Women’s Adventure ACT – FAQ’s

1. ***Who are you?***

We’re a volunteer-led, genuine community group getting women in Canberra outdoors, in a safe, supportive and judgement-free way. We’re not a registered charity nor ‘official’ not-for-profit, but we’re not here to profit.

We have [a set of 12 principles](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VHLhiNOl-1hhRTVreUv5WQDwXs8Cra1F/view?usp=sharing) that define how we do things. Principles like respect, acknowledging indigenous ownership of land, encouraging diversity, encouraging leadership for women and looking after our natural resources are things that are important to us.

We began as a bushwalking/rockclimbing group, almost 4 years ago, and have grown significantly from that. All on the back of volunteer effort. We’ve had around 4,000 local Canberran women participate in over 450 various activities during that time.

1. ***How do I join an activity?***

We use [**meetup.com**](https://www.meetup.com/Womens-Adventure-ACT/) to manage attendance at all our activities, because not everyone uses Facebook.

We use the Facebook Group for general information, for articles relevant to women in the outdoors and adventure, to post photos and reviews from our activities (hopefully to inspire and pass on knowledge!), and in some cases - give advance notice of activities before we post them on Meetup.

To join an activity, you’ll need to join up the site at Meetup.com (it’s free), with an email address and password:

Search for our meetup group: Womens Adventure ACT, here:

https://www.meetup.com/Womens-Adventure-ACT/

Click on the red ‘Join This Group’ button

We recommend you download the Meetup App (IOS or Android), and use it to keep your attendance status updated.

You’ll need to ensure your profile photo shows a picture of your face to join – that helps keep stalky exes and spammers out of the group. If there’s a genuine reason you can’t comply, just get in touch with us.

We’re outdoors people, not IT experts, so we can’t help with any meetup.com app or software questions, sorry! We recommend you use the Help function in meet-up if you’re having problems.

1. ***I don’t want to join in activities or meet-up, I’m just here for the inspo or hike tips.***

Great! We’re glad we inspire you!

This Facebook Group is specifically for members of the Meet-up Group.

If you have strong opinions about how you think we should run things, we always welcome input from the broader community – just please, bring your manners. Being rude about things is never okay.

1. ***I don’t have a Paypal Account/I don’t use Paypal - can I pay cash or transfer by bank transfer please?***

Last year, we had over 1,200 women participate in around 125 different activities. As our group is run entirely by volunteers, it’s too much admin burden on volunteers, to let people pay by three different ways.

Also, carrying $30 in coin on a walk if you’re the walk leader, isn’t much fun. It’s easier if you can set-up a Paypal account, pretty please 😊.

We understand not everyone has/wants to use Paypal. Unfortunately it’s just easier for us to manage payments that way. We’re sorry ☹.

1. ***Why is there a charge for walks?***

In 2018, we introduced a $3.50 walk fee (of which we receive $3.11 after Paypal), as an incentive to help stop the 65% no-show rates we were experiencing.

Meetup costs us $380 a year. We also pay a Garmin In-Reach subscription which is $660 a year – for emergency GPS communication to help keep everyone safe on walks, and run a website to hold some of our documents. A small fee encourages people to attend, rather than just hit ‘Going’ and then not show up, and it helps cover *some* of our costs.

If you’re on a pension, are a student or have a low income and you really can’t afford the $3.50 activity fee, just let the organiser of the activity know, and we’ll waive the charge for you.

Most clubs or associations (including Bushwalking Clubs) in Canberra charge a membership fee to join and/or participate. We’ve seen some outdoor businesses charge up to $200 per person to participate in the same walks that we run.

So $3.50 is nothing - you can’t even buy a coffee for that!

It takes us around 30 hours a week – every week, of administrative effort – just to keep the group going, and this doesn’t include time taken in seeking out, planning and then actually running activities, either.

So if you are concerned about us giving up almost every weekend and multiple days during the week - away from our families, friends and our own hobbies and jobs to run activities for this group to make ‘our millions’ from $3.11 fees, then we’re probably not the right group for you.

For overnight hikes and some small courses, there will usually be a $15 fee because:

* We prepare a detailed information pack for all participants and a safety walk plan for every overnight hike, which includes emergency and safety information. The walk plan is specific for every overnight hike we do.
* We provide use of group share items and consumables like stoves, gas, water purifiers which incur wear and tear and have to be replaced
* If we haven’t done the walk previously, we purchase the relevant topographic maps ($17 each map), with multi-day walks requiring multiple maps

Occasionally we’ll ask for a contribution towards the activity lead’s away costs. We run repeat activities (e.g Kayaking in Jervis Bay) for the benefit of the group, and it can become quite expensive doing repetitive away trips as an activity lead. Yes, it’s fun, but we don’t run these for our own personal benefit. We may ask for a small contribution to help cover the lead’s transport and accommodation, but we’ll be transparent about that.

