

New Caver Orientation



Rules for Safe Caving and Happy Covers

Dos	Don'ts
Check the Closed Cave List for cave closure status, and get permission from the landowner if necessary.	Never enter a cave without express or implied permission from its owner.
Cave in groups of 4 or more people.	Never cave alone.
Move cautiously. Be aware of your surroundings, and look before you move. Maintain three points of contact at all times when climbing (and even when walking!).	Don't jump. Don't run. Don't be a daredevil.
Honor your personal limitations. Choose the safer alternative. Ask for help.	Don't do anything you don't want to do. Don't get hurt!!
Inform your trip leader of any medical conditions. Bring any medications you may need.	Don't get sick.
Feed and water yourself as needed. Do your best to stay warm and dry. Wear the right clothes.	Don't wear yourself out or let yourself run out of steam. Don't get hungry. Don't get cold.
Stay with the group. Give each other space. Pay attention to your surroundings. <i>Remember to be an angel for the person behind you!</i>	Don't leave the group. Don't rush people. Don't wander off. Don't get lost!
Carry a minimum of three sources of light. Be prepared. Bring everything you need. Self-sufficiency is key. <i>See BATS gear list for minimum requirements.</i>	Don't rely on others in your group for personal supplies.
Point your light at the ground or ceiling when you turn to talk to someone	Don't shine your lights in people's eyes.
Get informed. Join the NSS. Join a grotto. Learn from those more experienced than you. It's a lifelong adventure!	Don't be stupid!

Tips from Seasoned Covers

"Three points of contact at all times when climbing. And I wish I would have had knee pads on that first trip." —"Two-Step" Jeff Benford (Vice President of RASS)

"Turn around a lot and see what your route will look like on the trip out!" —Sarah Kidwiler (WV caver)

"No jumping!" —Tiny Manke (former president of BATS)

"Step 1: Look around. Step 2: Move. Do not do step 2 before step 1. Also, gravity still applies underground." —Dave Jackson (Owner of CaveSim)

Caver's Motto: Take nothing but pictures; leave nothing but footprints; kill nothing but time.