

# HOW TO LEAVE NO TRACE WHILE GETTING MARRIED OUTSIDE

AND WHY IT MATTERS





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# A NOTE FROM ME:

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Hey there,

I'm Amanda, your elopement photographer and I couldn't be more excited to photograph your amazing day out in nature—it's going to be incredible! I started photographing elopements because I love the outdoors, and I know you do too, which is why I'm so excited to share this guide with you. It has a ton of helpful things to consider as you plan your outdoor wedding day, to keep the amazing location you'll say your vows looking beautiful for years to come.

We have a huge privilege of being able to access such amazing public lands (National Parks, State Parks, National Forests, Wilderness Areas, BLM lands, etc) as a backdrop for committing your lives to each other. Instead of paying \$5-20k+ for a wedding venue, public lands give us the gift of the best venue in the world, for nearly free.

With that, comes the responsibility for all of us to keep that venue looking amazing, so you two can come back to that spot in 10, 20, or 50 years, and for it to still look and feel the same as when you said your vows there.

So as I come alongside you and help you plan your day, I'm excited to keep in mind how lucky we are to have such a beautiful planet—I have the best job in the world, and I can't wait to help you two create a beautiful outdoor wedding day that's as kind to the planet, as it is to us.

Cheers,  
Amanda Matilda

First off,

# WHAT IS LEAVE NO TRACE?

Simply put, Leave No Trace is a set of ethics & best practices we should follow to enjoy and protect the outdoors at the same time.

Leave No Trace has a set of 7 minimum-impact principles, that help guide our decisions when we're outside

1 PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE

2 TRAVEL AND CAMP ON DURABLE SURFACES

3 DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY

4 LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND

5 MINIMIZE CAMPFIRE IMPACTS

6 RESPECT WILDLIFE

7 BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHER VISITORS

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## WHY SHOULD I CARE ABOUT LEAVE NO TRACE WHEN IT COMES TO MY WEDDING DAY?

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If you're getting married outside, it's probably because you're drawn to nature's beauty.

And the way we keep nature beautiful, so that we can continue to come back to these gorgeous spots time & time again, is to make sure that we enjoy them sustainably and responsibly.

Weddings, elopements, and photo sessions can have a big cumulative impact on the environment—and without following Leave No Trace, this is what could happen:

Locations that are currently available for weddings, & elopements could become off-limits for special events and professional photography—meaning it could become impossible to come back to a location for a vow-renewal or anniversary session in 5 years.

The spot that you said your vows could get so badly damaged, destroyed, or trashed that it needs to be closed for restoration, and won't look the same at all when you want to come back in the future.

The prevalence and costs of special event permits could spike, causing it to become very difficult to have any kind of events on public lands

So whether you find the outdoors peaceful, serene, awe-inspiring, or whatever's drawing you to getting married in nature, we're all in this together.

And together we believe it is possible to have the BEST day, while also protecting our natural world for future visitors.

By reducing our impact as we visit, photograph, and celebrate outdoors, we can protect these places we love! You don't have to limit your celebration to reduce your impact—this guide will help you each step of the way as you plan, prepare, and finally get married somewhere beautiful!



# 5-STEP GUIDE TO LEAVE NO TRACE WHILE GETTING MARRIED OUTSIDE

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# STEP 1: PICKING A LOCATION

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The place you get married is a decision that affects a large portion of your experience of getting married... so how do you pick the perfect place?

Things to Consider to help you find the perfect outdoor wedding location:

1

## NUMBER OF PEOPLE

How many people will actually be there?

Hint: Don't forget to include your photographer, officiant, other vendors, guests (and pets!)

Ex: 5 guests + photographer + videographer + officiant + musician + caterer + couple getting married + 2 dogs = 12 people & 2 pets (it adds up quick!)

Is there a location that both allows that number of people and can sustain that amount without causing environmental damage?

Note: Most outdoor areas have a limit to the number of people that can be in attendance at an event (including vendors) and many have strict rules about (or don't allow) pets— be sure to check the rules, regulations, and permit guidelines of that particular area.

2

## ACCESS NEEDS

Consider every individual's needs. Does anyone have access requirements?

Does someone require a flat walking path, wheelchair access, or facilities?

Will you be bringing chairs for anyone who cannot stand throughout your ceremony?

