning new coping mechanisms and time away from electronics before a Philmont adventure will help participants be more successful.

Philmont does not allow the use of drones by participants for any purpose and restricts the use of drones to only include the Philmont Marketing Department and the Philmont Fire Department.

#### LEADERSHIP

##### Tips for Breaking Camp Quickly

Here are the basic policies that Philmont proposes:

- The Crew Leader should be responsible for waking the crew. A normal time to wake up is anywhere between 5:30 and 6:00am **[more on that below]**. People should pack up their personal gear first (sleeping bags, tents, etc.) then get the bear bags down and finish packing their packs.
- Lead by the Wilderness Pledge Guide, make sure to "fluff your duff" by returning the appearance of your tent site to what it was before your tent was placed. To rejuvenate the grass, pine needles, etc. that was under your tent, use your hands or



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feet to gently rearrange the material into a position that is more natural than the imprinted rectangle left by your tent.

- Form a line with your crew to police the area, picking up all trash and making sure no gear is left behind.
- Pack out cold ashes from campfire ring by using an empty meal bag. Ashes should be dispersed 30 minutes outside of camp and 100 ft. off the trail.
- Some crews prefer to eat breakfast while hiking or 30 minutes down the trail as an extra incentive to get out of camp early.

#### Break Camp in 30 Minutes or Less

Breaking camp in the morning can be one of the biggest time sucks on your trek. On your first shakedown hike, you might find that it takes your crew almost 2 hours from wake to trail (W2T). With a little prioritization, organization, and practice you should be able to get to 30 minutes from W2T.

#### Your Crew's Strike Camp Priorities...

1. Dress, drink water, and take a Red Roof Inn break (10 minutes)
2. Place sleeping system in your pack (5 minutes)
3. Disassemble tent, rainfly, and bear bags and distribute all gear into packs (15 minutes)

All these priorities can be done concurrently, though it helps if everyone is together at the end to ensure an even distribution of the crew gear and food into packs. Remember this is a Scout trek, unless you have a small crew the scouts should carry the crew gear and food, except maybe the crew's first aid kit.

#### Tips to shave off Camp Striking minutes:

- Place all gear and water where it is supposed to be the night before.
- Sleep in some of the clothes you plan to wear the next morning. Philmont's rules won't allow sleeping in outer clothes that might have food smells on them, but you can at least have your fresh socks and underwear on with your designated "sleep clothes" when you go to sleep to make it a bit quicker in the morning.
- Share a tent. Not only does that reduce your pack weight, but that's one or two fewer pieces of gear to break down and pack in the morning.
- Minimize extra gear to reduce packing time. This helps reduce your pack weight,



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too. Ideally, your gear should have multiple purposes. For example, leave the Philmont provided rain fly poles at base camp and use your trekking poles instead.

- Skip all activities that are not on your Strike Camp priority list - No Breakfast, No Coffee, No Journaling, No Watching the Sunrise, and No Sleeping.
- Navigator figures out where the trailhead is located on the day before.
- Crew leader holds evening briefing with the crew for tomorrow's hike. Don't wait until ready to leave to tell everyone where you are going.
- After dinner cleanup, prepare all the crew gear for immediate packing.
- Wake early - up at dawn and hit the trail by sunrise. Civil dawn will be at 5:15 am, nautical dawn is at 4:37 am. Sunrise is at 5:46 am.
- Wear a wristwatch with an alarm. Set the alarm for your wakeup time.
- Eat breakfast after walking at least an hour. Eat when you are tired - you're taking a break anyway, might as well eat.
- Have a duty roster. Practice all the tasks. Refine those skills.
- Have one bag with your name on it to hold all of your "main bear bag" items.
- Have another bag with your name on it hold all of your "Oops bag" items.
- Store your gear in your pack in waterproof stuff sacks and group them by when you'll use them.

Is Anybody Not Ready - Hike On!

[www.ship1610.org/philmont](http://www.ship1610.org/philmont)