

DFW-Adventures (DFWA) Disclaimer and Rules:

This Disclaimer and Rules helps our attendees all be on the same page providing for as (safe and informed) events as possible. Check this document periodically for updates.

As an attendee or guest of DFWA events you agree to the following DFWA Disclaimer and Rules.

A cash donation to organizer is welcomed at events to help pay costs.

Attention Event Hosts:

1. Reference this "DFWA Disclaimer & Rules" in all postings.
2. Do not request fee without DFWA Organizer permission.

01. Consult a doctor before attending events. You should not attend if health concerns may pose a risk to yourself or members of the group. Some of the events can be strenuous due to duration, temperature, weather and other environmental conditions. All events are attend at your own risk. If you feel that an event may be dangerous, bad weather may be an issue or the leadership skills are lacking then it is your responsibility not to participate in that event. DFWA is not responsible for any accidents or medical costs incurred to participants as a result of attending events.

We request that you maintain in your profile a current, recognizable face picture so that we may all recognize you and in case there is an emergency search and rescue party looking for you.

Share DFW Adventures Facebook address with friends and family: www.facebook.com/dfw.adventures

02. You must know how to swim to attend any activities that involve being on the water such as kayaking, canoeing, water skiing, jet skiing, etc. Those who do not know how to swim put not only themselves at risk but their would be rescuers. It would also be ideal for you to know CPR and First Aid. It is required that (each person) bring to all outdoor events a fully charged cell phone, whistle, flashlight, first aid kit, water, food, compass and a pair of two way radios:

[Two Way Radio that has NOAA weather alerts enabled](#). (Set radio to Channel 5)

You should have experience with paddling before attending any events that involve kayaks, canoes or rafts. We do not provide lessons but may post events by organizations that do. You are responsible for checking the instructor's background and certifications. Absolutely **no** inflatable kayaks or inflatable canoes to be used at our events.

03. Be flexible with your schedule. Although many events may have a time frame that we try to adhere to we are sometimes late getting back due to unforeseen reasons. It is best to plan being out at least an hour or two past any times posted. Also, be on time to events! The group will not wait for late arrivals. Always check event postings for updates as sometimes date, time and venue may change due to unforeseen circumstances such as reservation cancellations, weather, illness and/or unsafe environmental conditions. Please R.S.V.P. to any events that you plan to attend. Members who "no show" or change RSVP's at the last moment may be removed from future events.

Please use cash at all events and tip appropriately. We may use these venues again.

If you carpool, help your driver with the cost of gas.

04. As a group, please stick to the schedule, map, route or plan of events since the organizer may have already contacted venues ahead of time to coordinate times of arrival. Maps are often distributed or courses given during hiking events. Do not defer from these (unless directed by the event organizer) as you may become lost or there may be hazards that the organizer is aware of and has designed the trip to take the group around, such as loose footing, traffic, construction, cliffs, dead ends and other hazards or possible delays.

05. Be respectful! Our group is diverse with a wide range of ages, skill sets, levels of experience and beliefs. Also, we move as a group and we want everyone to be accounted for so that everyone is safe and having fun. Please help your organizer by paying attention to the organizers instructions and keeping up with the group. Taking periodic breaks to let people catch their breath or to view something interesting is common on our hikes.

06. Respect member's privacy. Do not post pictures that have in them member's license plates, children or anyone that has requested not to be photographed. Do not post or email without permission any members personal information such as phone numbers, home addresses, email addresses, names or contacts. Please be sure that you do not take pictures of the organizers unless you ask first. Some of them would rather not be photographed for personal reasons or for safety concerns. Absolutely no photos that are nude or are offensive in any manner.

07. Organizers have the right to cancel an event at any time due to weather or safety concerns, etc. without any expectation from members of reimbursement of fees, dues or costs of any kind. Organizers are not responsible for any fines (such as parking or towing) incurred by members of this group at events. Organizers are not responsible for your safety or property, ultimately you are.

08. No spam. Do not send messages to members or use DFWA events, mailing lists or resources for any communications that are political, religious, hateful or advertising services or events. Any other groups or services wanting to combine events, participate in or sponsor our event must contact the DFWA Organizer (dfw.adventures@gmail.com) first and receive permission. Certifications may be required. In case of communication failure all persons attending DFWA events should join the DFW Adventures Facebook as a backup for event updates: www.facebook.com/dfw.adventures

09. Parents are responsible for children safety. Be aware events may have alcohol present and foul language may be used. We do ask members to keep events family friendly. Minors must be accompanied by an adult and should be capable of keeping up with the group. Dogs are often welcome to events but must be picked up after, leashed and behave themselves at all times. Do not bring animals or minors to any event in which they may pose a hazard to themselves or other members in the group. Some events will not be minor or pet appropriate, please confirm.

