

Trail Etiquette (Non-Motorized Trails)

Yielding

Yielding right-of-way to a fellow trail user does not always mean stopping or stepping off the trail, yet sometimes that's the best way to ensure safe passing.

The most important thing to remember when interacting with others on the trail is courteous communication is often the safest way to pass.

Trail conditions and specific situations are always a little different, and will dictate whether you need to stop, step off the trail or simply smile and say "hello" as you pass each other.

Everyone

- Avoid using trails that are muddy, so you don't leave uneven bicycle ruts, deep footprints, or hoof tracks. If you must traverse a muddy trail, go right through the center of the trail (even if it is muddy), rather than travelling around the mud and widening the trail.
- Stay on the trail, and respect trail conditions and trail closures.
- Say hello to other trail users and communicate. Trails are a great place to meet new people!
- Leave no trace - pack it in; pack it out. If you see litter, please pick it up.
- If you love Michigan's trails, get involved and join your local trail organization!

Horseback riders

- If you encounter a muddy trail, travel through the center of the trail so inadvertent trail widening doesn't occur.
- Communicate with other trail users about the safest way to pass on the trail.
- Keep at least a horse length back from other trail users.
- Clean up after your horse in staging areas, campgrounds and on paved trail surfaces.

Bicyclists

- Although avoiding muddy trails altogether is best, if you do come across wet trail conditions, dismount and tiptoe down the center, not to the sides because it widens the trail.
- Before passing, alert other trail users of your intentions.
- Maintain a safe speed, especially near other trail users.
- Cyclists are expected to yield to all other trail users.
- Cyclists moving quickly and quietly can scare horses. Speak and communicate when encountering a horseback rider on the trail. The horseback rider will tell you the safest way to pass.

Hikers & runners

- If you must traverse a muddy section of trail, go right through the center of the trail, rather than travelling around the mud and widening the trail.
- Keep pets on a 6-foot leash and keep them close.
- When hiking in a group, please walk single-file and be aware of other passing trail users.
- If you're about to pass another trail user, a simple "hello" is often the best way to announce your presence.
- Don't block the trail and stay alert to other trail users, especially cyclists.
- Yield to horseback riders and be sure to speak to the rider and ask the best way to pass their horse.

Winter tips

- At the trailhead, check to see whether the trail is one-way or two-way.
- Downhill skiers always have the right of way.
- If snowshoeing on a groomed trail, be sure to travel on the side – not on the track, as that ruins the trail for skiers.



Be Courteous and Kind by doing YOUR part to SHARE the trail! 😊