



Original illustration · an imagined situation

Talk it over

What makes a path look official? What would you check if its status were unclear?

The tempting shortcut

Imagine a quiet bend on a Bryce trail. The next switchback is visible below you. A worn diagonal seems to cut out the turn. Your friend says, "It is only a few steps."

Which way do you go?

- A. Take the diagonal; it is already worn.
- B. Stay with the switchback.
- C. Stop and check the park map.

After the conversation

Follow the designated trail, including its bends. Footprints do not turn a shortcut into a route.

Guidance checked 2 October 2026. Independent BCC education; no NPS endorsement. For all follow-up decisions, use the reading edition.

nps.gov/brca/planyourvisit/day-hikes.htm · nps.gov/brca/planyourvisit/safety.htm



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How could the same photograph be made without changing the animal's behavior?

A visitor at lunch

Imagine finishing lunch at a picnic area. A squirrel comes toward your table. You have a few crumbs and a phone within reach.

What do you do with the last crumbs?

- A. Offer a tiny crumb for a photo.
- B. Secure the crumbs with the rest of lunch.
- C. Brush the crumbs onto the ground.

After the conversation

Keep food and scraps secured. Observe animals without feeding, attracting or approaching them.

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nps.gov/subjects/watchingwildlife/7ways.htm · nps.gov/brca/planyourvisit/day-hikes.htm



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How would your choice change if you needed help,
or if a ranger program gave different instructions?

One light, many eyes

Imagine an independent evening of stargazing at an open viewing area. People nearby are looking up. You need a light to find the zipper on your bag.

How do you use your light?

- A. Use a low red light, aimed at the bag.
- B. Sweep a bright white beam across the area.
- C. Keep it off even though you cannot see your footing.

After the conversation

Use only the light you need, directed at the task. A dim red light can help preserve night vision; keep enough light for safe movement.

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nps.gov/subjects/nightskies/stargaze.htm · nps.gov/brca/playyourvisit/astronomyprograms.htm



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What could you pack before a walk to make the considerate choice the easy choice?

The last orange peel

Imagine a snack stop. Your orange is finished, the nearest trash container is elsewhere, and an empty pocket in your bag could hold the peel.

Where does the peel go?

- A. Tuck it under a bush; it will break down.
- B. Put it in the pouch for later disposal.
- C. Set it beside the trail to collect on the return.

After the conversation

Carry food scraps and packaging out to an appropriate waste container. Bring a small bag to make this easy.

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nps.gov/articles/leave-no-trace-seven-principles.htm · nps.gov/brca/learn/education/self-guided-field-trips.htm · nps.gov/subjects/watchingwildlife/7ways.htm



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Which parts of a photograph can change without moving the photographer onto fragile ground?

Room for a photograph

Imagine lining up a photograph from the trail. A low rock ledge just beyond the path would give you a cleaner view. Its surface looks solid from here.

How do you find the picture?

- A. Step onto the ledge for a higher angle.
- B. Find a new composition from the path.
- C. Ask a friend to stand on the ledge for scale.

After the conversation

Photograph from designated access. Bryce's crumbly rock and slopes are not platforms to climb for a better angle.

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nps.gov/brca/planyourvisit/safety.htm · nps.gov/brca/planyourvisit/day-hikes.htm



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How can a group enjoy being together while leaving space for someone else's experience?

A shared soundscape

Imagine your group arriving at a broad overlook. Someone is listening quietly, another visitor is moving through, and a friend suggests playing a song on a speaker.

How do you set the mood?

- A. Play the song softly for the group.
- B. Keep the speaker off and listen.
- C. Call out to make the canyon answer.

After the conversation

Keep voices low and speakers off. Leave room for people to pass within established access.

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nps.gov/brca/planyourvisit/day-hikes.htm · nps.gov/articles/leave-no-trace-seven-principles.htm



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What would you record to make a useful memory without claiming an identification you have not checked?

A pocket-sized memory

Imagine noticing a small stone beside the trail. Its bands catch your eye. You would like to remember it after you leave.

What do you take away?

- A. Put the stone in your pocket.
- B. Photograph it where it lies.
- C. Stack it with other stones as a marker.

After the conversation

Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects where you find them. Keep a photograph, sketch or observation instead.



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What should a useful backup plan preserve, and what can it let go of?

The route can wait

Imagine reaching a junction where a posted sign closes the route you planned. Your saved screenshot shows the route as open. This is a fictional situation, not a report of a current closure.

Which information guides your next step?

- A. Follow the saved screenshot past the sign.
- B. Respect the sign and rethink the route.
- C. Look for footprints around the barrier.

After the conversation

Respect posted closures. Check official current conditions and ask park staff when information is unclear.

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nps.gov/brca/planyourvisit/conditions.htm · nps.gov/brca/planyourvisit/day-hikes.htm