Are chairs allowed at that location and/or will setting up chairs cause damage at that location?

What about fitness levels? Can everyone carry everything they need to the location and pack all of their own items out?

Will everyone be comfortable and prepared with weather, altitude, or other environmental factors?

### 3

## ACTIVITIES & EXPERIENCE

What activities do you want to do on your wedding day? (Ex: catering, music, chairs, floral installations, alcohol, etc.)

Are the activities you want to do allowed in the location you want to go?

What kind of access and space is required for these activities in order to leave minimal impact?

Do you need to bring any equipment for them?

Can you actually get it to your location? Is that equipment allowed?

How private do you want your wedding experience to be?

Is the location you want to get married super popular & busy? This may be unideal for your wedding experience, and cause impact on other visitors since public lands can't be privately reserved for events.

Can you pick a less-trafficked location or go at a non-peak season, day of the week, or time of day?

The questions above will help guide you to a location with a better understanding of whether that space can accommodate your plans.

Each park, venue, public lands space, and environment has its own rules and regulations.

Knowing exactly what kind of day you want from the start will help you quickly narrow down places that serve your needs, as opposed to those that don't.

You might also consider if your dream location cannot sustain your plans, whether you want to alter factors that will allow you to accommodate your celebration in a place you love.

It's all about choosing priorities – and never over burdening a space beyond what it can handle. Remember that sometimes less really is more. Following leave No Trace isn't about limiting your plans, but being realistic and intentional about your choices.





# CONSIDERING GETTING MARRIED IN A NATIONAL PARK?

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If getting married in a national park is your dream, take a close look at the regulations below. There are some differences and specifications from park to park, but these general rules apply across the board to most National Park weddings & elopements:

1

**Permits** - Permits for special events (including 2-person elopement ceremonies) are required in most national parks, and many parks also require photographers to apply for a separate commercial use permit for taking professional photos of the event.

2

**Leave No Trace** - Most National Park permits require you to sign indicating that you will closely adhere to Leave No Trace principles and practices for all events/ceremonies that take place in that National Park.

3

**Speakers & Music** - Sound amplification via speakers is not permitted in most national parks. Vocal communication & musical instruments should not exceed normal conversational volume or negatively impact other park users.

4

**Decor** - Equipment such as tables, chairs, carpets, tents, floral displays, and generators cannot be used in most parks. A few portable chairs (provided by the permittee) for the elderly are sometimes permitted.

5

**Confetti** - Throwing and scattering of: confetti (including biodegradable), rice, birdseed, flower petals or other materials, is prohibited in all parks.

6

**Pets** - Pets are not permitted on trails in almost all national parks, even if they're on leash—and pets are completely banned from certain national parks



# HOW TO CHOOSE A WEDDING DATE

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## TIME OF YEAR, SEASONS, & WEATHER

As you pick a date, think back on your desires and the desires of your guests as far as season, temperature, and weather. Certain locations at different times of year can result in significantly different experiences at the same location.

Questions to ask yourself to decide on the right time of year to get married at your chosen spot:

1

Is there a “high tourist season” or busiest time of the day when there will be crowds?

Most public lands do not allow visitors to ‘reserve or restrict access’ to a location - you have to be prepared to “Be Considerate of Other Visitors” and share your location if it is busy. Many couples prefer to get married in the off-season, or on a weekday, or at sunrise (or both) in order to have a private and intimate wedding experience of having a beautiful place all to themselves.

2

What type of weather will you & your guests enjoy & be prepared for?

Different seasons have significantly different attire and gear requirements, and unpreparedness is one of the top reasons outdoor excursions don't follow Leave No Trace. However, most accidents can be easily prevented with the right preparation and gear. Also make sure to consider what the ground conditions are. Mud and snow often make people step off trails. If the ground is wet or muddy, guests are less likely to follow Leave No Trace, and more people have higher impact. Ensuring you access your ceremony location via a durable surface is really important with guests.

3

Are there any seasonal natural hazards, road closures, wildlife closures, or fire bans to be aware of?

Some seasons come with potential extreme weather or natural hazards like snow, heatwaves, avalanches, landslides, high winds, floods, thunderstorms, tornados, etc that require additional preparation, or a whole backup location for your event. Also be aware that some roads and outdoor areas close seasonally due to weather or animal migrations or mating seasons. Lastly, be sure to check if there are commonly seasonal fire bans at your location, as that may affect your choice of decor & activities, or the time of year you want to get married.

