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# THE GREEN GIRL

## The Green Girl's guide to summer adventure

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When you're out communing with Mother Nature this summer, make sure you don't love Mom to death! Before you load up the backpack and waterproof the hiking boots, think about your activities' impact on the area you plan to visit. Your guiding principle should be "take only photos, leave only footprints." In other words, leave no trace of your visit.



Here are a few tips for an eco-friendly outdoor adventure:



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Z Prepare. Know the rules and regs for the area you'll visit.

Z Don't take cuts — in trails. This is no time to be a trailblazer. Hike and camp only on existing trails and campsites. Going off trails damages and kills plants, displaces organic soils and compacts mineral soils, effects that last far longer than your sore muscles.

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Z Pack it out or put it away properly. Pick up all spilled food and trash — even tiny pop tops — from your camp site. If you're in an area without trash cans, take trash bags so you can pack it all out. Human food attracts animals, leaving them open to predators. The expectation of a free feeding can also create nuisance animals that have to be relocated or destroyed.

Z Light up right. Where fires are permitted, always use established fire rings. In the backcountry, use a lightweight stove for cooking.

Z Watch from a distance. Observe wildlife from a safe distance, restrain any pets and stay away entirely during mating and nesting seasons.

Z Appreciate the sounds of silence. Leave the iPod speakers at home, speak softly on trails and let nature be your music. You'll see more wildlife, and fellow hikers will appreciate your consideration.

Z Green up your gear. Look for items made from recycled materials. One site to check out is

[www.mountainsmith.com](http://www.mountainsmith.com).

For more information, visit the Leave No Trace Web site at [www.lnt.org](http://www.lnt.org).

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Supplemented by staff members of Pine Jog Environmental Education Center, West Palm Beach, in association with Florida Atlantic University. For more information, go to [www.pinejog.fau.edu](http://www.pinejog.fau.edu).

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