



Field Team Member Search Briefing



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Thanks for your help with the search.

Sign In with complete information: *find the sign-in sheets* and enter your complete information. Your team assignment is based on it..

Report to staging and wait to be assigned to a team. Assemble food and water and proper clothing, given the terrain and weather forecast; you might be out longer than expected.

Follow directions from your Field Team Leader. Your leader is responsible for safety and efficiently completing your assigned task.

If Lost, Stay Put! Don't be a moving target..

Cold: Protect yourself from hypothermia by wearing the **three Ws**: warm-when-wet, windproof and waterproof clothing. Nibble quick-energy food to keep your energy up.

Hot: Avoid dehydration, heat exhaustion and heatstroke: drink water and eat salty snacks.

Early in a search, your team may do a *hasty search* of a trail, stream, drainage or other

high-probability area. For a hasty (rapid) search, move fast to look more for a responsive subject than clues. From time to time, stop, shout the subject's name, and listen quietly.

As you walk, look up, down and all around. Look for *clues*. Even a single footprint or candy wrapper may save a life. Check the area between you and the next searcher. Check under logs and in tangles of brush.

If an area looks rough or messy, call a stop and take the time to investigate, or for a bigger area, ask your Field Team Leader to stop and concentrate the team to search that small area.

For a wide-spaced *sweep search* or a closer-spaced *line search*, members form a line, spaced out by your team leader. Search lines have a tendency to compress themselves downhill: correct as needed by moving back uphill. In a sweep search, you should be in voice contact but might not be able to see the searcher on either side.

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When sweeping swathes back and forth through a search segment, the left-end or right-end searcher takes note of landmarks to retrace their steps on the next sweep, or backtracks the track on their GPS. When there are few landmarks, we may use plastic flagging tape to temporarily mark a swathe's edge.

Sweep search communications are often informal, but especially for bigger line searches, may be more formal. Some commands that might be used by your team:

“Stop!”: stop and shout **“Stop!”** so that everyone hears it. You should shout **“Stop!”** *Anyone* can shout **“Stop!”** *at any time*: a possible clue for the leader to check, a safety concern, or just needing to retie your boot.

“Forwards!”: walk forwards, keep in line, but move side to side to avoid obstructions or check possible hiding places.

“Ready Right!”: get the right ready! If you're right of the leader, and you hear this, you turn

towards the searcher to your right and shout out **“Ready Right!”**

“Right Ready!” (word order reversed): I am the right end searcher and I'm ready to move. Or, I heard **“Right Ready!”** from the searcher to my right *and* I'm ready to move.

“Stop! Collapse Left!”: we've reached the far edge of our search segment, and we are repositioning to sweep another swathe of it.

SIGN OUT! before you leave. If you forgot to sign out, contact your team dispatch or call the local police non-emergency line so we're not searching for *you*.