# STEP 2: PREPARING FOR YOUR DAY

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Great, you've picked your date and location! You know how many people can be present, what sort of activities and amenities you can incorporate, and you have a base knowledge of how to prepare guests to access the space safely. Next, with your knowledge of everything that is possible according to the rules and regulations of your location, it's time to start figuring out how to use the 7 Leave No Trace principles to guide the planning of your day. Each of the following 7 principles will apply differently depending on your plans, but all of them can apply in some manner! If there's anything you want even more specifics on to apply to your event, local knowledge and expertise will go a long way.

- 1 **Plan Ahead and Prepare**
- 2 **Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces**
- 3 **Dispose of Waste Properly**
- 4 **Leave What You Find**
- 5 **Minimize Campfire Impacts**
- 6 **Respect Wildlife**
- 7 **Be Considerate of other Visitors**



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It's a great idea to do your research prior to your wedding day. call local land managers/rangers, check online resources and recent trail or location data, and seek out knowledgeable vendors! Get to know the area well, because then you can be prepared to educate your guests and bring the right gear to have a truly enjoyable experience.

## PLAN TO STICK TO TRAILS & DURABLE SURFACES

While staying on trail 100% of the time you're outside is an admirable goal, it is likely that you or your guests will go off-trail at some point during the day. While doing so (either because the trail ends, or your group spans out into a space that can handle congregation) staying on durable surfaces is the next best thing to staying on trail.

### WHAT ARE DURABLE SURFACES & WHEN IS IT OKAY TO GO OFF TRAIL?

#### OK TO GO OFF-TRAIL:

Rock, sand and gravel: These surfaces are highly durable and can tolerate repeated trampling and scuffing. (Just be aware that lichens that grow on rocks are vulnerable to repeated scuffing).

Ice and snow: The effect of travel across these surfaces is temporary, making them good choices for travel assuming good safety precautions are followed and the snow layer is of sufficient depth to prevent vegetation damage.

#### SOMETIMES OK TO GO OFF TRAIL:

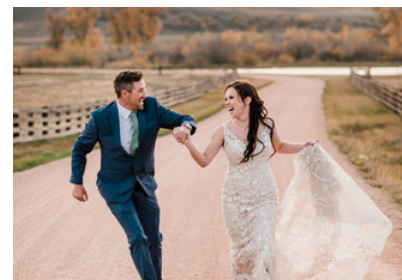
Vegetation: The resistance of vegetation to trampling varies. Careful decisions must be made when traveling across vegetation. Dry grasses tend to be resistant to trampling, while wet meadows, moss, tundra plants, and other fragile vegetation quickly show the effects of trampling. If vegetation shows signs of trampling, it creates what are called "social trails," (or "satellite trails") which encourage other visitors to go off-trail because there is the appearance of a space used for travel. As a general rule, travelers who must venture off-trail should spread out to avoid creating paths that encourage others to follow.

#### NOT OK TO GO OFF TRAIL:

Living soil: 'Cryptobiotic crust' or 'crypto' is often found in desert environments, and is extremely vulnerable to foot traffic. One footstep can destroy this fragile soil, causing damage that will take many years to overcome if ever.

Desert puddles and mud holes: Water is a scarce resource for all living things in the desert. Don't walk through desert puddles, mud holes or disturb surface water in any way.

Fragile Vegetation: Moss, alpine meadows, tundra, wildflowers, and other fragile plants are not resistant to trampling and can take years to grow back if stepped on.



# *“Take nothing but pictures, leave nothing but footprints.”*

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Here's some important tips to keep the place you get married as good (or better) than the way you found it.

