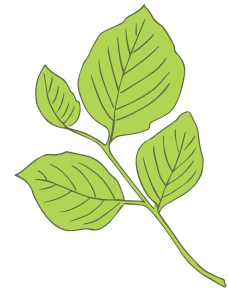


Health & Safety Outdoors



The table below outlines some of the common hazards you might encounter when running activities outdoors. It's here to help teachers and group leaders think through potential risks and plan ahead for safe, engaging outdoor learning experiences. Use it as a starting point when preparing your own site-specific risk assessment.



This list is intended as a guide and should be adapted to suit your own site, group and organisational procedures.

Hazard	Suggested Control Measures
Weather conditions: High temperatures causing heat exhaustion or sunburn.	Learners should wear appropriate clothing including sunhats, sunglasses, and sunblock on hot days. Where possible, hold activities in shaded areas and ensure access to drinking water.
Weather conditions: High winds causing trees and branches to fall, causing injury.	Check the weather forecast in advance and postpone the session if wind levels are too high.
Weather conditions: Extreme cold causing hypothermia.	Learners should wear warm waterproof clothing and footwear (e.g., coats, gloves, boots). Postpone the session if conditions become unsafe.
Eye level tree branches: Risk of injuries to eyes and face.	Mark any low or sharp branches with bright ribbon and remind learners to watch out whilst moving around.
Toxic plants or fungi: Risk of sickness, rash, or allergic reaction.	Check the site before use and remind learners not to pick or eat unknown plants or fungi.
Uneven ground and wet conditions: Increased chance of slips, trips, and falls.	Check the site before use and remind learners to watch their footing, especially on wet or uneven ground.
Off-lead dogs: Uncontrolled dogs could cause distress, disease, or dog bites.	Advise learners not to approach or touch dogs. Politely ask owners to move their dogs if necessary.
Litter and dog poo: Risk of injury or infection.	Check the site beforehand and remind learners to look out for hazards. Learners can report any sharp litter to the group leader. Wash hands after the activity.
Interacting with minibeasts: Bites and stings.	Remind learners to stay calm around wasps and bees and use paintbrushes or similar tools to gently move or examine, instead of handling them.
Members of the public: Inappropriate behaviour.	Make learners aware that the site is public. Set clear boundaries for exploration and maintain age-appropriate supervision ratios.
Proximity to water: Risk of injury or drowning.	Check water levels and riverbank stability before and during the activity. Carry a portable throwline and follow your organisation's water safety procedures.
Missing child	Clearly communicate site boundaries, maintain supervision ratios, and carry out regular head counts and check-ins. Establish a missing child procedure and meet up point in advance.