



**Project Skills:**

- Learn the seven principles of Leave No Trace (LNT)
- Develop a skit that demonstrates LNT principles

**Life Skills:**

- Self-responsibility

**Academic Standards:**

- Environmental Education: E.4. Personal and civic responsibility

**Grade Levels:** 4-7

**Time:** 30-45 minutes

**Supplies Needed:**

- Box of props, such as different clothing, bandanas, pots, garbage, trash bags, sticks, stuffed animals, bones, feathers, headphones, blue tarp, random camping gear, magnifying glass, and field guides
- 7 LNT principle cards in the shape of footprints (laminated)
- 7 LNT principle “cheat sheets” (laminated)
- LNT “beach ball”
- Paper and pen (for observer to record evaluation data)
- Evaluation

**Do Ahead:**

- Create a LNT beach ball.
- Cut out and laminate seven LNT principle cards in shape of footprints.
- Cut seven LNT principle “cheat sheets” apart and laminate each.

**BACKGROUND**

Leave No Trace is a nationwide (and international) program designed to assist visitors with their decisions when they travel and camp on America’s public lands. The program strives to educate visitors about the nature of their recreational impacts as well as techniques to prevent and minimize such impacts. Leave No Trace is best understood as an educational and ethical program, not as a set of rules and regulations.



The mission of Leave No Trace is to promote and inspire responsible outdoor recreation through education, research, and partnerships. The Leave No Trace program is focused specifically on human-powered (non-motorized) recreation.

**WHAT TO DO**

**Activity: Seven LNT Principles**

Ask participants if they have ever been hiking in nature with their families, or even walking through a park together. All of us use the world’s resources and it’s important that we “tread lightly” in nature.

One way that we can “tread lightly” is to follow the principles of Leave No Trace (LNT). LNT is information and skills that help people protect themselves and the areas that they visit (state parks, campgrounds, etc.). LNT is about making good decisions to protect the world around you – the world we all enjoy.

There are seven principles of LNT. Lay out the LNT principle cards upside down on the ground. Ask a volunteer to flip over one card and read the principle on that card. As each card is read, ask participants to name one example of how we can follow that principle. After all the cards are read, continue to the next activity.

**Activity: Leave No Trace Skits**

Divide the participants into four groups. Three groups should be assigned two LNT principles; the fourth group should be assigned one LNT principle. Hand out the appropriate LNT principle “cheat sheets” to each group.

It is each group’s responsibility to create a skit that illustrates the main concepts of their assigned principle(s). Allow the groups 10-15 minutes to develop their skits.

Each group then presents its skit. At the end of each presentation, it is the audience’s job to decide which of the seven LNT principles was presented in the skit. Review the principles with the group and answer any questions. Repeat for all four groups.

**Activity: Leave No Trace Beach Ball**

Before you start this activity, create a “Leave No Trace” beach ball. Inflate a medium to large beach ball; divide the beach ball into sections by drawing lines with a permanent marker. In each section, write a summary question or statement:

1. Why is it important to respect wildlife?
2. How many feet from a water source should you discard waste water or go to the bathroom?
3. What should you do with cold ashes from a campfire?
4. Name two items that should not be burned in a campfire.

**Sources:**

- Created by Jessica Jens, 4-H Youth Development Agent, UW-Extension, Sauk County.
- Adapted from information presented at a “Leave No Trace” workshop, 2002 Regional Association of Experiential Education Conference, Hudson, WI.
- “The Leave No Trace Draw” lesson plan is from Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics. This copyrighted information has been reprinted with permission from the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics. For more information or materials, please visit [www.LNT.org](http://www.LNT.org) or call 303-442-8222.

5. What is the largest sized stick that should be burned in a campfire?
6. Before you go on a trip or hike, list one thing you should do.
7. Name one durable surface.
8. Name one way you can be considerate of other visitors.
9. Name three items that you should never “leave behind.”
10. Name one non-durable surface.
11. Give one example of a “water source.”
12. Why is it important to plan ahead and prepare?
13. List three of the seven principles of Leave No Trace.