1

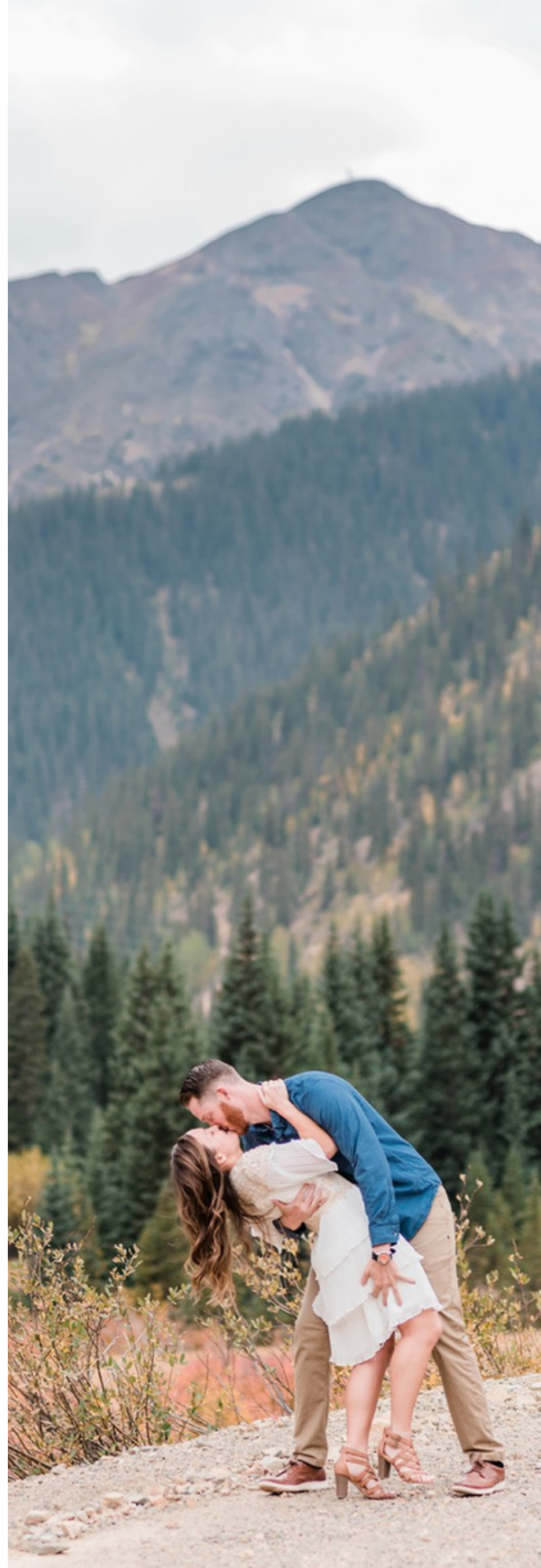
**Leave everything You Find:** While it may seem like a fun idea to take mementos of your day from the environment, it's best to leave it as it is. If you see something you want to remember, take a photo of it instead of taking it with you.

2

**Pack everything out:** Flower petals, toilet paper, food scraps, champagne cork wrappers—all of it. Even items that may be perceived as “natural” or “biodegradable” are likely not native to the environment and take a lot of time to degrade—and in the meantime they have the same effect as leaving trash behind.

3

**Human Waste:** I guess we are talking about it—going #2 on the trail sometimes means you have to hike back out with a bag of you-know-what. WAG bags are a great option in places where facilities are not available. In certain environments (desert & high-alpine) you always need to pack your own waste out. In other places you can dig a cat hole at least 6 inches deep. Make plans for you, your guests, or your pets and be prepared to pack it out.





4

**Bouquets & Flowers:** If you're going to be hiking with a bouquet on your pack, make sure it is sturdy and won't be dropping petals along the way. Also depending on the environment you're in, you may want to check the local rules & regulations to see if it's allowed to bring non-native species of flowers. It's always best to avoid bringing invasive species of plants into environments in case pollen or seeds do drop. Also be aware of the impacts of floral installations (where they might leave holes in the ground), and always make sure to fully disassemble these and pack them out.

5

**Confetti, Seeds, & Rice:** Most national parks don't allow throwing anything on the ground, and it's generally not a good idea—even biodegradable confetti. Some sustainable alternatives are to sustainably collect local native leaves or use ribbon sticks, glow sticks, snowballs, or a high-five tunnel to celebrate instead.

6

**Popping champagne:** Find that champagne cork after you pop it, and make sure to pack out the wire cage & wrapper. Also be aware that alcohol is illegal in some national parks, and the sugar in champagne can be harmful to certain fragile environments. If you really want to pop some bubbly for a fun "spray photo" sparkling water is a great alternative and looks the same in an image!

7

**Be Careful with Fire:** Always check for fire bans in your area before having a campfire or using candles, fireworks, smoke bombs, or sparklers. A quick search online will tell you if there are any bans. Only use designated fire pits, only start the fire if there are no high winds and if there's adequate water to drown it nearby. Keep your fire small and make sure it's fully put out when you're done (the embers should be cool to the touch)

# 12 SUSTAINABLE ALTERNATIVES TO POPULAR WEDDING & PHOTOGRAPHY TRENDS

## INSTEAD OF

## TRY

1

Popping Champagne for a “spray photo”



Popping Sparkling Water! It looks the same in photos, and doesn't leave any sweet-smelling remnants that could potentially harm fragile ecosystems or attract wildlife (putting them in danger)

2

Throwing Confetti (even “biodegradable confetti,” rice, or seeds)



Tossing sustainably gathered native leaves or snow off the ground

Or having guests shake ribbon wands, ring bells, or do a “tunnel of hi-fives”

3

Using Sparklers



Using mini LED lights to create the same affect in your photos or have guests hold glow sticks or cell phone flashlights

4

Taking Photos with Smoke Bombs



A small portable fog machine that takes environmentally friendly fog fluid or, try tossing a handful of sustainably gathered loose dirt in the air for the same effect

5

Warming up by a Campfire



Using an indoor fireplace. Or, if you're getting really adventurous, find a local hot spring to warm up in instead!

6

Taking Photos with Candles Outside



Using LED candles from a craft store—they don't require lighting, they don't blow out, and look super realistic in photos

# 12 SUSTAINABLE ALTERNATIVES TO POPULAR WEDDING & PHOTOGRAPHY TRENDS

## INSTEAD OF

## TRY

7

Tossing Your Bouquet off a cliff or into the ocean



Finding a safe place to toss it straight into the air and catch it again, or toss it to your partner for a photo. Remember bouquets have non-biodegradable materials like plastic ribbon, wire, & tape.

8

Collecting mementos from the environment (like wildflowers, rocks, etc)



Taking photos of all the amazing things you want to remember and bringing in your own special mementos to your wedding location and also packing them out.

9

Setting up a big arch for your ceremony



Finding natural “arches” like standing between two trees, or letting the landscape create a natural visual “frame” around you

10

Taking Photos laying in a field of wildflowers



Laying a blanket down on a wide path or bare gravel/sand/rock area within an area with wildflowers to get nearly the same effect

11

Setting up chairs for every guest



Having as many guests who are able to stand for the ceremony. They can even stand in a circle around you.

12

Carving your names into a tree or rock for a photo



Creating your own signs, or doing a wedding-day art-project together with your names on it that you can take home and enjoy forever





## WILDLIFE & PETS

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**Photos With Wildlife:** If you're lucky enough to see some wildlife on your elopement day, make sure to get some photos from a safe distance. For the safety of the animal (and you!), it's important to never try to approach, follow or feed them—no matter the animal or size. A good rule of “thumb” is to stick your actual thumb out in front of you and close one eye—if you can't cover up the whole animal with your thumb, you're probably too close.

**Pets:** Wildlife can be strongly affected by the presence of our furry companions, so be sure to only bring dogs in places they are allowed, and then keep them on-leash and under control.

**Food & Wildlife:** Food and food smells can have a large impact on wildlife. Some animals are notoriously sneaky and like to steal food—so make sure your food (and any scented items) is secured if you walk away from your pack, so you don't unintentionally feed wildlife. Feeding animals can cause them to become aggressive and need to be relocated or terminated. For backpacking elopements, especially in bear country, always make sure you have the proper food storage. Some areas require bear canisters, and you should never bring food into your tent! Bear can rentals can easily be found at national parks or nearby camp and outdoor stores. Always make sure to pack out all your food when you leave.

**Bear Spray:** Speaking of bears... bear spray is required in some areas, and not allowed in others—this is something else you'll want to research and know ahead of time to know what's appropriate for your chosen area.

# WHAT ABOUT OTHER VISITORS?

We are all lucky to have access to public lands—and remember, these public spaces are supposed to be for everyone. As much this is YOUR day, there are also other visitors who come from wide & far to enjoy the same natural beauty. If you find yourself sharing your wedding or elopement location with other people, take a deep breath and smile. They will probably do everything they can to stay out of your way, and they're probably stoked to have witnessed a wedding!

