



Larapinta Trail

...expand your horizons

Safety: It's Your Responsibility



Safety should be your first priority when walking the Larapinta Trail. Careful planning, having the right supplies and knowing your limits are the keys to a trouble free walk.



Avoid Dehydration

Every bushwalker needs to carry an adequate amount of water to suit the terrain, the current weather conditions, the length of their walk and the amount of physical exertion involved.



Be prepared to carry and drink large quantities of water. Do not wait until you are thirsty as thirst is one of the early signs of dehydration. Even in mild conditions walkers will still need to drink water regularly due to the dry climate.



Surface water located along the Trail is scarce, unreliable and will require treatment. Don't take risks by carrying less water than required to get you between the supply points indicated on the maps and website. Remember to carry enough water for cooking and emergencies.

Safety in numbers

Plan to walk with 2 or 3 other people. This means that in an emergency, an injured person is not left alone when someone goes for assistance.



Emergency Communications

It is suggested that you carry some form of emergency communication such as a satellite phone, PLB (Personal Locator Beacon) or Spot Messenger. Satellite phones and PLBs can be hired by contacting the businesses listed in the 'Links and Contacts' page of the Parks and Wildlife website. Mobile phones should not be relied upon as there is very limited coverage, only on the very highest points of the Trail.



Logbooks

For your safety be sure to write in all logbooks located at the Trailheads so that in the case of an emergency, Rangers can track your movements. Please record your details clearly and accurately.

Gastroenteritis isn't funny

All tank and surface water located along the Trail requires purification treatment with either sterilising tablets, a filter pump or by boiling for 5-10 minutes before drinking.

Overheating can be fatal

Walking in hot weather can result in heat exhaustion, which may progress to a potentially fatal heat stroke. Don't ignore the early warning signs. If you feel unwell, stop and rest in the shade and wait for cooler conditions.

Central Australia experiences extreme temperatures, particularly between November and March when day time temperatures regularly exceed 40°C. Hot weather can also occur outside of these months, so have a flexible itinerary and postpone your walk if the temperature is forecast over 32°C. Parks and Wildlife recommend planning your walk between April and October.

Average daily maximum and minimum temperatures can be found in the 'Safety on the Trail' page on our website courtesy of the Bureau of Meteorology or by visiting www.bom.gov.au

Freezing winter nights

Poorly prepared walkers risk hypothermia in winter, when night temperatures sometimes drop to -7°C. Hypothermia, which is a potentially fatal condition, can also result from prolonged immersion in the cold, deep waterholes found along the Trail.

Planning your walk

Have a thorough and well thought out walk plan prior to your departure. Consider what you will do in emergency situations such as an accident, flood or fire, or in the case of extreme weather. Be flexible so that you can adapt to unforeseen situations - allow for rest days or pulling out.

Leave details of your walk plan with a reliable person including your intended time of return. Don't forget to arrange return transport before you depart.

Guide to walking times and grades

Refer to Section Maps for detailed information about walking times and grades.

Walking times are provided as a guide only, for Larapinta Trail walkers of average fitness and capable of carrying overnight packs (e.g. 15 to 20kg). The times are based on a steady pace and



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Safety: It's Your Responsibility (continued)

allow for some brief stops but no long rests. Fast walkers and day walkers may travel more quickly on the easier sections of the Trail, while less agile walkers may be slowed down by gorges and the rocky ground.

For a safe walk you will need...

- Section Maps with Trail Notes for the sections you intend walking
- Food and water for the days you intend walking plus a little extra in case of unexpected delays or emergencies
- Sturdy footwear, a broad brimmed hat and sunscreen
- Loose-fitting breathable clothing that gives maximum sun protection
- Very warm clothing for winter nights (including a beanie or warm hat)
- Protective clothing and shelter for inclement weather
- Well stocked First Aid Kit (and to be capable of providing basic first aid)
- A whistle to attract attention if you become lost
- Some form of emergency communication (satellite phone, PLB or Spot Messenger)
- A small torch

The above items are to be taken in addition to your normal hiking gear.

Emergency Procedures

The best way to avoid getting lost is to stay on the marked Trail.

The following points highlight the importance of giving your walk plan (including proposed route and return time) to a reliable friend and carrying some form of emergency communication.

If a member of your group gets lost...

Notify the police as soon as possible. Phone **000** in an emergency or phone the Alice Springs Police on **131 444**. This information is also available at Trailhead shelters.

They will want to know:

- The exact location of the last sighting of the person.
- What clothing they were wearing.
- Medical conditions or other relevant personal information.

Leave a prominent marker (e.g. a brightly coloured shirt) at the location of the last sighting on the Trail to assist searchers.

If you get lost...

Stay calm and if you are in a group, remain together. Do not make things worse by leaving the group or attempting to get back to safety. Seek a nearby open area to wait for assistance. Assistance will come when it becomes apparent that you have not returned from your walk or contacted the authorities.

If there is a bushfire...

Don't commence your walk if a bushfire is burning in the area. Check with a Ranger first or check the Trailhead and website for the latest information and advice.

If you are caught in an area threatened by fire:

- Find an open, bare area e.g. a creekbed.
- Protect yourself from radiant heat e.g. crouch behind a rocky outcrop and wait for the fire to pass.
- Replace any synthetic clothes you are wearing with wool or cotton clothing. Avoid having any skin exposed.
- Protect your airway. Keep low to the ground and cover your mouth with a wet cloth.

Information about controlled burns by Parks and Wildlife Rangers will be posted on the relevant Trailhead information boards and the website. If in doubt, do not start your walk until it is definitely safe to do so.

In the case of a flood...

Parts of the Trail follow normally dry watercourses which may be subject to flooding. If flash floods occur walkers are advised to move to high ground and wait for creeks to subside. Do not camp in creek beds if there has been constant rain in the region. In the case of sustained flows walkers should wait to be rescued. Never attempt to cross flood waters.

Remember... Safety should be your number one priority when walking the Larapinta Trail.