10. Any criminal activity, illegal drug use, failure to observe park or facility rules, DUI, destruction of property, cutting down of trees, trail blazing, abusive language, unsafe behavior, ignoring fire bans, separating from group, leaving trash, smoking near members, direct complaints to meetup venues, no shows or excessive annoying attitudes (drama) will get that person(s) removed or banned from DFWA events. The intended purpose of this group is to build community, learn from one another and have fun. If you do have any concerns or issues please bring them calmly and privately to the DFWA organizer A.S.A.P. -- Anyone receiving unsolicited or harassing email from should notify the Organizer.

All Rights Reserved by DFWA. -- Members should review:

[Wunder](#) / [Weather](#) / [Water](#) / [Flow](#) / [Wind](#) / [Lightning](#) / [Maps](#) / [MD Map](#) / [Burn Bans](#)

DFW-Adventures (DFWA) / dfw.adventures@gmail.com / www.facebook.com/dfw.adventures / 940-202-9755 (Text)

Basic Equipment Requirements:

Even if it is just meeting for a campout or a walk in the woods, plans change and these are the items I have found the most useful for each member of the group to keep with them. Whether you are on an event with DFWA or just on an outing with your friends it is good to get into the habit of having these with you.

Snack (energy), Water, Whistle, Small Compass, First Aid Kit, Small Flash Light.

A legal sized pocket knife (for outdoor events), [2 Way Radio \(With NOAA Weather Alerts Enabled\)](#). (Set to Channel 5)

The 2 way radios (with NOAA alerts) have been very useful. For one it is a must for on road communications between members that are convoying to an event from a general meeting location. Sometimes there will be cars or trucks that get between vehicles and announcing a turn off or a sudden detour is necessary. I have even had members who were running late catch up to us and call the rest of the group on the radio.

Having the NOAA weather alerts enabled can save your life if you have a storm coming in and you are out on the water or camping in a flood prone area.

You can purchase a [Two Way Radio on Amazon](#). Become familiar with the radio and how to set the channel and code before arriving to an event, turn on the NOAA weather alerts and have the radio fully charged. (Set to Channel 5)

First Aid Kit Should Contain At Minimum:

Assortment of Bandages, Ace Bandage, Eye Drops, Tweezers, Antiseptic Wipes, Anti-Biotic Cream, Sting Relief Wipes, Aspirin, Tylenol, Anti-Histamine, Blister Treatment, Sterile Gloves, Anti-Acid Tablet, Burn Relief, Muscle Relief.

DFWA Payments:

Payments for DFWA events are generally collected ahead of time with the instructions on how to pay posted on each event that has a fee. This is ideal because many meetup groups complain that a lot of people who sign up in the beginning for an event either change their RSVP at the last minute or "No Show". Members who have already paid are more likely to attend events. This helps reduce events where there is low member turn out.

There are no refunds once a member has paid. Even if there is bad weather or you have to cancel we cannot afford to reimburse. However, most fees will be so small that it should not be a deterrent to event attendance. Members who RSVP for an event that has a fee are expected to send payment within 1 - 2 days of their RSVP. This cuts down on people signing up for all events and then taking up a spot that a paying member could have used.

Members get more quality events, a greater opportunity to meet fun and exciting people and a chance to meet a lifetime friend or soul mate at a fraction of the cost that dating sites charge. Also, meeting as a group of friends is much safer than meeting as total strangers alone at a bar or coffee shop.

Carpooling:

Event members are welcome to carpool at their own discretion. At some events members can park their cars at a 24 Hour Walmart where cameras are present. Hide any valuables, roll up your windows, lock doors and set your alarm.

DFWA is not responsible for theft or damage to property.

Carpooling saves money and helps the environment.

Keep in mind though...

1. Be careful of who you carpool with.
2. You are at the mercy of the driver's schedule.
3. Driver and passengers should understand time schedule of event.
4. Offer to assist with gas money.
5. Drivers, be respectful and drive safely.

DFW Area Taxi Services:

If you drink at events, do so responsibly and have a designated driver or call a taxi:

- (214) 688-1999 -- Alamo Cab Company
- (214) 905-1111 -- Ambassador Cab
- (972) 222-2000 -- Checker Cab Company
- (214) 428-0202 -- Cowboy Cab Company
- (214) 477-5163 -- Dallas Taxi
- (214) 349-3333 -- Diamond Taxi
- (214) 475-3736 -- DFW Transportation
- (214) 421-7788 -- Eagle Cab Company
- (972) 554-1212 -- Executive Taxi Service
- (972) 554-1212 -- Golden Cab Service
- (866) 669-4259 -- King Cab Company
- (214) 428-0202 -- Ranger Taxi Company
- (214) 252-0055 -- Star Cab
- (214) 630-9595 -- State Taxicab Company
- (800) 258-3826 -- Super Shuttle
- (972) 554-1212 -- Taxi Dallas
- (214) 350-4600 -- US Cab
- (214) 426-6262 -- Yellow Cab

Tips on how to start a Fire:

I have noticed many new members are interested in knowing how to start a fire.

Making a fire under favorable conditions:

01. Seal all fuel containers and make sure all flammable liquids are as far away from your fire area as possible including any alcohol for consumption that may be flammable. Make sure that your hands and clothing have not been exposed to flammable liquids.

02. Select an area where there is plenty of dry dead fall wood nearby but not so close that it poses a hazard of the fire burning out of control.

03. Determine the direction of the wind.

04. Circle the pit with stones leaving an open spot in the direction of the wind. If you dig a small trough to help the wind blow into the pit that is even better.

05. Gather at least three handfuls of dry grass or shredded tree bark and place in fire pit.

06. Place four - five handfuls over very small twigs on top of the clump of grass.

07. Have a pile of slightly larger sticks ready to place on top.

08. Before lighting the fire make sure that at least six feet of area or further is cleared of any combustible materials that might ignite if a rogue ember gets out of the pit. If you have a river nearby have water ready to put out any fires.

09. Light the dry grass. The wind will help keep the fire going and as it catches the twigs wait about 20 seconds and throw on the larger sticks. Adding logs as the fire increases. Even if there is no wind having a trough dug through the gap in the rocks will pull in air as the heat from the fire begins to rise.

10. Remember a fire can only continue as long as there is adequate oxygen. If you pile on too much wood at one time it might suffocate the fire before it gets properly started.

Note: Make sure your tent is not downwind of the fire or embers may burn holes in it!

ALWAYS extinguish fires when leaving the location to minimize risk of causing an uncontained forest fire.

Also check out...

[How to build a self feeding fire](#)

[How to make a fire in wet conditions](#)

A Good Knife:

I always carry a knife when I am out hiking or kayaking. I get asked almost every time, "Why the knife?" Well, I don't think I am Rambo enough to take down a charging wild pig with it and I realize that some of you are gun toting members of the NRA so I try not to get into any arguments with anyone. The reason I carry a knife is for construction. Most people look at a knife as a weapon but when you think about it a knife is used more as a tool than it is ever used to fend off marauding zombies, at least on DFWA hikes.

Any survivalist, person with military experience, backpacker, survivor show finalist will tell you, if they know anything at all, that a good knife is one of the most important parts of your kit when in the wild or in a survival situation. If a person breaks a leg a crude but effective frame can be created easily to help carry them out using a knife to cut tree branches. A knife is used for cutting para cord, gutting fish, conducting emergency triple bypass heart surgery, cutting your way out of entanglements and should the unavoidable happen, as a defensive tool against wild pig or dogs (which you will probably lose but hey you tried).

A good knife doesn't have to be expensive or massive. It should be a medium sized blade, full tang with an integrated handle. The blade should be thick enough to strike it with a rock on the blunt side and it not chip or break. Some prefer a serrated edge while others prefer a straight edge. Unless you are in a kayak or canoe I would go with the straight edge because it can be sharpened easier. Some knives are all black or dark in color, if so tie a yellow cord through the grommet so that you can better see it if it is dropped.

NOTE: All kayak and boating knives should have a blunted point and be serrated to help avoid cutting yourself if using it to try to cut out of entanglements. See example below.

I wear my knife on my webbing, it is prominently displayed not to be menacing but to be as available as possible should it be needed quickly. Getting caught up in a thicket of thorns is no fun but having to search your gear or remove a back pack to get to your knife can be challenging when your movement is limited. However, you have to be careful. Make sure your knife is within legal limits for carrying, you may have to check with your state law enforcement to find this information. Having a knife too long not only adds weight to your kit but could get you arrested if a police officer or park official sees you with it.

See [Texas Weapons Laws](#): You should always check with your local police department for the most current and accurate information on legal carrying of knives or guns.

I know that some folks may have their favorites but a knife I have become especially fond of and has served me well is the inexpensive Winchester fixed blade knife. It is easy to hold on to, it has a sheath that the knife stays in reliably even without the safety fastener being used. The blade is a little harder to put an edge on than most but it is thick and can be hit on the back with a rock when trying to cut through tough limbs. For the price you can't beat it and though heavy it is of the right size that won't weigh you down too much.

Even if you decide it is not the tool for you it won't cost you an arm and a leg, unless of course you are a zombie.

Outdoor Water Treatment:

When planning a hiking trip I always look for a source of water to be nearby such as a river or a lake. This helps eliminate the need to pack copious amounts of water that adds weight to my kit. However, most water sources are polluted with biological and chemical contaminants that can make you sick, or in the case of [protozoa](#), cause death. So to solve this I have invested in water filtration systems that eliminate most threats that I may come in contact with when collecting and ingesting water in the outdoors.

My first purchase was the [Katadyn Hiker Pro](#) which is a wonderful water filter system that has served me well. It is especially good for larger groups when a great deal of water is needed for cooking and cleaning. It is however a little heavy and has tubes that must be attached. This system is good when you are at a campsite but when you are on the go during a hike or kayaking it can be a bit cumbersome and bulky.

Filters: Filter physically removes particles, protozoa and bacteria down to 0.3 microns in size, including Giardia, salmonella, cryptosporidium and others. Activated-carbon core adsorbs chemicals and pesticides

Does not filter: Viruses, may use a [Steripen](#) or boil water for added protection.

Katadyn Hiker Pro:



During a presentation on backpacking gear at REI I discovered the [Sawyer Water Filter](#). It is awesome! You can take your existing hydration system, cut the hose, insert the Sawyer attachments and filter and presto you have yourself an inline water filtration system that is guaranteed for 1 million gallons of water. This means that you can quickly fill your water reservoir and it be filtered as you drink! It is light weight, reduces the bulk factor and is a quick on the go system that can be filled as you make a fast stop at a creek, river or lake or even as you are kayaking down a river. It is a little pricey but well worth the money as I plan to also use it while traveling in countries where the water is suspect.

Sawyer Water Filter:



Filters: Hollow fiber membrane filter physically removes particles, protozoa, and bacteria down to 0.1 micron in size, including giardia, salmonella and cryptosporidium.

Does not filter: Viruses, may use a [Steripen](#) or boil water for added protection. Does not filter pesticides, chemicals and salts.

Knots that are useful to know:

[Figure Eight Double Loop](#)

[Bowline on a Bight](#)

[Figure Eight Follow Through](#)

[Double Fisherman's \(Grapevine\) Bend](#)

[Double Overhand Stopper](#)

[Square Knot \(Reef Knot\)](#)

[Rapala Knot](#)

[Emergency Harness](#)

[A-Z Buschcraft Knots](#)

Taking Care of Your Feet:

When hiking and backpacking your feet are one of the most important things to take care of besides thirst. Nothing can stop you in your tracks like a twisted ankle, festering blister or sore, achy and exhausted feet! There are several things you should consider to help you keep your feet happy and your hike pleasant.

1. [Hiking Boots](#)

Even if you are not prone to twisted ankles it is a good idea to get some light weight boots that are breathable and have good ankle support. Twisting an ankle or a nasty fall can turn a nice hike into a painful or possibly dangerous situation as you either have to ditch your gear to lessen the weight on your foot, become stranded until rescue crews find you or create a situation for your co-hikers who must help evacuate you back to safety. Always break in your boots before going on hikes, this will help loosen them up and identify areas of the boot that are prone to cause blisters on your feet.

2. [Hiking Socks](#)

Look for 100% wool socks in the winter which help keep your feet warm even when wet and moisture wicking socks for the summer that will help keep your feet cool, dry and free of painful blisters.

3. [Gel Inserts](#)

Gel inserts, if seated properly, can help lessen the pounding of your feet across rocks and boulders. However, any moisture can be a detriment since your foot may slip inside your boot causing a blister. Make sure you have dry feet and moisture wicking socks when using gel inserts.

4. [Preventive Aid](#)

Always cut your toenails a few days before a hike and care for any blisters, cuts or sore spots so that when you are on your hike you don't have any areas that may become infected or a painful problem. Using anti-fungal foot powder is also ideal, take some with you to treat your feet at night after a hard days hike. If you know where you may get blisters cover that area with [mole skin](#) before your hike.

5. [Foot First Aid](#)

Keep some mole skin with you for blisters. This can be applied over the blister and will help your foot from continued abrasive contact with your sock or boot. The faster it is applied the better. In the evening apply antibiotics to the affected area and then keep dry allowing air to get to it if the temperature is not too cold.

6. [Toe Warmers](#)

These are great to have when you are hiking in extreme temperatures. However, you must keep the circulation of blood going to your toes and feet. Move your toes around as much as possible to get the blood moving, toes that become too cold can fall victim to frost bite which can lead to loss of feeling in the toes or the need for amputation.

Using a Barometer to Predict the Weather:

1. Determine the wind direction. This is best done with an established weather vane, but if you do not have one, lick a finger and stick it in the air. The sun rises in the east and sets in the west, and you can use this to establish your general orientation and determine the wind direction.
2. Check the pressure reading on your barometer. This will be between 28 and 32.
3. Take the wind and pressure reading and compare it to your guide to local weather patterns. This will yield a prediction. For example, in the US if the wind is southeast to northeast, and the pressure is above 30.1 and falling slowly, that means there should be rain coming, and that it will arrive in 12 to 18 hours.

[eHow "How to Read a Digital Barometer"](#)

The chart below illustrates how to interpret your barometer's inches of mercury reading. This provides a reasonably accurate forecast for the next 12 to 24 hours.

Barometric Readings:

Pressure Over 30.20"

Rising or steady - Continued fair

Slowing falling - Fair

Rapidly falling - Cloudy, Warmer

Pressure 29.80" to 30.20"

Rising or steady - Same as present

Slowing falling - Little change

Rapidly falling - Precipitation likely

Pressure Under 29.80"

Rising or steady - Clearing, cooler

Slowing falling - Precipitation

Rapid falling - Storm

Camping During a Storm:

There's a number of things to consider when camping during a thunderstorm. Stay away from trees and any metal (ex. tent stakes and poles). Keep a low profile, if you are out in the open, and spread out from each other so that you are not all one target to lightning. Avoid ridges and high areas, which will be more prone to lightning strikes, and low areas, which will be more prone to flooding.

[About.com "What should tent campers do in a thunderstorm?"](#)

Assume a crouching position with your head down and with your feet as close together as possible. This helps prevent the current in the ground around you from traveling a course through your heart or brain. It will take the path of least resistance as it flows up one leg and out the other. Do not touch the ground with your hands, you want to have the least amount of contact with the ground as possible. If you cannot stay in a crouching position then sit on a small boulder with your feet still close together and your head down. Keep a low profile since lightning will typically strike the tallest structure first.

If you are in a group then spread out so that the lightning strike will be less likely to hit everyone in the group. Everyone should count off ... group member 1, group member 2, group member 3, etc. This sounds silly but if someone is struck then they can be identified quickly and CPR can be performed. If a person is struck you must call in medical support as soon as possible and evacuate the person to a trauma center.

If there is hail, use anything that is non-metallic (such as towels, blankets, etc.) to cover your head, do not use a sleeping bag since it may have a metal zipper. If possible try to cover your fingers as well since they can become broken from a strike. Also, pay attention to the possibility of flooding, high winds and tornadoes. ALWAYS have a NOAA weather radio with you when outdoors. However, leave it in the tent once you have heard the report since it may increase your chances of being struck since it has metal components.

Lightning 30/30 rule: If it takes less than 30 seconds to hear thunder after seeing the flash, lightning is near enough to pose a threat; after the storm ends, wait 30 minutes before resuming activities. Once the storm has passed check all members in your group to make sure no one was hit. Do a group count and then check your gear for damage.

GPS Rino 530HCx:

I have been using the Rino 530HCx and have been very pleased. It is a little pricey, \$300 - \$500 for the base unit, then another \$100 bucks for a decent topo map and about \$50 for expanded memory. But it has been worth every cent to me. Nothing beats knowing how to do basic orienteering with a map and compass but having a GPS unit is also ideal.

The Rino 530HCx has a two way GMRS radio that will actually send your coordinates to anyone else with the same model, has a NOAA weather radio, built in digital altimeter and barometer, compass and a good rechargeable battery. Had mine turned on for two days! It is also water resistant and can take a beating.

I take mine everywhere and it is been a real life saver when I have used it for weather reports and finding my way to waypoints that I put in before each excursion.

[Click here for more information on this GPS](#)

Product Description: Hit the trail in confidence with the Garmin Rino 530HCx, which combines a two-way FRS/GMRS radio with a high-sensitivity GPS navigator. The waterproof unit offers 22 channels and 5 watts of transmit power, so you can contact friends or rescue crews from up to 14 miles away (line of sight) over GMRS channels or up to 2 miles over FRS channels. The high-sensitivity GPS receiver, meanwhile, locates your position quickly and precisely and maintains its GPS location even in heavy cover. The advantage is clear: whether you're traipsing through thick woods or strolling near tall buildings and trees, you can count on the Rino 530HCx to help you find your way when you need it the most. The combined radio and navigator functions make the device a must-have for mountain climbing, alpine camping, back-country skiing, and a host of other outdoor activities.

The 530HCx navigator/2-way radio is compact and lightweight, with a 10.3-ounce housing that won't slow you down on the trail. Like the rest of the Rino series, the Rino 530HCx offers a unique Position Reporting feature, which lets you send your exact location to other Rino users in your group so that everyone can see your position on the map page. No more worrying about the lagging hikers in your group each time you reach a fork in the trail. Plus, because the 530HCx is a standard FRS/GMRS radio, you can use it to communicate with other conventional FRS/GMRS radios in the area.

The 530HCx is also equipped with a built-in electronic compass that provides bearing information even when you're standing still, along with a barometric altimeter that tracks changes in pressure to pinpoint your precise altitude. You can even use the altimeter to plot barometric pressure over time, which can help you keep an eye on changing weather conditions. And thanks to the NOAA weather radio, you'll know well in advance when a storm is advancing.

Receive detailed mapping information on the navigator's 1.3-by-1.7-inch, 256-color TFT display. Perhaps the most important feature, however, is the crystal-clear 256-color TFT display, which clearly shows attributes from the built-in basemap, including lakes, rivers, cities, interstates, national and state highways, railroads, and coastlines--in short, a host of helpful details for your outdoor adventures. Users can also expand the mapping possibilities via the microSD card slot, which accepts cards preloaded with MapSource data for your land and sea excursions. Just insert a MapSource card with detailed street maps and the Rino 530HCx will provide step-by-step or turn-by-turn directions to your destination.