## TIPS TO GET MORE PRIVACY & SECLUSION FOR YOUR WEDDING DAY

### Sunrise, Weekdays, & Off-Season

For highly trafficked and popular areas, consider planning your wedding or elopement earlier in the day. Sunrise ceremonies, even during the busy season, are one of the best ways to have the trails all to yourselves! Also look at off-season or “shoulder season” (between off-season & high-season) or consider getting married on a weekday.

### Look for Alternative Spots

If you want to get married in a super popular location, you might find yourself amongst other couples getting married on the day of your celebration, or even literally waiting in line to take photos at iconic viewpoints. To avoid this, look for alternatives to the most popular spots that may be more off-the-beaten path and naturally more secluded. An experienced local vendor (photographer or planner) can usually help with this.



# TIPS TO RESPECT OTHER VISITORS ON YOUR WEDDING DAY:

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- Be mindful of the noise you're making—many national parks actually don't allow amplified music, but try not to be too loud even in spaces where a speaker is okay.
- Be aware of the space your group is taking up—try not to block viewpoints, or cause passing hikers to veer off trail to walk around.
- Don't hog the best photo locations—everybody has a right to get their shot! Instagram influencers, tripod dads, families, and pro photographers alike deserve their chance to capture an image that will document this memory for them.
- Be open to approaching people and politely asking if they don't mind letting you step in to get a couple quick shots if it's a particularly busy area—then move on in a timely manner so others can do the same.
- Let others enjoy the sunset too Smile, say hi, and share the views.
- Most other visitors are very happy to oblige letting you take photos with the good views—and simply being kind, respectful, and courteous usually goes a long way.



# STEP 3: TALKING WITH YOUR GUESTS

Now that you're informed about the best minimum-impact practices for having an amazing outdoor wedding experience, it's time to make sure that your guests are in the loop too. When sending pre-wedding emails, these are some great things to include:

## WHAT TO BRING

What gear do your guests need to have a safe and enjoyable time for your day? Sensible shoes, jackets, extra layers, water, snacks, headlamps and other safety gear?

## WILDLIFE INFORMATION

Let guests know what wildlife they may encounter and remind them to not feed, follow, or approach them. If you're getting married in bear country, make sure to include information about bear spray and proper food storage.

## SERVICE

Will you have cell phone reception in this area? Do you have paper maps, GPS, or other ways to safely find help in an emergency?

## WHAT NOT TO BRING

It's a good idea to explicitly ask your guests to please not bring confetti, rice, flower petals, etc. Even if no one mentioned it, bring it up. Guests may have organized as a 'surprise' without your knowledge and may not think about the impacts of their celebration. Also if your location is not pet-friendly, make sure your guests are aware.

## NAVIGATION

Do you have maps downloaded and available? In remote or less-frequented locations it can be easy to get off trail, especially at night. We highly recommend downloading area maps, trail maps, and even alternative trail maps. We love Google Maps, Alltrails, & Strava. Consider a GPS device and/or compass too.

## **PARKING**

Where are they going to park? Is there enough parking? (encourage carpooling). Make sure parking areas are clearly designated on any maps you send to guests.

## **WASTE**

Your guests are there to enjoy themselves, but there's no venue staff in the parks to pick up after your party. How can you make sure you don't have to worry about cleaning up after your guests?

## **FACILITIES**

Tell guests where the nearest facilities to your wedding location are, and where there are no toilet facilities.

## **TIMELINE**

Will guests need to meet you at a certain time/location? It's always a great idea to send GPS coordinates for the exact place you plan to meet. Back up plans are never a bad idea (Example: if we are not at this location by 10:00 a.m., meet at the Visitor Center where there is cell reception).

## **LEAVE NO TRACE**

Feel free to send along the exact LNT guidelines to give your guests a better idea for expectations. Giving them enough of a heads up gives you all a chance to discuss expectations, clarify any confusion, and make sure everyone is prepared.

Pro Tip: If you're worried about seeming like a "party pooper" to your guests with some of this info... it's a great idea to start out this email with something like: "We're so excited to get married in such a beautiful natural setting, and we want to ensure everyone has an enjoyable experience and that we keep this place looking beautiful so that we can come back here on our 5-year anniversary."



