Be Prepared, Plan Well, Live Long

Trips into the Zion backcountry, even short ones, require advance planning. Summer weather is hot and dry, winter can be cold and icy, narrow canyons are subject to flash flooding, and there are cliffs everywhere. Rangers at the Kolob Canyons and Zion Canyon Visitor Centers can help by providing current conditions, weather forecasts, and National Weather Service flash flood potential ratings. But your safety is your responsibility. Every year, a number of people are seriously injured or die while visiting the backcountry of Zion. Your safety depends on your own good judgement, adequate preparation, and constant attention. Don’t let an accident ruin your vacation.

Planning Your Trip

Permits
Permits are required for overnight trips in the backcountry (including climbing bivouacs), through hikes of the Virgin River and tributaries, and canyons requiring the use of descending gear or ropes (including the Subway). Permits are available the day before or the day of a trip at both visitor centers.

Reservations
Reservations are available for many backcountry trips. See page 8 or visit www.nps.gov/zion for more information.

Group Size
Large groups produce larger impacts. Group size is limited to a maximum of 6 or 12 people sharing the same affiliation (school, club, scout troop, family, friends). Larger groups may split and visit different areas. They may not visit the same drainage, route, or backcountry trail, on the same day. This is strictly enforced; violators are cited. The group size limit does not apply to trails in Zion Canyon including Emerald Pools, Angels Landing, Observation Point, and The Narrows to Orderville Canyon.

Walk-in Permits
Walk-in permits are available for all areas in Zion National Park. At least 25% of all permits are available for walk-ins. Walk-in permits are given out the day before, or the day of your trip. Arrive early if you wish to visit a popular area, such as the Subway, on a summer weekend. See page 8 or visit www.nps.gov/zion for more information.

On-line Permits
Frequent visitors can obtain permits on-line through our Zion Express Permit Program. See page 8 or visit www.nps.gov/zion for more information. New in 2008, express permit members can get permits three days before their trip. For example, canyoneers wanting trips on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday can get all three permits on-line Wednesday. Avoid lines, use express permits!

Permit Fees
Backcountry fees are based on group size: $10 for 1 to 2 people, $15 for 3 to 7 people, $20 for 8 to 12 people. Fees are used to help defray the cost of issuing permits, backcountry patrol, resource monitoring, trail maintenance, and search and rescue.

Zion Canyon Shuttle
Travel in Zion Canyon from March 21 to November 2 is by shuttle bus only. The buses have room for backpacks, climbing gear, two bicycles, and other equipment. Buses run often throughout the day. You may get on and off as often as you like. The buses are free. Check the schedule, page 3. If your hike ends at a trailhead in Zion Canyon, plan your trip so you will not miss the last shuttle of the day. Only the Zion Canyon Scenic Drive is closed to private vehicles; the Zion-Mt Carmel Highway through the park is open to private vehicles all year.

Backcountry News
A Backcountry Management Plan was completed in 2007. Some use limits and group size limits have changed. See page 7 for details. The Narrows campsite 8 is closed because of flashflood danger. We hope to relocate it to a safer spot. To protect cryptobiotic soil, designated campsites will be created next year in the Southwest Desert.
Leave No Trace

The Leave No Trace program promotes and inspires stewardship of the outdoors through education, research, and partnerships. Leave No Trace is more than a campaign for clean campsites. It’s a program dedicated to building awareness, appreciation, and respect for our public recreation places. Leave No Trace is about enjoying the great outdoors while traveling and camping with care.

Plan Ahead and Prepare

Boil before you go. Know where you are planning to stay and what white-water conditions might be like. Always check the weather forecast.

Camping

Carry maps and know how to use them. Tell someone where you are going and when you plan to return. Learn about the area you are planning to read through books and talking to others. Always check the weather forecast.

Transport and Camp on Durable Surfaces

Walking off trails is a problem that causes erosion, destroys water sources, and makes areas prone to soil erosion. Keep your campsite at least 100 ft away from streams and water sources. Your campsite should not compact vegetation.

Dispose of Waste Properly

Carry your impact to the backcountry and dispose of it in proper trash cans or dumpsters, or take it home with you. Leave the site cleaner than you found it. Make human waste in small bags, not in diapers. Store your food away from bears.

Transportation

Before you leave, try to complete your hike at a different location from your starting point. Push and pull tugs are services available. Inquire at the backcountry desk.

