



# Covid-19 Advice for Hillwalkers

Effective in Northern Ireland for Step 1

This advice aims to help hillwalkers make a safe and responsible return to hillwalking in the presence of Covid-19. It should be considered in addition to your normal good practice. Apply common sense and use your experience and intuition as a hillwalker to make sensible decisions.

**Stay safe. Scale back your ambitions, be cautious, choose objectives within your skills and physical limits to minimise the risk of accidents and injury and to avoid pressure on the emergency services.**

Can I go hillwalking?	Yes - subject to Government restrictions.
Where can I go?	Stay local in accordance with Government restrictions.
Who can I go with?	If hillwalking with people from outside your household the maximum group size is 6.

- Follow Government and public health advice.
- Be socially responsible, do what you can to help reduce the transmission of the virus.
- Respect the wishes of landowners and local communities.
- Maintain physical distance from people not living in your household.
- Stay safe - choose low risk walks that suit you and/or the group's ability.

## Before Hillwalking

- Choose a route that allows you to stay local, and if possible, walk or cycle to the start point.
- Prepare and plan your route and check that you can access the trails/hills.
- Stick to low risk routes and try to avoid busy times and popular locations.
- Carry a first aid kit and be prepared to deal with minor incidents during your walk.
- Have a plan of action to maintain social distancing and good hygiene if you have to cross stiles, go through gates, or pass others on narrow paths.
- Only take dogs where they are permitted, and keep them on a lead at all times.

## Parking

- If possible, check if a car park is open before travelling.
- If on arrival you find the car park is full or closed, have an alternative plan.
- Park in a way that will not obstruct the emergency services (who may need to use forest entrances), local residents accessing their homes, or local farmers who need to enter fields or farmyards.

## While Hillwalking

- Walk within your capabilities and within areas and routes that are familiar to you.
- Be vigilant on 2m distance when breathing hard during ascent, passing gates and going through stiles.
- Avoid holding or sharing anyone's poles/ gear throughout the walk.
- Be especially mindful of not gathering around a map, at summits, or for photos.

For further information please go to the Mountaineering Ireland website; [www.mountaineering.ie](http://www.mountaineering.ie).  
This advice will be updated and reissued as the situation develops.