## **STEP 4: ENJOY YOUR DAY!**

Your day is HERE! You're ready to celebrate, party, & enjoy yourself. The best thing about Leave No Trace, is your awareness and preparation means that it'll be second nature to you on your wedding day.

Don't feel held back by Leave No Trace at this point--let it free you to really appreciate the landscape around you! To give you a good idea of what this will look like in practice, here's a short play-by-play recap of each Leave No Trace Principle and how it applies in real-time on your wedding day!

**Travel & Camp on Durable Surfaces** – Stick to trails and durable surfaces like rock, sand, gravel, ice, snow, and study vegetation like dry grasses for your ceremony, portraits, and activities.

**Dispose of Waste Properly** – Before you leave your ceremony or celebration area, be sure to do a good sweep and pick up any little trash items that might have fallen. Use a trash bag to collect any waste that is generated & know the environmental regulations on going to the bathroom in the wilderness.

Leave What You Find – Everything you see makes up this beautiful landscape—leave all of those treasures where they are! If there’s something you see that you love, let your photographer know and they can take a beautiful detailed photo of it instead. “Take nothing but pictures & leave nothing but footprints.”

Minimize Campfire Impacts – Follow fire regulations and if you do have a campfire, make sure to use an established fire pit, and put it out entirely before leaving. Avoid using sparklers, smoke bombs, or candles in any place that you wouldn’t consider safe for a campfire.

Respect Wildlife – Keep a safe distance from all wildlife you encounter and don’t leave your food unattended.

Be Courteous of Other Visitors –Smile & be friendly to other hikers and even couples/photographers you meet on the trail. Share the views & best photo spots and enjoy being in the beautiful great outdoors together.

**THAT’S IT! YOU DID IT! CONGRATULATIONS ON HAVING A STUNNING, ENJOYABLE, AND SUSTAINABLE WEDDING DAY. YOU ROCK!**



Quick guide to

## **HIKING ETIQUETTE:**

Yield to uphill hikers and horse riders. Sometimes uphill hikers will happily take the break and pull off, but remember that they have the right-of-way.

If a single hiker is passing a big group, it's easier and less damaging for the single hiker to yield and step off the trail.

Like driving, stay right & pass on the left.

“On your left” or a “hello” are great and simple way to give hikers a heads up that you're catching up and about to pass them.

Be aware of faster hikers approaching behind you and let them pass.

Hike single file in groups.

Overall, just be friendly and respectful to the fellow outdoor lovers.





# STEP 5: SHARING YOUR MEMORIES

After your day is over, the most amazing way to get to relive your memories is through your photos. And sharing them with your friends and family is a great way to showcase how awesome your day was (especially if some of them weren't able to attend).

When you share, it's important to consider the impact putting your images publicly online. Over the last few years, we've witnessed some of the most beautiful easily-accessed places in the US get overrun beyond the capacity of the environment to withstand—resulting in places getting destroyed, fences getting put up, and viewpoints changed forever.

Simply being conscious of what you post online can help ensure that the place you got married stays beautiful for years to come.

## **SOME TIPS FOR SUSTAINABLE SHARING OF YOUR WEDDING PHOTOS:**

**Think before geotagging your exact location:** Even if you don't have a ton of followers, including exact geotags or hashtags of fragile environments, without the proper context and including Leave No Trace information can result in cumulative damage to that environment. Consider possible impacts before tagging (or geotagging) specific locations. Depending on the specifics of the area, you may choose to tag a general location if any at all. Learning the location's history can also inform your choice.

**Be Mindful of What Your Images Portray:** Give some thought to what your images may encourage others to do, and what the impact of those actions may be. Images that demonstrate good Leave No Trace practices and stewardship increase the likelihood that others will emulate this behavior. Be mindful of the platform you have and the people you reach when sharing.

**Kindly Educate & Include information on Leave No Trace:** Given the millions of social media users in the world, think of the incredible potential that social media has to educate outdoor enthusiasts! When you share your images, it's always a good idea to include the relevant information on how you kept your event sustainable in that area. You never know what other couples might see your photos—and that's an amazing way to ensure that your wedding location stays beautiful for years to come.

# THAT'S A WRAP!

I hope this guide will help you enjoy getting married in a beautiful outdoor location while also helping protect it so we can all enjoy it in the future.

I'm so excited to be a part of your day!

Enjoy Your World, Leave No Trace

- Amanda Matilda