Pets, Fire & Firearms

Pack your pet in when you leave home. Pet owners are responsible for their pet’s actions and must ensure that their pets do not cause wildlife to approach campers. Pet owners are also responsible for maintaining their pets. Pets are not allowed on backcountry trails. Pets are not allowed on backcountry trails.

Minimize Campsite Impacts

Camping is not allowed in the Zion Canyon Loop.

Keep Wildlife Wild

Watch wildlife from a distance and don’t approach, feed, or follow them. Feeding wildlife: human food is unusable and illegal. Animals can become aggressive beggars and you can be held responsible for them. Feed wildlife and your food by storing your meals and trash tightly.

Be Considerate of Other Visitors

Like you, other visitors want to enjoy nature. The less you have to protect them from the sun’s heat. The sun can be as high as we will walk; it will melt the ground, and it will create a heat wave that is difficult to extinguish. The less you have to carry as you are often hot. It is illegal to use solar power in the park. Never climb directly above waterfalls; instead, try to climb down or to the side of it.

Don’t leave your mark – graffiti away from nature’s art.

Mountain Lions

Mountain lions are wild animals and can be dangerous. They have been observed frequently in the park. An attack on a human is unlikely; there is a greater risk of being struck by lightning. Zion National Park has never had a reported attack on people or pets. However, mountain lions have attacked in other areas.

Recommendations For Your Safety

• Walk downhill away, and never let them run ahead or lag behind.
• Solo hiking or jogging is not recommended.
• Never approach a mountain lion. Most safer to avoid a confrontation by giving them a way to escape.
• Do not try to look big. Pretzels or your arm up.

Stock Use

Horses traditionally have used the park trails.

Stock allowable are burros, mules, and camels. Llamas, dogs, goats, camels, and others are not allowed.

Permits are not required for day trips. Stock is prohibited during spring times, unless weather conditions are very dry. Stock use is not allowed on the wash trails.

Where trails are present, stock must remain on trails. Free or loose hooved livestock is not allowed. Stay a safe distance from livestock. When riding, stock must be kept at least 150 feet from the road. Check the Backcountry Planning Map on pages 6 and 7 for trails open to stock use.

Stock is not permitted in any Lower Coopital Wash from the trailhead to the junction with Scoopit Wash, in Scoopit Wash proper, in upper Coopital Wash above the springs, and in Hubler Wash.

Overnight Trips

The only overnight stock camp is Hop Pocket Camp. It is not recommended for overnight stays. The river is closed in excess of 140 cubic feet per second. Horses are not allowed.

Winter

Where trails are present, stock must remain on trails. Free or loose hooved livestock is not allowed. Stay a safe distance from livestock. When riding, stock must be kept at least 150 feet from the river. Stock is not permitted in any Lower Coopital Wash from the trailhead to the junction with Scoopit Wash, in Scoopit Wash proper, in upper Coopital Wash above the springs, and in Hubler Wash.

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Prevent
Do not forget to consult with us on your camping trip to make sure you respect our environment. Keep in mind that you are going on a year-round camping trip. Always check the weather forecast.

Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
Walking on trails is a problem that causes erosion, destroys water sources, and impedes access to public recreation areas. Keep your campsite small. In areas with designated campsites, camp at least 100 feet away from trailheads, water sources, and sensitive vegetation.

Dispose of Waste Property
Carry your trash out of the backcountry and dispose of it in a proper trash can or receptacle. Inadequate sites for campers may result in damage to sensitive vegetation. Sites for campers may result in damage to sensitive vegetation.

Watch wildlife from a distance and don’t approach them. Feeding wildlife is considered a favorite among mountain lions. They are not banded by the Park Service. They are not fed at any of the backcountry campsites.

Be Considerate of Other Visitors
If you are camping in a desert area, keep your campsite small. Do not dig any holes in your campsite or alter anything in your campsite. Keep your campsite small. Do not dig any holes in your campsite or alter anything in your campsite.

Be Considerate of Other Visitors
If you see someone where you are going and you plan to return. Learn about the areas you are planning to visit by reading books and talking to others. Always check the weather forecast.

Treat Your Water
Water collected in the backcountry is not safe to drink without treatment. There are two methods of treatment. Bring water to a rolling boil for at least one minute. In areas with additional items for each 1,200 feet above sea level. Water and dirt are filtered through an 0.1 micron sieve, or one fabricated as meeting ANSI/ISO International Standard 55. Then add eight drops of liquid chlorine bleach, or four drops of iodine, per gallon of water and let it stand for 30 minutes. Always check the weather forecast.

