



Group Use on the Appalachian Trail

1) Familiarize yourself with [ATC's tips and guidelines for organized group camping](#):

- A camping group = 6 to 10 campers, including the leaders. 10 is the maximum size for a camping group on the Appalachian Trail (A.T.). A day hiking group is up to 25 people.
 - If your group size exceeds this number, divide into groups of 10 or fewer, camp in separate locations, and register each of the groups separately.
- Your group should check and follow all local land management guidelines. You may need a permit from a state forest, park or other agency depending on where you will be camping.
- Your camping group may not stay in A.T. shelters, these are for solo hikers and are not designed for group use.
 - There are campsites at some A.T. shelter areas which groups of 10 or less may use - bring tents, hammocks, or tarps and camp in designated campsites.
- Take care to keep group members together; most search and rescue missions along the Trail happen when someone gets separated from their group.
- Guiding and other commercial activities are not an appropriate use of the Appalachian Trail.

2) Register your group:

- Be sure to register your group with [AT Camp](#). Please note that this is not a reservation system and that all AT campsites are on a first-come, first-served basis unless otherwise noted.
- Your registration information will help us build an effective network of group campsites along the Trail and provide *your* group with a means to avoid overcrowding and prevent damage at overnight sites during your hike.
- By registering, you can view the capacity of an overnight site by clicking on its icon. The calendar shows the number of other people already registered for the site in the calendar date box.

3) Follow [Leave No Trace Practices](#):

- Traveling and camping in small groups reduces the physical impact to the A.T., environment, paths and facilities.
- Small groups also help preserve the sense of solitude and remoteness for other hikers who encounter your group.
- Please don't disturb the environment (i.e. move rocks from stone walls, cut branches from trees, and dispose of waste properly)
- Fires should only be made in designated locations based on local regulations.

Guidelines for [Camping in Michaux State Forest](#)

- Camping along the A.T. is first come first serve and ATC group guidelines apply.
- Primitive backpack camping is permitted while hiking along the Appalachian Trail. Hikers may not stay more than one night at any location.
- Primitive Camping is defined as Camping where all equipment is transported in one trip by nonmotorized methods, and where a motor vehicle is not located near or part of the camping experience
- Camping in groups of more than 10 people is not permitted on the Appalachian Trail. In the Michaux State Forest there are established group sites at Big Flat and Piney Mountain that can be reserved. These group sites require a Letter of Authorization from the Michaux State Forest District Forester in addition to a camping permit. You'll want to do this at least 30 days in advance.
- The North Chapter of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club maintains the A.T. and facilities including campsites and shelters in the Michaux State Forest. These volunteers put in countless hours making sure that trail users have a positive experience. They are also a tremendous resource when it comes to planning a trip. For more information or to volunteer go to: <http://www.patcnorth.net/>.

You may also want to consider nearby alternatives which may not be as busy:

1. Tuscarora Trail: <https://www.hikethetuscarora.org/>
2. PA State Parks Group Camping: <https://www.dcnr.pa.gov/StateParks/GroupCampingMap/Pages/default.aspx>

The [ATC website](#) has a page dedicated to group camping where you'll find additional information:

- [Leave No Trace Guidelines for Groups](#) - <https://appalachiantrail.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/atIntforgroups8-14-2012.pdf>
- [Scouting on the AT](#) <https://appalachiantrail.org/explore/plan-and-prepare/scouting/>
- [Group Registration Form](#): <https://atcamp.org/index.cfm?BCPermitTypeID=4>



Shelters, campsites, and privies along the trail are maintained by Volunteers. For more information about the maintaining clubs and to volunteer go to:

<https://appalachiantrail.org/get-involved/volunteer/clubs-partners/>



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