

# People love it outside.

British Columbia is beautiful, and we think that outdoor exploration is a great thing. In fact, we encourage it. However, when park visitors are uninformed, their exploration can become detrimental to the parks, wildlife, and other park visitors.

So we authored a few key messages to help educate park visitors and inspire respectful behavioural changes so we can all enjoy our parks for a long time to come.



## The people in our parks.

Those who explore parks have a diverse set of reasons for being there and a varying degree of experience in the outdoors. As a result, many have incomplete knowledge or misinformation, which can contribute to poor park experiences and ultimately the degradation of our parks.

Regardless of what they do or do not know, we like to assume the best of people and convey our messages by these guiding principles:

### RESPECT

Let's empower everyone with the opportunity and insight to make great decisions moving forward. There's no need to scold a lack of knowledge. Share what you know openly.

### HONESTY

There's no need to sugarcoat the risks of non-compliance, the consequences of failing to prepare, and the implications of unsafe behaviour. Tell it like it is.

### PRIDE

You love parks. So speak from the heart. Love is contagious.

# These are the messages we think all park visitors need to know.

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*To encourage people to pack out their garbage, we recommend sharing that:*

## Parks are not self-cleaning.

You can say things like:

- Trash ruins the park for everyone.
- It takes zero effort to pack out your garbage.
- Litter attracts wildlife and increases human/wildlife conflict.
- For extra karma points, pick up other people's trash, too.

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*To encourage people to stop feeding wildlife, we recommend sharing that:*

## Wild animals are supposed to eat wild things.

You can say things like:

- Fed animals lose their natural fear of humans and can become aggressive.
- Wildlife have access to a whole forest full of food; they're not hungry.
- Animals change their patterns to accommodate food sources like garbage; don't mess with nature.
- Check out Wildsafe BC for more information.

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*To encourage people to partake in good trail etiquette, we recommend sharing that:*

## Nice people make nature nicer.

You can say things like:

- Acknowledge others on the trail; this is a shared space so remember to be kind and considerate so everyone can have a good time.
- Stay on the trail; shortcutting and trampling cause erosion and impact plant and animal habitat.
- Give animals space; it's their home first.
- Don't blast music; not everyone came to the park to listen to your music.

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*To encourage people to use outhouses properly, we recommend sharing that:*

## Outhouses are toilets not garbage cans.

You can say things like:

- If you wouldn't put it in your toilet at home, don't put it in the outhouse.
- Garbage backs up the outhouse, renders it unusable and can attract wildlife.
- Don't leave garbage in outhouse corners; it attracts wildlife and stays there forever.
- Outhouses can be some of the best views on the trail. Help keep them clean and enjoyable for everyone.

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***To encourage people to adopt respectful backcountry bathroom etiquette, we recommend sharing that one should:***

## **Poop considerately in the wild.**

You can say things like:

- Pooping in the backcountry can have detrimental effects on the environment, water quality, and landscape. Try and hold it until you can find an outhouse.
- If you have to go, dig a hole 100m away from camps, water sources and trails and bury your waste, or pack your poop out.
- No one wants to see human waste and toilet paper while hiking.

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***To encourage people to keep campsites clean, we recommend sharing that:***

## **Messy campsites cause mayhem.**

You can say things like:

- Garbage attracts wildlife so don't leave it lying around.
- Treat your campsite like your home, if you aren't around, your food shouldn't be either.
- Store all wildlife attractants like food and smelly items, including things like deodorant and toothpaste, in a hard-sided vehicle, trailer, bear cache or bear hang.
- The firepit is not a garbage dump.
- Pack out all garbage and recyclables, including organics. Organic matter can attract wildlife.

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***To encourage people to minimize noise disturbances in the parks, we recommend sharing that one should:***

## **Keep nature serene.**

You can say things like:

- Parks are for everyone to enjoy and not everyone enjoys them with a bass line.
- Keeping your neighbours up at night isn't cool; adhere to posted quiet hours and noise rules.
- Let the sounds of nature prevail.

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***To encourage people to not remove natural items from a provincial park, we recommend sharing that:***

## **If everyone took something, there would be nothing left.**

You can say things like:

- Taking things from parks—flowers, mushrooms, wood, etc.—is destructive.
- Items like flowers, mushrooms and dead wood all play a role in our parks, so please let them do their thing.

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***To encourage people to be safe out there, we recommend sharing that one should:***

## **Plan ahead and prepare.**

You can say things like:

- Prepared people get lost less and stay alive more. Do your research and pack your essentials.
- Mother Nature is unpredictable, so it's good to be prepared for anything.
- Make a trip plan and tell someone responsible where you're going and when you expect to be back.
- Visit AdventureSmart for more information.

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***To encourage people to avoid conflict with wildlife, we recommend sharing that:***

## **Wildlife is meant to be wild.**

You can say things like:

- Travel in numbers and make some noise—startling large animals may not end well so make your presence known.
- Help keep wildlife wild - when you see animals, do not approach or taunt them; give them space to simply be.
- Know how to look for signs of recent animal activity and know what to do in case of an encounter.

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*To encourage people to pay attention to dog leashing rules, we recommend sharing that:*

## **Fido can't always be free. For good reason.**

You can say things like:

- Leashing your dog keeps you, them, and other wildlife safe. Triple win.
- An unleashed dog can cause negative impacts to the trail, park visitors, natural resources, and sensitive wildlife that call the park home.
- Adhere to posted signs regarding on- and off-leash areas.
- Not everyone is a dog-lover yet everyone has a right to enjoy the trail.

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*To encourage people to be aware of firewood collection rules, we recommend sharing that:*

## **Forests are not firewood.**

You can say things like:

- Use supplied firewood and burn it only in designated areas.
- Before you plan on having a campfire, check to see if a campfire ban is in effect.
- Campfires are illegal in many backcountry and alpine locations.
- Buy it where you burn it. Moving firewood can spread invasive species and diseases.

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*To encourage people to be aware of drone usage rules, we recommend sharing that:*

## **Drones should be kept at home.**

You can say things like:

- It's illegal to operate drones in the park without permission.
- If you get permission, keep drones away from people and wildlife.

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*To encourage people to heed illegal camping rules, we recommend sharing that:*

## **It's important to camp safe, not sorry.**

You can say things like:

- If you want to sleep in the wild, do so in designated areas only.
- If a permit is required, get one.

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*To encourage people to heed smoking, vaping, and cannabis rules, we recommend sharing that:*

## **The best thing to inhale is fresh air.**

You can say things like:

- Smoking tobacco and cannabis, using e-Cigarettes, and vaping are not permitted in any BC Park, except in frontcountry campsites.
- We recommend you just get high on life.