Minimalist Backpacking:

- Backpack, Good boots with ankle support (gel inserts optional)
- Tarp (With length of para-cord for setup and tie down)
- Sleeping pad (blanket optional)

- Sharp Knife (cutting sticks for staking out tarp)
- Head lamp (should have new batteries installed)
- 2 glow sticks (used for backup light or signaling)
- Duct Tape, Twine (used for tarp repair and frame construction)

- Water Reservoir (With Sawyer water filter installed)
- Sierra Cup (used for boiling water, drinking, eating)
- Spoon (preferably long handled)
- Small scrub sponge, Bio-degradable soap
- Small hand trowel (shovel), Toilette Paper
- Small camp towel (for picking up hot items, drying)

- Striker and Flint, Strike anywhere matches (in a water proof container)
- 5 Alcohol Prep Pads (for abrasions and used as fire starters)
- Neosporin, Bandages, Mole Skin, Safety Pins, Aspirin, Tweezers, Eye Drops, Tums
- Sawyer Extractor Snake Bite & Insect Sting Kit, Antihistamine for insect bites
- Toothbrush and Toothpaste, Floss, Toothpicks
- Sun and bug protection, Sulfur for deterring ticks and fleas
- Anti-fungal foot powder, Extra pair of socks

- Map, GPS, Compass, Whistle, Two way radio with NOAA weather alerts enabled
- Rain poncho, Thermal blanket (for sitting on, emergency signaling)
- Trash bag (keeping items dry if rains, used to carry water, used to collect garbage)
- Someone in group should have a length of good climbing rope

- 1 Single serving oatmeal or grits packet (per day for breakfast)
- 2 Single serving cliff bars (per day for lunch and snack)
- 1 Single serving dehydrated meal (per day for dinner)
- 1 single serving Gatorade powder packets (per day for electrolytes)
- 1 Single serving Starbucks coffee packet (per day)
- 1 pack of Gum and some hard candy (keeps mouth from getting dry)

Many backpackers are considering is using a tarp instead of a tent.



North Texas Nasties:

When out and about in the North Texas wild keep your eyes out for the following nasties:

Poison Ivy:



Poison Oak:



Copper Head Snake:



Water Moccasin (Cotton Mouth):



Rattle Snake:



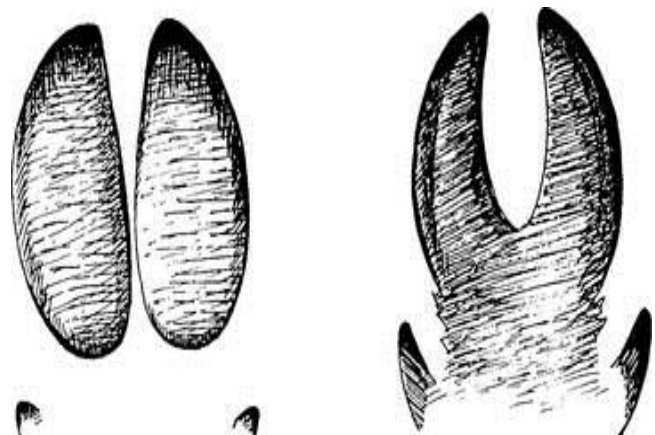
Scorpions and Fire Ants:



Brown Recluse and Killer Bee Swarm:



Wild Pig (Boar):



A Brief Introduction to Kayaking:

Kayaking / Canoeing / Water Craft:

Those new to kayaking or canoeing will find it to be a sport that can be both relaxing and adventurous. However, to avoid a potentially hazardous situation you should familiarize yourself with the following before ever getting on the water or transporting your kayak.

Preparation is key:

When I first bought my kayak I wanted to jump in the SUV and drag it to the river and that is what I almost did! Take a course, or at least buy a book, that will teach you key elements such as the proper way to secure your boat to your vehicle (which can save a life or at least your boat), how to enter and exit your boat, gear you should take, self-rescue techniques, and general boating maneuvers.

Know your environment:

Boating can be a different experience depending on the body of water that you are on. A lake can be calm and enjoyable one moment and in the next a wind storm can produce white caps that can capsize your craft possibly leaving you stranded far from shore. I was kayaking on Lake Ray Roberts in search of Bald Eagles (which I saw, awesome!). Suddenly, a windstorm came up and I had to beach my craft for several hours before returning to where I parked my car. Now I carry a NOAA weather radio with me, especially when I plan to get away from shore.

Rivers are ideal for boating but always check with the river authority to determine the flow and the release of water from any local spillways or dams. Remember, knowing weather conditions upstream is just as important as knowing the weather in your immediate boating area. Once I was camped on an island in the middle of the Brazos River and a storm many miles upstream produced enough flow that they began releasing water from the dam in anticipation. We lost a couple of canoes since they were near the river and had water in a tent. When camping always pull your boat and gear as far up on the bank as possible and tie it off to a tree when possible.

