

Summer mountaineering safety tips



Plan and inform

Always tell someone about your route and estimated time of return.

Enter your name in summit books and sign-in books at huts. This could be of great help to mountain rescue teams in case of a search mission.

Good preparation and planning are crucial for safety in the mountains. Deciding where to go on the spur of the moment is strongly discouraged.

- Check the weather forecast (www.vreme.si).
- Book your stay at the mountain huts and/or ask hut managers about the condition of your chosen path. Cancel your reservation if you change your plans.
- Get a hiking map and carefully plan your route. Use a guidebook when planning your tour; online data is useful mainly for checking the current conditions.
- Mobile navigation apps can be useful, but they can't replace a real paper map. The Locus Map app includes hiking maps of the Alpine Association of Slovenia.
- Get an early start. Thunderstorms are much more likely in the afternoons and mountain huts are the only place where you're safe from lightning.

Food and extra drinks can be bought at mountain huts. Your backpack will be lighter and your outing much more pleasant.

Keep your garbage in your backpack, take it down to the valley, and sort it in separate containers.

Bivouac huts are to be used in cases of emergency and not as tourism facilities.



www.en.pzs.si/trgovina.php



Trails

Slovenian mountain trails are marked with the Knafelc blaze (white dot inside a red ring). Follow these marks and you won't get lost.

DON'T STRAY OFF THE MARKED TRAILS.

If you get lost, return the same way to the nearest blaze. **DO NOT CONTINUE** if you don't know where you're going!

Mountain trails are rated by difficulty.

Easy trails – walking without the use of hands. Trekking poles can be used.

Difficult trails – occasional use of hands. Steel cables and other equipment to increase safety. A helmet is recommended.

Very difficult trails – use of hands is mandatory. Steel cables, iron pegs, and other equipment to facilitate upward movement. A helmet, climbing harness, and via ferrata kit is recommended.

Keep in mind that Slovenian mountains can be a very dangerous place and it's not uncommon to encounter vast snowfields even in late summer.

If part of the path with dangerous exposure (as rocky jumps, long slopes...) is covered with snow (even if it's just a couple of meters), it can be safely negotiated only with an ice axe and crampons. If you don't have them, it's better to turn back – the risk of slipping is too great.

In case of an accident

The Slovenian Mountain Rescue Service is in charge of search and rescue missions in Slovenian mountains.

In case of an accident call 112 or send an SMS with the following details:

YOUR NAME,
details of the accident
(**WHAT, WHERE, AND WHEN**),
HOW MANY are injured
and the extent of their injuries,
THE KIND OF HELP you need.



IMPORTANT:

Keep calm and don't panic. Make sure that the whole group keeps a cool head. Evaluate the situation and protect YOURSELF and the INJURED from additional hazards. Perform first aid to the best of your ability.

Use the international air rescue signal only if there are no rescuers at the site.



Keep in mind that it may take several hours for help to arrive. Sometimes, a helicopter can't fly due to heavy winds, bad weather, fog, etc. and mountain rescue teams have to get to the accident site on foot carrying all of their heavy gear. Regularly practice your first aid skills and always carry the required equipment.



Alcohol and tobacco have no place in the mountains!



Equipment

Wear sturdy hiking boots (high cut or mid cut to protect the ankles). Sandals, sneakers and other lightweight footwear are inappropriate and can result in an accident.

Did you know that slipping (caused by inappropriate footwear, inexperience, or tiredness) is the number one cause of accidents in the mountains?

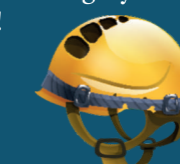
Whatever your chosen activity (hiking, running, cycling...), always carry a backpack with the following items:

- first aid kit,
- headlamp and spare batteries,
- emergency foil blanket and bivy sack (for thermal protection in case of an accident or unplanned bivouac),
- fully-charged cell phone (turn off mobile data to save battery power),
- hiking map and compass,
- high energy food which is light, long-lasting and doesn't take up much space (energy bars, nuts, etc.),
- sufficient quantity of liquid (non-alcoholic isotonic beverages).

Don't forget clothes that protect against the sun, wind, and cold (warm clothes, a hat, and gloves). It's not unusual to encounter extreme cold and snow in the height of the summer.

IMPORTANT – know how to use your equipment!

Wearing a helmet is highly recommended!



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Published by the Alpine Association of Slovenia in cooperation with the Mountain Rescue Association of Slovenia, June 2019. 10000 copies.
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Translated by: Gorazd Pipenbaher.
Photo credits: Manca Čujež
Illustrations: Shutterstock
Design: Andreja Aljančič Povirk
Printed by: Fotolito Dolenc d.o.o.