Transportation
You are encouraged to complete your hike at a different location from your starting point. Hike trails and camp areas are not services. Keep water clean by not leaving your mark—graffiti takes away from the site cleaner than you found it. Bury human waste properly, or use a polychallenge. Inquire at the backcountry desk.

Minimize Campsite Impacts
Carry your trash out of the backcountry and dispose of it in a proper trash can or receptacle. Inequate sites for campers may result in damage to sensitive vegetation. Sites for campers may result in damage to sensitive vegetation.

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The Zion Narrows

The Zion Narrows has a spectacular gorge in the upper reaches of Zion Canyon: 16 miles long, up to 2000 feet deep, and it climbs only 20-50 feet. The Zion Narrows walking the shadow of its cooing walls, sandstone gorges, natural springs, and hanging gardens are an unforgetable wilderness experience.

It is not, however, a trip to be underestimated. Hiking The Zion Narrows means hiking in the Virgin River. At least 60% of the hike is being walked, walking, and sometimes swimming in the river. There is no maintained trail; the river is the trail. The current is swift, the water is cold, and the rocks beneath are slippery. Fast-flowing and hypothermia are constant dangers. Good planning, gear equipped, and sound judgement are essential for a safe and successful trip. Your safety is your responsibility.

Weather forecasts, flash flood potential outings, and stream reports are available at the Zion Canyon Visitor Center, 435 572-0780. Permits are not issued when the flow is 120 feet per second. Enter the river at the end of the path past the old cabin. Chamberlain’s Ranch is a private ranch outside Zion National Park. Please respect private property.

Group Size Limit for The Narrows

Large groups produce increased impacts on the backcountry. Group size is limited to a maximum of 12 people sharing the same affiliation (school, club, scout troop, family, friends) in the same stream, route, or backcountry trail on the same day. This strictly enforced, violations will be cited.

Preparation

Footwear
Hiking The Narrows is like walking on slippery bowling balls. It requires balancing on algae-covered rocks in the middle of a swiftly flowing river. Standard footwear is unsuitable. Hiking boots with good ankle support are best. Sandals and bare feet are not appropriate—they result in twining, steeping, and permanent river polish.

Clothing
In mid-season, The Narrows is chilly. The water is cold, breezes may come down the narrows, and it can blow steadily, and very little sunlight penetrates the river. The water is cold, breezes may come down the narrows, and it can blow steadily, and very little sunlight penetrates the river. Because the trailhead at Chamberlain’s Ranch is a 1½-hour hike from the Temple of Sinawava, either two vehicles or a shuttle service is recommended for weekend trips. Campsite stays are allowed. Reservations are recommended for weekend trips. Campsite limits are 14 and only one site can accommodate groups larger than six people.

Virgin River Water Quality Project

With the increase in recreational use of Zion National Park waterways, the National Park Service introduced a human waste disposal program for overnight users in The Narrows. An environmentally friendly human waste disposal bag, complete with use and disposal instructions, is provided to all party members with every Narrows overnight backcountry permit. It is a lightweight, sanitary way to pack out waste. The bag will not disintegrate or make septic tanks or water sources contaminated. Clothing will not disintegrate or make septic tanks or water sources contaminated. The materials are safe for landfill and may be deposited in the trash. Use of this waste disposal system is strongly encouraged for all backcountry hikers as a means for protecting The Narrows.

Transportation

If you are hiking The Narrows from top to bottom, there are several transportation options:

• If you have two vehicles, you can shuttle yourself by parking one vehicle at Chamberlain’s Ranch and the other at the Zion Canyon Visitor Center.
• You may make arrangements with a local shuttle service.

To help maintain your balance, a walking stick is recommended. Hiking The Narrows without one increases your chance of injury and longer. Walking sticks are sometimes found in an occasional deposit at the north end of the river. Some hikers use them to help keep balance while walking, but a walking stick is strictly prohibited, in the park and at Chamberlain’s Ranch.


during the summer dries out, and the water is always cold. Great room finding, cold skills, and good judgement are needed to navigate the rugged terrain of Zion.

Water Depth
Water level varies in The Narrows. Under ideal conditions, when flow is under 75 feet, foot to second, crew crossing is around knee-deep. Higher flows may on higher water, a stronger current, and may include wading in waist deep water. Be prepared. From where you are now, chest-deep holes are common.

Waterproofing
Waterproofing The most experienced hikers fall occasionally in The Narrows. It is therefore a good idea to waterproof your belongings. Many hikers line their packs with large plastic garbage bags. Resealable bags provide extra protection for sensitive belongings. Many hikers line their packs with large plastic garbage bags. Resealable bags provide extra protection for sensitive belongings.

