



TEN TORS @ PCSC



MOORLAND SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

It is essential that you are prepared for walking on the moor and that you know what to do when things are not going well. You need to plan your route effectively to avoid problems in the first place and when there is an emergency, you deal with it calmly and knowledgeably to ensure things don't get worse!

The table below highlights potential hazards and risks on Dartmoor, the section that follows gives advice on preparation for, and dealing with emergencies.

HAZARDS	RISKS
Terrain	<p>Incurring physical injury through falling from rocks, slipping on clutter (especially when covered by heather), sliding on slimy stream boulders, or tripping over grass tussocks.</p> <p>Becoming stuck in a bog. Dartmoor is notorious for its bogs, but they are not that numerous and should present a threat only to the unobservant.</p> <p>Suffering from exhaustion. Walking with a pack on Dartmoor for many hours is extremely demanding for anybody whose fitness level or intake of energy giving food is inadequate.</p>
Weather	<p>Becoming lost in inclement weather. Morning mists can be dense, and even in clear conditions visibility can deteriorate rapidly as cloud roll in across the moor.</p> <p>Facing a moorland fire. Dry weather, even in spring can lead to extensive fires.</p> <p>Being struck by lightning. While thunder is unnerving, the risk from lightning is very real.</p> <p>Suffering from heat exhaustion (hyperthermia). Whatever the weather there is always a risk of heat related illness due to the nature of the exercise. The risk is far greater in full sun.</p> <p>Suffering from exposure (hypothermia). A cold wind, a downpour, or a snow storm can rapidly catch out a walker who is inappropriately clothed or unfit.</p>
Flooded Rivers	<p>Dartmoor rivers rise very rapidly after rain. Crossing a swift-flowing flooded river is EXTREMELY DANGEROUS and must not be attempted except where the river is very narrow and less than knee deep. Rucksacks must be removed and carried across. The team must help one another across. If there is no bridge nearby, go upstream to a safe crossing point – returning to a point on the opposite bank that allows you to resume your original course.</p>
Drinking Water	<p>Becoming ill through drinking impure moorland water. Although the streams may look refreshing, the presence upstream of a rotting animal carcass could soon bring an end to the days walking.</p>
Adders	<p>Being bitten by an Adder. Adders are plentiful but timid. In spring they may be slow to escape the approaching boot and, through feeling threatened, may bite.</p>
Ticks	<p>Being bitten by a tick. Ticks are exceedingly small and similar to mites. Adults have eight legs and beaklike mouths adapted for sucking blood; in this country they are parasitic on sheep and deer. Ticks can latch on to exposed skin or get into body folds and transfer disease.</p>
Live Firing	<p>Entering a live firing danger area when it is in use. Dartmoor continues to provide vital training for the Armed Forces. Check for firing times on www.dartmoor-ranges.co.uk and if warning signal red flags are hoisted do not enter.</p>
Unexploded Ordnance	<p>Being injured by unexploded ordnance. Dartmoor has been used for military training for over 125 years, and during the Second World War both north and south moors were used to prepare forces for the D-Day invasion. Unexploded ordnance that works its way to the surface could, if touched, explode and kill.</p>
Vehicles	<p>Begin struck by a vehicle. On the narrow Devon lanes vehicles can present a hazard to walkers.</p>

What do I need to prepare for?

- Plan route using a route card - measure distances accurately and predict how long legs will take, practice timings and pacing.
- Make distances and terrain suitable for capability of party members. It is often faster to walk a longer distance on easier terrain than fight through bogs and tussocks.
- Plan escape routes, this is very important if there is injury or very poor weather.
- Leave your route details and what to do if over return time – stay in contact with training staff via trackers and mobile phone.



On the training weekend

- Start early to get maximum daylight
- Carry out equipment check – have you got everything?
- Carry out people check - is everyone feeling fit and healthy?

Aim to avoid problems

- Getting cold - Hat and coat on early before the chill sets in
- Getting wet - Coat and over trousers on before the shower arrives, once you are wet it is tricky to get dry and warm again,
- Getting wet and cold = hypothermia. For every 100 meters of ascent the temperature drops by about 1 degree centigrade. Wind chill will lower the temperature even more
- Getting lost/disorientated:
 1. Keep a close eye on your progress against planned route and times
 2. Keep together. You must be able to talk to one another and be heard in the wind. Maximum distance apart 10 meters.
 3. Start to use pacing if mist descends.
(Practise on the flat, find a true 100 metre stretch e.g. running track. Walk at normal pace and count the number of even paces i.e. if starting with left foot, count when right foot comes down. Now count out the next 300 metres and see how close you are at the end of the 400 metre track. Ascending and descending hills will vary your pace length BUT you will have a reasonable idea of how many paces are needed for say 50 metres or 150 metres or 500 metres)
 4. Mentally log off features as you should come to them on the map



- Walking on ridges in the strong winds. This will sap energy and on some ridges can be dangerous. The wind at the top of the hill is likely to be at least 3 times stronger than in the valley.
- Where possible avoid slopes, rocks, scree, long grass, tufts and bogs. All these have the potential to cause injury.
- Cooking in the tent. You have NO chance of getting out once the nylon tent catches on fire. In bad weather cook in the porch lee but with you and a partner on the outside of the tent. Tents can be replaced - you cannot. [See this video to see what I mean...](#)

Accident and Emergency action

If something does happen you need to do the following, this is summarised on your **green card** which you should be carrying with you at all times.



- Can you ALL walk off? If not-
- Establish exactly where you are on the map. Mark the map
- Note the time, the number injured and extent of injuries
- Make injured safe
- Use the mobile phone to call for help – try to call Mr Cook first.
If no signal;
- At least 2 of you (the strongest/best navigator) to walk off for help. Tell those remaining what route and objective (house or telephone box) you will take. Take the marked map and details of those with injuries and those who are fit. Take the Mobile phone as you may walk into an area with a signal
- Those remaining - Set up tent where possible. Get into sleeping bags/bivy bags. Make hot drink if safe to do so
- Keep those injured warm - insulate from cold coming up from ground. Share body warmth if necessary
- Be careful if injury likely to require medical attention e.g. broken bones as fluids will cause delay to anaesthetic being given
- Time for help to arrive will be: outward journey plus mobilisation of team plus return journey. This may take 6+ hours and may be dark.
- **Distress signal. 6 blasts on the whistle OR six flashes on torch every one minute. Response is 3 blasts/flashes.**
- Ground to Air signals, use your body to make letters (all in standing position):
- Y = Need help (Arms outstretched)
- I = Serious injuries - need doctor (Arms raised directly above head)
- X = Unable to proceed (Arms and legs outstretched)
- N = We do not need anything (Raise left arm above head, raise right arm slightly away from thigh) Best avoid doing this - see below.
- Never wave to a helicopter or search plane unless you need to attract attention. They may be searching for someone else and if you keep moving they will know you are okay.