[TWC Weather Radar](#) / [NOAA Forecast](#) / [USGS Water Data](#) / [Texas Wind Speeds](#)

Temperatures on a river are generally colder than when you are higher up on the banks and during the colder months can create a hazard of hypothermia should your clothes or sleeping gear become wet. Using water tight tote bags or even large re-sealable paint buckets is ideal. Also, when a dam is near, water coming out of the bottom of the dam is going to be much colder than the surface water.

Water Safety:

Knowing how to swim is a must when kayaking or any other activity on the water. You never know if you will be caught in some rapids, the flow increases suddenly because they let water out of a spillway or there is a storm upstream that sends a sudden burst of water downstream. Life preservers are good but when you are caught in a situation where you have to get to shore you have to feel as comfortable as possible in self-rescue in case no one else can get to you and be able to assist when someone near you is in trouble and needs help. You absolutely must learn how to swim before getting out on any body of water or else it puts not only you but others with you in harm's way if the unthinkable does happen. This cannot possibly be stressed enough.

Purchasing a Kayak:

I recommend not buying an inflatable kayak. They are slow and you will have to work twice as hard to keep up with anyone that has a hard shell kayak. Also, they do not appear to track as well and the wind plays havoc with them. I would suggest renting a kayak a couple of times to see what kind suits you best. [REI Dallas](#) rents several kinds of kayaks for a reasonable price. They also rent out camping gear.

Make a Checklist:

You never want to carry too much on a trip because it is going to be that much more weight you have to pull. Having a lot of weight is also horrible for those unlucky enough to have to portage their craft in areas where water flow is less than ideal or there are obstacles that pose a hazard. When packing for a trip throw everything into the middle of your garage, then go through it and determine if you "really" need that item or it is just something that is going to slow you down.

Know your people:

Finally, know the people you are going with (it is always ideal to have at least one person with you when boating). You could meet them for the first time on a trip but as a group you should determine who is a novice and who is an expert in the group. No one wants to look stupid in front of strangers so encourage your group to be open about questions on boating advice and safety procedures. Novice boaters should have a more seasoned boater leading and following. Everyone should have a life preserver and at least one member of the group (preferably all) should know CPR and water rescue. It is sad but I worked with a guy who went swimming in Lake Ray Roberts with some buddies. He was not a good swimmer and once he reached a drop off he panicked. His friend went to save him and he ended up drowning him because, in his panic, he pushed him under water and choked him. Water safety is no joke! When rescuing someone always approach them from behind never allowing them to latch onto your neck or shoulders, even if you have to temporarily push them away. Take them with the palm of your hand under the chin and with your other arm swim them to shore. Knowing CPR is a must for anyone who engages in activities in and around water.

Kayaking Emergencies:

At two different events I have had persons new to kayaking attend and fall out of their boats. This is to be expected but I would recommend that anyone leading an event, have the following items for emergency rescue.

1. PFD (personal flotation device, life jacket).
2. Serrated knife for cutting away entanglements.
3. [A two-way radio with NOAA weather radio alerts enabled](#).
4. A hand pump to pump water out of submerged yaks.
5. A paddle sleeve that blows up and can be used as a secondary flotation.
6. A throw rope that is prepped to latch on to kayaks or PFD's for towing.
7. A flashing beacon and whistle (or small air horn).
8. [Flare gun \(highly recommended for off shore night events\)](#).

All participants in events should have at least the following:

1. PFD (personal flotation device, life jacket).
2. Serrated knife for cutting away entanglements.
3. [A two-way radio with NOAA weather radio alerts enabled](#).
4. Whistle
5. Flashlight
6. Water
7. Hand pump and Throw Rope.

All persons should feel comfortable in their swimming abilities before attending an event and all members should attempt (with assistance) a near shore self-rescue:

[Assisted Rescue \(The "T" Maneuver\)](#)

[Self Rescue \(The "Ladder" Maneuver\)](#)

Avoid Group Think! - All members should be aware of group think. Sometimes organizers or even participants may make the wrong call on safety and influence others to take unnecessary risks. Think for yourself, research and have prior knowledge of weather, personal limits and equipment needed. If for any reason you think your personal safety may be at stake, make it known and if necessary walk away.