Recommended Equipment

• hiking boots with ankle support
• walking stick
• shoes and hiking
• extra dry, warm clothes
• flashlight and spare batteries
• first aid kit
• plastic bags for waterproofing gear

Left Fork, “The Subway”

There are two ways to hike The Subway. Both trips involve extensive route finding. Visions are encouraged to do the trip with experienced Subway hikers and/or obtain a detailed trail guide. Permits are required regardless of the direction of travel. The Subway is a day use area only.

Hike From Bottom and Back

This is an strenuous 9½-mile hike requiring rappelling skills, 6-8 hours of hiking time, and permits. It begins and ends at the Left Fork Trailhead off of the Kolob Terrace Road.

Hike From Top to Bottom

This is a strenuous 9½-mile hike requiring rappelling skills, 6-8 hours of hiking time, and permits. It begins and ends at the Left Fork Trailhead off of the Kolob Terrace Road.
The Zion Narrows

The Zion Narrows is a 15- to 20-foot-deep, 16-mile-long canyon on the Virgin River, located within Zion National Park. The Narrows are at their narrowest point—16 miles long, up to 2000 feet deep, and it narrows to just 20 feet wide. The Narrows restricts the river to natural channels, which flow between walls of sandstone. The walls rise from the riverbed to over 2000 feet. The Narrows is considered one of the most challenging sections of river running in the United States. The Narrows is a popular destination for whitewater rafting and hiking trips. The Narrows are divided into three sections: First Narrows, Second Narrows, and Third Narrows. Each section has unique features and challenges. The Narrows are best navigated with a knowledgeable guide and in favorable water conditions. The Narrows are closed to the public from mid-November to mid-March due to cold temperatures, high winds, and flash flooding.

The Virgin River

The Virgin River is a tributary of the Colorado River and flows through the southern part of Nevada and northern part of Arizona. It is a major water source for the Colorado River, which is one of the most important rivers in the United States. The Virgin River is also known for its unique geological features, including canyons, waterfalls, and natural bridges. The Virgin River is a popular destination for rafting, fishing, and hiking.

Zion National Park

Zion National Park is located in the southern Utah desert. It is known for its stunning landscapes, diverse wildlife, and unique geological features. The park is divided into five sections: East Entrance, West Entrance, South Entrance, North Entrance, and West Rim. Each section has its own unique attractions and activities. Zion National Park is a popular destination for hiking, rafting, and camping.

The Subway

The Subway is a short but challenging section of the Narrows. It is a narrow canyon that leads to a natural bridge. The Subway is accessible only by hiking and requires a permit. The Subway is best navigated with a knowledgeable guide and in favorable water conditions. The Subway is a popular destination for hiking and photography.

Water Quality

The Virgin River is a critical water source for the Colorado River and its tributaries. It is also a popular destination for rafting and fishing. The river is susceptible to pollution from various sources, including agricultural runoff, industrial waste, and sewage. The National Park Service is working to improve the water quality of the Virgin River and its tributaries. This includes efforts to reduce pollution sources, improve water treatment facilities, and restore degraded riparian areas.
Permits are required for most overnight trips in the backcountry, including canyoneering, backpacking, and other activities. A valid permit is required to enter the park, and the fee varies depending on the route you plan to take. Reservations are available for certain areas, and walk-in permits are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Visitors are limited to one lottery entry each month for each area. A non-refundable $5.00 fee is charged for each calendar reservation becoming available. Reservations and permits for all backcountry areas are available on-line to those who live in the area and want an early start. The number of calendar reservations becoming available varies depending on the area. For example, canyoneers wanting trips on March 5 must be received in March. For a complete list of canyoneering and backpacking reservations available on-line, use limits, and group size limits is available on Zion Express Permits. Additional information and questions, consider taking a canyoneering course before heading out on your own. This injured hiker is coming out of The Narrows. Zion’s search and rescue team is highly skilled, but the best smart can make the difference between surviving and dying. Always Have a Plan B: There is no substitute for planning ahead, taking the proper equipment, having the right skills, and using sound judgement. Be smart can make the difference between having a wonderful trip or ending up in the hospital—or worse.

Canyoneering: Safety: What is Your Plan B?

