



BASIC HIKING PROFICIENCY COURSE & QUALIFICATION

Here's a comprehensive outline for basic hiking leadership skills on established easy to moderate trails, encompassing both practical and theoretical components. This curriculum aims to equip hiking leaders with the necessary skills and knowledge to safely and effectively lead groups on moderate trails, ensuring both safety and enjoyment for all participants.

Note that paragraphs some skills are generic and apply to all proficiency courses run by AsAfrica, which are combined for those items.

1. Accident Prevention

- Understand common hiking hazards (e.g., slips, falls, wildlife encounters, exposure, dehydration, getting lost, group dissension).
- Risk assessment and management, simulated emergency scenarios
- Communication in case of an emergency
- First aid basics and emergency response, use of first aid kits

2. General Safety and Preparedness

Essential gear and clothing for different weather conditions

Nutrition and hydration needs, water purification techniques

Packing a backpack with essential items
Setting up a safe and effective campsite

3. Group Control

- Leadership styles and group dynamics
- Roles of leader and assistants on trail
- Communication skills and techniques for guiding groups
- Role-playing group scenarios
- Practice leading small group hikes
- Implementing effective communication on the trail



4. Environmental Awareness

- Ecosystem and wildlife knowledge
- Impact of hiking on the environment, Importance of Leave No Trace principles
- Conservation practices
- Identifying local flora and fauna
- Participating in a trail maintenance project

5. Map Reading

- Understanding topographic maps and scales
- Compass explanation and basic uses
- GPS and digital navigation tools
- Planning and following a route using a topographic map

- Using map&compass and GPS devices on the trail

6. Hiking scopes for certification

- Low altitude (below 2400 metres), on trail OR off trail (requires map&compass navigation)
- Higher altitude (above 2400 metres but not above 7500 metres), on trail OR off trail. Both require map&compass navigation and mountaineering certificate with basic ropework (not climbing skills).

7. Trail characteristics discussed

- Levels: Easy, moderate, challenging and extreme
- Day packs, slackpacking, backpacking
- Established or natural campsites
- Special skills: roping on steep ground and traverses, awareness of altitude risks, skilled navigation, dangers of river crossings
- Effects of distances, elevations, daylight and weather
- Assessing participant endurance, morale, nutrition and full preparation
- ONLY easy to moderate hiking covered on course

8. Interpretive Site Information and Research

- History and cultural significance of local trails
- Sources for finding interpretive information
- Techniques for engaging storytelling and interpretation
- Researching and presenting information on a specific site
- Conducting a guided interpretive hike

9. Group Satisfaction and Enjoyment

- Understanding group needs and motivations

- Strategies for enhancing the hiking experience
- Evaluating and responding to feedback
- Implementing fun and engaging trail activities

10. Costing and Planning

- Budgeting for hiking trips
- Cost considerations for gear, permits, and transportation
- Funding and sponsorship opportunities
- Developing a budget for a mock hiking trip
- Planning logistics (permits, transport, accommodation)
- Managing trip expenses



11. Trip Feedback and Review

- Importance of post-trip evaluations
- Methods for collecting and analyzing feedback
- Implementing changes based on feedback

12. Trails Marketing

- Marketing principles and strategies
- Utilizing social media and digital platforms
- Engaging with customers and communities to promote hikes

13. Ethics and law

Tourism Act and Guide qualifications

Trail ethics and general good practice

Course

Duration: 2,5day course, with each headline topic covered in talk, alternating between theory (1-2 hours) and practical (4-5 hours) sessions.

Assessment

- Written tests on theoretical knowledge
- Practical demonstrations and evaluations
- Group projects and presentations

Awarded: AsAfrica Technical Certificate for Basic Kayak Touring Proficiency. This certificate is officially recognised when put towards the Generic Adventure Site Guide qualification.

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