Know the Weather: [TWC Interactive Weather Map](#) / [NOAA Weather](#)

Know the Flow Rate: [USGS Real Time Water Data for Texas](#)

Know the Wind Speeds: [Texas Wind Speed Map](#)

Online Wilderness Resources:

I would like to start a discussion on wilderness resources that are online. Please feel free to send me suggestions for additional resources: dfw.adventures@gmail.com

- [ACME Mapper \(VERY AWESOME!\)](#)
- [DFWA North Texas Points of Interest Google Map](#)
- [DFWA Places to Hang Out Google Map](#)
- [DFWA YouTube](#) / [DFWA Twitpic](#) / [DFWA Twitter](#)
- [TWC Weather Radar](#) / [NOAA Forecast](#) / [NOAA Hazard Planner](#)
- [USGS Realtime Water Data](#) / [Texas River Authority](#)
- [Texas Winds Speeds Radar](#)
- [Weather.com Lightning Strike Map](#)
- [South Central Lightning Strikes Map](#)
- [Local Storm Reports in Past 24 Hours](#)
- [DORBA Trail Conditions Map](#)
- [Omaha's Military Surplus](#)
- [AFMO \(Military and Law Enforcement Supplies\)](#)
- [Animated Knots Tutorial](#) / [Most Useful Knots](#)
- [Survival Kit](#) / [Mess Kit](#)
- [A-Z Bushcraft](#)
- [Survival Topics Web Zine](#)
- [Backpacking Women Travel: Women on the Road](#)
- [REI Dallas Course Calendar](#)
- [REI Equipment Rental \(Kayaks & Camping Gear\)](#)
- [SAS Survival Series \(YouTube\)](#)
- [Compass 1](#) / [Compass 2](#) / [Compass 3](#) / [Compass 4](#) / [Compass 5](#)
- [Finding True North without a Compass](#)
- [Survival Wisdom and Know How \(Book\)](#)
- [Things to consider before buying a survival knife](#)
- [DFW Grotto \(Caving Group\)](#)
- [Arbuckle Mountains Grotto](#)
- [Storm Shelter \(eHow\)](#) / [Storm Shelter \(wikiHow\)](#) / [Shelter](#)
- [Trails.com Texas Trail Maps](#)
- [Kayak and Canoe Put-in Map](#)
- [The Ultralight Backpacking Site](#)
- [The 27 Pound, 7 Day Back Pack](#)

Places in the DFW Area that you, your family or a date might enjoy:

Dallas:

- [Dallas World Aquarium](#)
- [Museum of Nature and Science](#)
- [Dallas Museum of Art](#)
- [White Rock Paddle Company](#)
- [The Katy Trail](#)
- [Galleria Ice Skating](#)
- [Americas Ice Garden](#)
- [Katy Ice House](#)
- [Ozona's Grill and Bar](#)
- [Stephan Pyles Restaurant](#)
- [Highland Park Village \(Shopping, Movies, Food\)](#)
- [Picnic at Exall Lake \(With a Waterfall!!\)](#)

Fort Worth:

- [Fort Worth Zoo](#)
- [Fort Worth Botanical Gardens](#)
- [Fort Worth Stock Yards](#)
- [The Modern Museum](#)
- [Bass Performance Hall](#)

Grapevine:

- [LegoLand Discovery Center](#)
- [Great Wolf Lodge](#)
- [Gaylord Hotel](#)
- [Grapevine Mills Mall](#)
- [Tarantula Train](#)
- [Delaney Vineyards](#)

Dating Safety Tips:

For our single members, one of the best ways to meet the potential love of a lifetime is through attending events with a group of friends. Meetup events offer a wonderful opportunity to meet people with similar interests. There is little pressure, you get to know a lot about a person, and meeting others in a group is a lot safer and more often successful than meeting someone at a bar or being setup on a blind date.

However, there are a few things to keep in mind:

1. When you meet someone in a group and they invite you on a date be sure to meet in a public setting a few times (for coffee or dinner) and take your own car instead of having them pick you up at your house.
2. Always let a friend or family member know where you are meeting the person, their name and if you want to be really safe print out a picture of them.
3. Do some research before you meet with them. Ask them what part of town they live in and check the sex offender lists. Look for them on other groups, Google their name, ask if they have met other people on meetup and see what those people might be like and what groups they belong to. A great site for research is [Pipl Lookup](#)
4. Email with them before going out, ask them questions about their family, what kind of things they enjoy doing in their spare time. If they email you constantly 24/7 then that should be a red flag.
5. During the first few dates be sure to park your car in a well lit parking space that is visible to others. Carry some pepper spray and have it where you can get to it easily. Never scream help, it is proven that fewer (if any) people will react, sometimes they think you are joking around. Scream fire and you will increase your chances of nearby people coming to your rescue. Text some details about your date to a friend such as appearance, name, make and color of car, location, even a picture if there is an opportunity to take one.
6. Beware of creepers -- people who join meetup groups to peruse member profiles but never attend events. If you receive harassing email from them please alert the group organizer so they can be removed.
7. Remember, this is the internet! Anyone can post a fake name, give fake information, meet with you and it become a bad situation. Go with your gut feeling, if the person is too good to be true take caution and use your common sense and best judgment when meeting with a person alone. Anytime you suspect you are being stalked or harassed report it to the police immediately and alert your family and friends.
8. Should you decide to meet with someone outside of the group, take note of their full name (though it may be fake), color and make of vehicle they are driving, license plate, physical description and any identifying features such as tattoos. Write these down and leave with a family member or a friend and always text them when you arrive and plan to leave a location with the address.