1. Back-up Equipment
The ability to stay alive, move, or go on when hanging in a tree or a hanger that must be known when you need it! Can you create extra friction? Can you have the proper skills? Can you create a rope that you can use on your trip? Do you have a headlamp and other equipment to travel after dark? Do you have extra warm clothes and food in case you have to spend the night? Will someone report you missing if you are overdue? No plan? Do you have a headlamp and other equipment to travel after dark? Do you have extra warm clothes and food in case you have to spend the night? Will someone report you missing if you are overdue? No plan? Do you have a headlamp and other equipment to travel after dark?

2. Weather Forecast/Flash Flood Potential
Check it out—when in doubt, stay out!

3. Map and Route Description
You must have them and know how to use them.

4. Anchor Equipment
Are your anchors good? How long has that wedding ring hung there? Can you create extra friction? Do you have the proper skills? Can you create a rope that you can use on your trip? Do you have a headlamp and other equipment to travel after dark? Do you have extra warm clothes and food in case you have to spend the night? Will someone report you missing if you are overdue?

5. Extra Clothing
Could you survive an unexpected night out in the canyon?

6. Extra Food
Help you keep your energy up and stay warm if you have to spend the night out.

7. Water
Drink one gallon of water per person per day.

8. Flashlight/Headlamp
It may mean the difference between getting out and spending the night in the canyon.

9. Helmet
Rocks fall.

10. First Aid Kit

Lighten Your Load
Cell phones and GPS units rarely work in Zion’s narrow canyons. Don’t count on them.

Keyhole Canyon
On June 11, 2004, a 31-year-old woman was descending Keyhole Canyon. She needed to get to the bottom of an eight foot waterfall. Instead of down climbing or using a rope, she jumped. Unbeknownst to her, the pool that she chose had a low beam that was shallow, and she sucked bottom into1. An 18-year-old boy was not traveling with the adult leaders. He missed a critical right hand turn, and began walking his way down a steep slope. The boy took a tumble 40 feet flat and landed in the bottom of the canyon. He suffered serious head, back, and internal injuries.

Ordekhaiden Canyon
On June 6, 2004, a Boy Scout group was descending Ordekhaiden Canyon. To avoid the bottom of an eight foot waterfall, instead of down climbing or using a rope, she jumped. She fell into a pool and was caught in strong current. Her climbing shoes and rope were caught in the current. She was no longer able to climb down on her own. Her Scout group went the rest of the way down, and she was pulled to shore by her rope. She was one hour off the ground, five hours after her accident. He was not able to continue his descent. And, he had no way to get back up the rock wall. He crawled up to a half mile above the Emerald Pool area, and reported his hiker for help.

Behunin Canyon
On November 19, 2004, a group of two was attempting the first rappel in Behunin Canyon. They passed through a couple of ledges, and a 27-year-old male began his descent. The ends of his ropes were caught in brush, and his rappel ended in the bottom of the pool. He was one hour off the ground, five hours after his accident. He was not able to continue his descent. And, he had no way to get back up the rock wall. He crawled up to a half mile above the Emerald Pool area, and reported his hiker for help.

What would you do? Can you stop yourself mid-rappel to correct a problem? Can you accelerate and start up your ropes? Would you abandon another group member when they have difficulty? If you answered yes to any of these questions, consider taking a canyoneering course before heading out on your own.

Keyhole Canyon
On June 12, 2006, a group of seven people attempted Keyhole Canyon. The group included a seven-year-old and a one-year-old infant. After completing one rappel, one of the group members became stuck on a ledge. The group did not have the skills to get the stuck person out of the water, and the group could not safely continue their trip. So, they spent a very cold night in the canyons.

Zion Backcountry Planner

Zion Backcountry Planner
Permits and Reservations www.nps.gov/zion

**Walk-in Permits**
Walk-in permits are available for all areas in Zion National Park. At least 25% of all permits are available for walk-ins. Walk-in permits are available the day before or the day of your trip. Difficult to obtain permits include the Subway, Mystery Canyon, The Narrows, and West Rim. The West Rim during the spring, and all areas on holiday weekends. You'll have greater success obtaining walk-in permits if you arrive at the Zion Canyon Backcountry Desk as soon as it opens the day before your intended trip.

**Reservations**
Lottery Reservations
The two most difficult to obtain permits at Zion National Park are The Subway and Mystery Canyon. An on-line lottery is used to provide a fair opportunity for all interested visitors to compete for the permits. The deadline for entry into the lottery is listed in the chart. Visitors are limited to one lottery entry per month for each area. A non-refundable $5.00 fee is charged for each lottery entry. The lottery does not apply for trips in November through March.