Now ask the group to form a circle. Ask the group to “bump” the beach ball from person to person. After the third bump, the person with the ball should catch it and hold on to it. Whatever question the receiver’s right thumb is on is the question that they need to read and answer. Participants can feel free to “phone a friend” to get help from the group.

**TALK IT OVER****Reflect:**

- What are the seven principles of Leave No Trace?
- How did your group decide what to do in the skit?
- What information from this activity can you share with your family and friends?
- Why is it important to “tread lightly” in nature?

**Apply:**

- What negative impact can humans have on the environment?
- What positive impacts can humans have on the environment?
- What will you do differently the next time you go on a hike?

**ENHANCE/SIMPLIFY**

- Laminated cards with the seven principles of Leave No Trace can be ordered on the Leave No Trace web site. If funding allows, these cards are a good take-home gift for each participant.

**HELPFUL HINTS**

- Find an adult volunteer who is willing to record what the participants say during the beach ball activity and any additional “Talk It Over” questions.

**ADDITIONAL WEB LINKS**

- Leave No Trace, Center for Outdoor Ethics: <http://www.lnt.org/>.

***Reviewed by Wisconsin 4-H Curriculum Team: June 2006***



A stylized brown footprint with a black outline, oriented horizontally. The text is centered within the footprint.

Respect  
Wildlife

A stylized brown footprint with a black outline, oriented horizontally. The text is centered within the footprint.

Plan Ahead  
& Prepare

A stylized brown footprint with a black outline, oriented horizontally. The text is centered within the footprint.

Travel & Camp on  
Durable Surfaces

A stylized brown footprint with a black outline, oriented horizontally. The text is centered within the footprint.

Leave What  
You Find

A stylized brown footprint with a black outline, oriented horizontally. The text is centered within the footprint.

Minimize  
Campfire Impact

A stylized brown footprint with a black outline, oriented horizontally. The text is centered within the footprint.

Dispose of  
Waste Properly



Be Considerate  
of Other Visitors

# LNT Principle #1

## Plan Ahead and Prepare

- Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you'll visit.
  - Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.
  - Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use.
  - Visit in small groups. Split larger parties into groups of 4-6.
  - Repackage food to minimize waste.
  - Use a map and compass to eliminate the use of marking paint, rock cairns, or flagging.
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# LNT Principle #2

## Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

- Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel, dry grasses, or snow.
- Protect riparian areas by camping at least 200 feet from lakes and streams.
- Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary.

### *In popular areas:*

- Concentrate use on existing trails and campsites.
- Walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy.
- Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent.

### *In pristine areas:*

- Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails.
  - Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.
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# LNT Principle #3

## Dispose of Waste Properly

- Pack it in, pack it out. Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods. Pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter. Deposit solid human waste in catholes dug 6 to 8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water, camp, and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished.
- Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products.
- To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.

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## **LNT Principle #4**

### **Leave What You Find**

- Preserve the past: examine, but do not touch, cultural or historic structures and artifacts.
- Leave rocks, plants, and other natural objects as you find them.
- Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.
- Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.

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## **LNT Principle #5**

### **Minimize Campfire Impacts**

- Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the backcountry. Use a light-weight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light.
- Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound fires.
- Keep fires small. Only use sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand.
- Burn all wood and coals to ash, put out campfires completely, and then scatter cool ashes.

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## **LNT Principle #6**

### **Respect Wildlife**

- Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them.
  - Never feed animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers.
  - Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely.
  - Control pets at all times, or leave them at home.
  - Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young, or winter.
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## **LNT Principle #7**

### **Be Considerate of Other Visitors**

- Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.
- Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail.
- Step to the downhill side of the trail when encountering pack stock.
- Take breaks and camp away from trails and other visitors.
- Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises.

## Evaluation: Leave No Trace

Please circle the number that shows your level of understanding or learning in this session.

- |   | <u>A little</u> |   | <u>Some</u> |   | <u>A lot</u> |
|---|-----------------|---|-------------|---|--------------|
|   | 1               | 2 | 3           | 4 | 5            |
| 1. I now understand the Leave No Trace<br>Behind principles:                        |                 |   |             |   |              |
| 2. I know how to use the Leave No Trace principles<br>the next time I go on a hike: |                 |   |             |   |              |

Final comments: