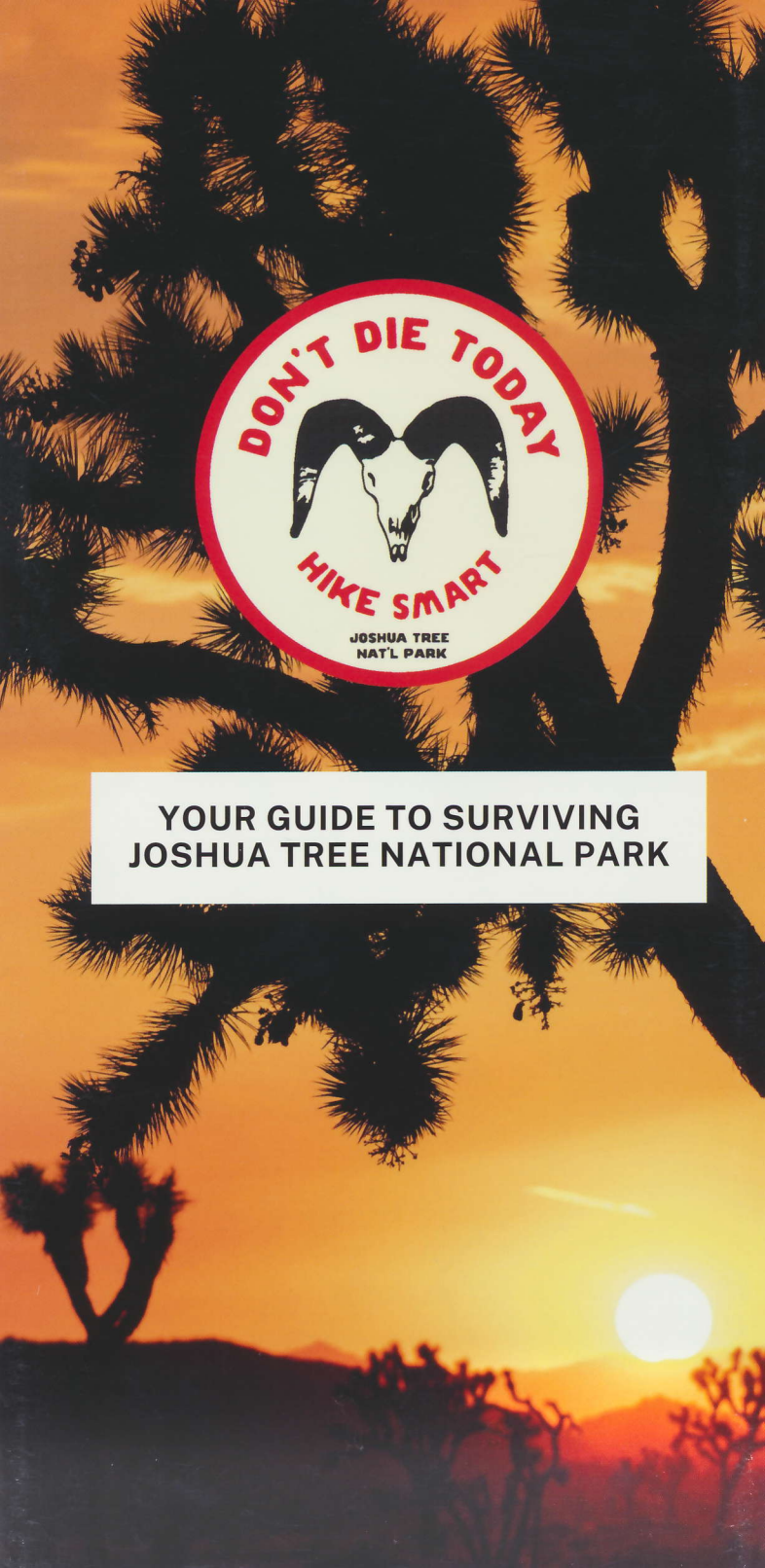

YOUR GUIDE TO SURVIVING JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK

DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES?

In case of an emergency, call 911. There is no reliable cell service in the park, but 911 calls may still connect.

HIKE SMART

- Check for safety and weather alerts before going into the park
- Tell someone where you're going and when you expect to be back
- Familiarize yourself with the part of the park you plan to visit and your route to resources like potable water
- Stay indoors between 10:00 AM and 5:00 PM when it's hot
- Plan for extreme heat, as well as for dramatic temperature changes overnight
- Drink water when you're thirsty, regardless of the weather conditions
- Take regular breaks in the shade to help regulate your body temperature
- Avoid putting your hands or feet anywhere you can't see
- Do not approach, harass, or chase wildlife

HEAT ILLNESS

Heat illness happens when your body temperature rises so rapidly that you can't cool off. It is a potentially life-threatening emergency.

Who's at risk? Anyone can get heat illness, especially when you're outside on a hot and/or humid day. Dehydration, sunburn, and challenging exercise increase the risk because they affect whether you sweat and how much.

Early heat illness can look like:

- **Sweating a lot more than usual, especially if your skin is clammy or pale**
- **Trouble making decisions (or making bad ones)**
- **Unexpected clumsiness, ringing in your ears, or blurry vision**
- **Lightheadedness or a pounding headache**

If you have these symptoms, stop what you're doing! Take a break in the shade and rehydrate with water and salty snacks. You should start to feel better quickly—get help if you don't.

Severe heat illness can look like:

- **Experiencing a very fast heart rate and a body temperature over 104°F (40°C)**
- **Suddenly feeling weak, disoriented, fatigued, or confused**
- **Stumbling, fainting, or having seizures**
- **Feeling nauseous or vomiting**
- **Struggling to speak, think, or behave normally**

If you suspect severe heat illness (also called heat stroke), call 911 and notify a park ranger. Heat stroke can cause brain damage and death.

Your priority is to stay as cool as possible until medical help arrives. Get out of the sun. If you have access to air conditioning or ice, use them.

GETTING LOST

Joshua Tree is a wilderness park with minimal signage and lighting. There is no reliable cell coverage in the park.

Before going into the park, research the area you'll be in and make a plan.

If you're going alone, let someone know where you'll be and when you expect to be back. When you park near a trailhead, consider leaving a note on your dashboard with your name, emergency contact, and planned timeline.

If you're going with a group of people, talk through what you'll do if you get separated. Every plan should include staying on official trails and going back to the last spot where you were all together.

If you become lost, always try to rescue yourself! Use the navigation tools you brought with you and what you remember about how you got there.

If you cannot self-rescue, call 911. If you have an SOS device, such as a personal locator beacon (PLB) or an SOS app on your phone, you should activate it after calling 911. Activating an SOS device does not guarantee immediate rescue.

Your priorities are to:

- Stay in the same place, especially if you are able to give your location to emergency responders
- Make yourself as visible as possible to searchers
- Minimize your exposure to the elements by staying in the shade, putting on more clothing layers, and setting up your emergency shelter.

To report a missing person in Joshua Tree National Park, call 911 or (909) 383-5651.

JTNPA is proud to be the primary non-profit partner for Joshua Tree National Park since 1962. Learn more about our work at joshuatree.org.

We want to see how you Hike Smart! Tag @JTNPA and use #DontDieToday on Instagram and Facebook.

See you in the park!

First aid information courtesy of Joshua Tree National Park, the National Park Service, and the American Red Cross

Photographs courtesy of NPS/Alessandra Puig-Santana, NPS/Lian Law, and NPS/Brad Sutton

Developed for JTNPA by Reilly Powell

INJURIES

This guide is not a substitute for first-aid training or medical treatment. If you think another person is seriously injured, call 911.

Serious injuries include any injury that:

- **Affects normal breathing**
- **Bleeds uncontrollably**
- **Causes unconsciousness**
- **Impacts whether or not you can get out of the park without help**

If you have any condition that may affect your safety in the park, plan ahead. For example, if you are allergic to bees, do not visit in the summer when bees are most active, carry your EpiPen, and check for wildlife alerts about bees.

If you are injured in Joshua Tree National Park, use the first aid supplies you brought with you to address your most concerning symptoms first. Take a break in the shade and decide if you're able to continue your activity.

If you can't continue recreating safely, always try to rescue yourself! Use the navigation tools you brought with you and what you remember about how you got there.

If you see someone you think may be injured:

- **Check your surroundings for hazards like loose rocks, flooding, or disturbed wildlife**
- **Call out and tap their shoulder to see if they are awake and able to respond**
- **Call 911 for help**

If you have a personal locator beacon (PLB) or an SOS app on your phone, you should activate it after calling 911.

YOUR SAFETY IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

10 ESSENTIALS

1. **WATER:** At least 2 gallons (7.5 liters) per person per day. You may need as much as half a gallon (about 2 liters) more on the trail.
2. **FOOD:** Focus on salty, high-calorie snacks. You may need up to twice as much food as usual when outdoors.
3. **CLOTHING LAYERS:** Protect yourself from the sun and temperature extremes with layered clothing.
4. **SUN PROTECTION:** Bring a hat, sunscreen, and sunglasses to reduce the risk of sunburn and heat illness.
5. **FIRST-AID KIT:** Create a Joshua Tree-specific kit that includes tweezers for removing cactus spines and a spray bottle to cool down.
6. **STURDY SHOES:** Wear closed-toe shoes that will be comfortable on variable terrain, like sand and rocks.
7. **NAVIGATION:** There is no cell service in the park. Bring a map, compass, and driving directions you can use offline.
8. **POCKET KNIFE:** You'll only have access to your own tools. Bring a pocket knife or multi-tool.
9. **FLASHLIGHT:** There is no conventional lighting in the park. Bring a light and extra batteries.
10. **EMERGENCY SHELTER:** Reduce the risk of exposure with a tent or space blanket.

RESOURCES

MAPS AND SUPPLIES are available in visitor centers and park stores. There are no retailers inside the park.

POTABLE WATER is available only at Joshua Tree Visitor Center, park headquarters, West Entrance Station, Black Rock Campground, Cottonwood Campground, and Indian Cove Ranger Station. Bring the water you will need with you!

FUEL is available in the nearby desert communities. There are no gas stations inside park boundaries.

INFORMATION ABOUT CONDITIONS, CLOSURES, AND FIRE RESTRICTIONS is available at nps.gov/jotr/planyourvisit/conditions.htm.

EMERGENCY PHONES are located at Indian Cove Ranger Station, Intersection Rock parking lot, and Cottonwood Visitor Center. There is no cell service in the park.

GET ALERTS, INFO, AND DOWNLOADABLE MAPS IN THE NPS APP

SCAN THE QR CODE TO DOWNLOAD OR VISIT NPS.GOV/SUBJECTS/DIGITAL/NPS-APPS.HTM