Calendar Reservations
Reservations are available on-line for a wide variety of canyons, backpacking trips, and climbing trips. They are available on a first-come/first-served basis starting on the dates listed in the chart up to 5 p.m. the day before your trip. A non-refundable $10.00 fee is charged for each calendar reservation. The number of calendar reservations per permit is not limited. A list of canyoneering and backpacking areas, use limits, and group size limits is on page 33. Many of the reservable spaces for The Subway and Mystery Canyon may already be taken by lottery entrants prior to calendar reservations becoming available.

**Climbing Trips**
Reservations are available on-line for eight of the park’s most popular climbing routes—Lunar Ecstasy, Spaceout, Moonlight Batton, Proslad Son, Touchstone, Desert Shield, Madnesterly, and Tricks of the Trade. The number of climbers on Zion’s walls is not limited, but a reservation is necessary to obtain an on-line permit (see Zion Express Permits).

**Other Areas**
Reservations are available for trips on canyon backpacking trips, and climbing trips not listed as available for reservations are available as walk-ins. Permits are available on-line to those who live in the area and want an early start. The entry permit process can be completed over the Internet. There are two requirements to obtain an on-line permit. First, you must be a member of the Zion Express Permit Program. To become a member, simply visit the Zion Canyon Backcountry Desk once every three years. You’ll be asked to complete a short orientation and sign a program agreement. Membership for those who signed up in 2007 will be valid through 2009. And second, you must have a reservation for your permit. Reservations and on-line permits are available until 5 p.m. the day before your trip. For example, canyoneers wanting trips on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday can get all three permits on the Wednesday. Avid liners, use express permit!

**Orderville Canyon**
On June 11, 2004, a 31-year-old woman was descending Orderville Canyon. She needed to get to the bottom of an 80-foot waterfall. Instead of downclimbing or using a rope, she jumped. She landed in a pool that she chose as her landing zone. The pool was shallow and its rocky bottom uneven. She landed snout down, and appeared to be deformed. The injury occurred at 5 p.m. After a difficult and painful carryout and ambulance ride, she arrived at the hospital in Saint George at 12 a.m.

Lower leg injuries are the most common injuries sustained by visitors to Zion’s backcountry. The most common cause of serious lower leg injuries is jumping. Do not jump. It’s especially useful to have a rope. You can often jump into a pool of water. Use a rope.

**Behunin Canyon**
On November 12, 2004, a group of two was attempting the last rappel in Behunin Canyon after dark. They threw their ropes off a ledge, and a 27-year-old male began his descent. The tails of their ropes caught in bushes, and he rappelled into the body of his ropes. He was one hundred feet off the ground, free hanging in mid-air. He was not able to continue his descent. And, he had no way to get his back up into his ropes. He hung on the Emerald Pool area heard his cries for help. What would you do? Can you stop yourself mid-rappel to correct a problem? Can you remember to check your safety line? Can you come to the right skills, and using sound judgement. Being smart can make the difference between having a wonderful trip or ending up in the hospital—or worse.

**Kolob Canyons**
On June 22, 2004, a group of seven people attempted Kolob Canyons. The group included a seven-year-old and a one-year-old infant. After completing one rappel, a snap, and a steep swim, they decided that they could not safely continue their trip. So, they spent a very cold night in the canyon. Rangers rescued the group the following morning. Can all members of your group safely complete the trip? Do not be afraid to say no to inexperienced friends. Do you have a plan B? Do you have a headlamp and other equipment to travel after dark? Do you have extra warm clothes and food in case you have to spend the night? Will someone report you missing if you are overdue?

**Canyoneering Safety: What is Your Plan B?**

**1 Back-up Equipment**
The ability to stop, reverse, or down-hang in a rope is a knewln golf that must be learned before you need it! Can you create extra friction? Do you have ascenders? Can you belay the less experienced members of your party?

**2 Weather Forecast/Flash Flood Potential**
Check it out—when it’s dirty, stay out!

**3 Map and Route Description**
You must have them and know how to use them.

**4 Anchor Equipment**
Are they well-made? Have long bars that welding hang them? Bolding Checklist • Is there another make of bolt that can do this? • What is the bolt that I am placing safely last for? When I secure that power that is prohibited in Zion National Park?

**5 Extra Clothing**
Could you survive an unexpected night out in the canyon?

**6 Extra Food**
Help you keep your energy up and stay warm if you have to spend the night out.

**7 Water**
Drink one gallon of water per person per day.

**8 Flashlight/Headlamp**
It may mean the difference between getting out or spending the night in the canyon.

**9 Helmet**
Rocks fall.

**10 First Aid Kit**
Lighten Your Load
Cell phones and GPS units rarely work in Zion's backcountry. The most common cause of serious lower leg injuries is jumping. Do not jump. You can often jump into a pool of water. Use a rope.

**The Subway**
On August 6, 2004, a Boy Scout group was descending The Subway. A 14-year-old boy was not traveling with the adult leader. He missed a critical right hand turn, and began working his way down a steep slope. He took a tumbling 40 foot fall and landed in the bottom of the canyon. He suffered serious head, back, and internal injuries.

**The Narrows**
On August 6, 2004, a Boy Scout group was attempting The Narrows. A 17-year-old boy took a tumbling 40 foot fall and landed in the gutter of the pool. He sustained serious head injuries. The boy was rescued by helicopter and flew to a hospital in Las Vegas. He then had a craniotomy and continued to recover.

**The West Rim**
On August 6, 2004, a Boy Scout group was attempting The West Rim. A 17-year-old boy took a tumbling 40 foot fall and landed in the gutter of the pool. He sustained serious head injuries. The boy was rescued by helicopter and flew to a hospital in Las Vegas. He then had a craniotomy and continued to recover.

**Always Have a Plan B**
There is no substitute for planning ahead. There are many ways to plan an adventure. The plan B is especially useful to have a rope. You can often jump into a pool of water. Use a rope. It’s especially useful to have a rope. You can often jump into a pool of water. Use a rope.

**Flashlight/Headlamp**
Is it part of your plan B? It’s especially useful to have a rope. You can often jump into a pool of water. Use a rope.

**What if you need them?**
Always Have a Plan B.
For Your Safety
Know the weather and flash flood potential forecasts before starting your trip. If bad weather threatens, do not enter a narrow canyon. Make informed decisions.

As A Last Resort
Watch for these signs of a possible flash flood:
- Any deterioration in weather conditions.
- Build up of clouds or sounds of thunder.
- Sudden changes in water clarity from clear to muddy. May be accompanied by flowing debris.
- Rising water levels or stronger currents.

If you have the misfortune to observe any of these signs:
- Seek higher ground immediately. Do not try to beat a flash flood out of a canyon.
- Remain on high ground until conditions improve. Water levels usually drop within 24 hours.
- If caught in an area with no high ground, try to seek shelter behind a jutting wall of rock that may break the initial mass of water and debris. It may be possible to wedge yourself into a crack above water level. Even climbing a few feet may save your life.

The Best Defense
Use good judgement before you go. If in doubt, stay out.

Zion Backcountry Planner 11
A diffi  cult, but rewarding, one night-back- trip next to a fl owing stream. Camping is limited to designated campsites.

**Season:**

Late spring and fall are ideal times for hiking in LaVerkin Creek. Temperatures are typically fi ve to ten degrees cooler than Zion Canyon. The desert is dry. Carry and drink water: one gallon per person per day for everyone in your group. Water is available at visitor centers. Hypothermia occurs when the body is cooled to dangerous levels. It is the number one killer of avid outdoors enthusiasts, and it usually happens without the victim’s awareness. It is a hazard in narrow canyons, even in summer, because immersion in cold water is the quickest route to body heat loss. To prevent hypothermia, avoid cotton clothing; it provides no insulation when wet and can cool body heat before you are chilled. Signs of hypothermia: •Uncontrollable shivering, •Stumbling and poor coordination. •Fatigue and weakness. •Confusion or slurred speech. If you recognize any of these signs, stop hiking and immediately replace wet clothing with dry. Wear the victim with your own body and a hot drink. Shout from bridges. A pre-norminal sleeping bag will help prevent further heat loss. Heat Exhaustion When heat exhaustion occurs when the body loses more fluid than it takes in. Signs of heat exhaustion include nausea, vomiting, fatigue, headaches, pale appearance, stomach aches, and clammy skin. If you or a member of your party begins to experience any of these symptoms, it is essential that you stop your hike. Find a cool, shady area. Rest with your feet to dissipate fl uid throughout your body. It is important to drink fl uid, but it is also important to eat. Drinking lots of fl uid and not eating, while suffering from heat exhaustion, can lead to a potentially dangerous condition of low blood salt. Heat exhaustion symptoms persist for more than two hours, seek medical attention at visitor centers.

Heat stroke is an advanced stage of heat exhaustion. It is the body’s inability to cool itself. Symptoms include confusion, disori- entation, and behavior changes. Seizures may occur. A person may still be sweating. If you believe that a member of your party is suffering from heat stroke, it is imperative to cool them using any available means, and obtain immediate medical assistance.

Your safety is your responsibility. If you have the misfortune to observe any of these signs: •Seek higher ground immediately. Do not try to beat a fl ash fl ood out of a canyon. •Remain on high ground until conditions improve. Water levels usually drop within 24 hours. •If caught in an area with no high ground, try to seek shelter behind a jutting fi n of rock that may break the initial mass of wa- ter and debris. It may be possible to wedge yourself into a crack above water level. Even climbing a few feet may save your life.

**The Best Defense**

Use good judgement before you go. If in doubt, stay out.

**Backcountry Management**

After a dry year prior, Zion National Park completed a backcountry management plan in 2007. Standards were developed to measure the health of natural resources and a social existing management zones to create overall use limits and group size limits. The use limits will be evaluated each year, and they will change as conditions warrant. For example, if the season occurring on the trail from Spry Canyon continues to be minimal, the use limit for Spry Canyon will be raised. In this case, the social standard would then become the limiting factor.

**Backcountry Use Limits 2008**

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<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Use Limit</th>
<th>Limiting Factor</th>
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**For Your Safety**

Know the weather and fl ash fl ood potential forecasts before starting your trip. It may rain without warning.

**As A Last Resort**

Watch for these signs of a possible fl ash fl ood:

• Any deterioration in weather conditions.
• Build up of clouds or sounds of thunder.
• Sudden changes in water clarity from clear to muddy. May be accompanied by fl oating debris.
• Rising water levels or stronger currents.

The weather is powerful. It takes a few moments to notice. You would be knocked down and battered to death.

**Flash Floods**

**Zion Backcountry Planner**

10 Zion Backcountry Planner

11 Zion Backcountry Planner
Maps & Guides

The Zion Natural History Association sells maps and guides, as well as other books, at park visitor centers. ZNHA may be contacted for phone or mail orders: Zion Natural History Association, Zion National Park, Springdale, UT 84767, (800) 635-3959 or (435) 772-3264 or for online orders: www.zionpark.org.

ZNHA is a non-profit membership organization which supports the scientific, educational, historical, and interpretive activities of the park. Members receive a 20% discount.

Area Guides

Hiking Zion and Bryce Canyon National Parks Eric Molvar and Tamara Martin. An illustrated guide to the breathtaking slick-rock canyons and towering cliffs of southwest Utah. $16.95

Hiking the Southwest’s Geology, Four Corners Region Ralph Lee Hopkins. Information on 50 hikes includes the landscape and geologic features along each trail. $16.95

Hiking the Southwest’s Canyon Country Sandra Hinchman. Describes backpacking, day hikes, and canyon routes. $16.95

Hiking Utah A Falcon guide by David Hall. $15.95

Zion: Canyoneering Tom Jones. Descriptions of trail hikes, off-trail hikes, and technical canyoneering routes. $19.95

Desert Rock Eric Bjornstad. Rock climbing routes in National Parks of the Colorado Plateau. $20.00

Rock Climbing Utah A Falcon guide by Stewart M. Green. The essential guide for planning climbing trips in Utah. $26.95

How To Books

Desert Hiking Tips Bruce Grubbs. Covers desert tips from drinking water to flash floods. $6.95

Backpacking Tips Bill and Russ Schneider. $7.95

Leave No Trace Will Harmon. The official Leave No Trace manual of the American Hiking Society, pocket-size. $6.95

Reading Weather Jim Woodmency. Weather basics to help you avoid bad weather on your outdoor adventures, pocket-size. $6.95

Route Finding Gregory Crouch. Pocket-size guide to map and compass navigation. $6.95

Emergency Survival, A Pocket Guide Christopher Van Tilburg, M.D. Quick information for outdoor safety. $3.50

Maps

Zion Topographic Map Scale 1:37,700 39 x 25” Backcountry and hiking information, paper, folded. $3.95

Trails Illustrated Topo Map of Zion National Park Scale approximately 1:37,700 30 x 25” Backcountry and hiking information, waterproof, tear resistant, folded. $9.95

St George & Springdale, Utah Trail Map Scale 1:25,000, 27 x 39” Hiking information, waterproof, tear resistant, folded. $10.99

USGS Topographic Maps Scale 1:24,000, 7.5 minute quads. Paper, rolled. $6.00 each. Kanarraville, Kolob Arch, Kolob Reservoir, Cogwell Point, Smith Mesa, Guardian Angels, Temple of Sinawava, Clear Creek, Springdale West, Springdale East, The Barracks.

Weather & Climate

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