We’re a community group, not a business. We’re not here to profit but it’s fair we try and cover at least *some* group costs.

We don’t expect you (or anyone else) to give up your life and resources for free, so please don’t expect us to do that either <3.

1. ***All your activities are too expensive.***

This year to date, we’ve run 74 activities.

Of those 74 (and you can check all this yourself, on meet-up):

 53 (**70.6%**) of all our activities year to-date have been **under $10** (44%), **free (14%)** or **helping others (9.4%)**

 10 (7.4%) were <$50

 7 (9.4%) were between $50 and $200

 2 (2.7% ) activities were expensive, commercial trips.

Recently, we listed two activities organised by volunteers, that were a couple of hundred dollars. They were for commercially guided snow-shoe trips and lodge accommodation. Snow activities can be expensive, we know! 

Of course we understand that some women can’t afford those activities, which is why most of what we do is not even the cost of a cup of coffee.

Everything we do is organsied by volunteers who select activities that suit them financially, which may not be activities that suit everyone else. We’re a diverse group of ages, financial situations and experience. We can’t expect volunteers to do activities that will suit everyone all the time, but we do a pretty good job of it.

If something doesn’t suit you personally, we’d love it if you could consider organising an alternative activity, that does fit within your budget, instead <3

1. ***What type of activities do you run?***

Walking is our keystone activity, however as our focus is participation, we do more moderate rather than extreme walks (or extreme anything). If you want to do longer, harder, and more off-track walking, we recommend you join a local bushwalking club, instead (Brindabella or Canberra Bushwalking Clubs).

We run a range of other ‘adventure’ activities such as abseiling, kayaking, caving, canyoning, too – mostly through commercial providers where we try and get a group discount. We use commercial providers where we don’t have the qualifications, skills or specialised equipment to safely run the activity ourselves.

We also run educational and skills activities such as beginner navigation courses, survival and outdoor skills like knot tying and camp cooking.

We’re not just about providing experiences – we want women’s skills and leadership to develop, and we’ll provide plenty of practice opportunities also.

1. ***Can I bring my child or pet on the walk?***

All our activities are for adults, 18+ years.

Occasionally we’ll run an activity such as a shorter walk that may also be suitable for children and **the description of the walk will specify that children of a certain age are welcome to attend.** We will specify where the Walk Leader has a Working With Children card.

As a parent, you are responsible for your child at all times during the walk.

Unfortunately we don’t allow dogs (or other pets) on any of our activities because: some people are fearful of animals / some people are allergic to animals / dogs aren’t allowed in Commonwealth National Parks, but there are other meet-up groups that are specifically for dog walkers and we’d encourage you to walk with your dog in those groups. Please leave Fido at home 😊

1. ***What if I can’t make it to an activity I’ve RSVP’d to? Can you take me off an activity?***

If you can’t now make it , please cancel your attendance on the meet-up site or app, with enough notice (more than 24 hours if possible, please!). This gives other people a chance to arrange childcare / transport / pack gear, etc to take your spot.

We understand that on rare occasions, things pop up, but it’s not okay to cancel at the last minute or simply just not show up at all. Please respect your fellow group members, the time and effort of volunteers, and help keep our good name with any providers.

What’s not so nice is a big group of people changing their mind about attending at the last minute, and members on a waitlist don’t have sufficient notice to find transport, childcare or pack for the event (or even to learn they are not on the attending list).

**Failing to attend:** Be an adult and keep your own reminders about activities you’ve said you’ll attend. Failing to attend once you’ve RSVPd will have removed from the group. It’s super frustrating for others who wanted to attend but can’t, when people who have RSVP’d just don’t show.

It’s also really annoying as a walk or activity organiser to go to the effort (and cost) of planning a walk, scoping it out, turning up early to run it, only to have lots of people pull out either the night before or the morning of the walk. So please be a big person and keep your own calendar and status updated!

We have a separate policy about refunds. **Please read that policy.**

1. ***I have an idea for an activity – can I suggest it?***

As we are run completely by volunteer labour, if you have an idea for an activity – providing you’re prepared to organise, host and lead the activity (and it’s safe to do so), we’d be happy to list it up as a group activity (THANK YOU!!). We can never have enough activities or volunteers to run them. Please contact us and we’ll walk you through the simple process to do that.

Unfortunately someone else isn’t going to organise and run your idea for you though – we all have families and jobs and other hobbies, too 😊.

In the interests of safety, we won’t let just anyone lead a walk – if an activity has more risk to it because it’s remote or off-track, we’ll need to address those risks and cover off issues like first-aid, incident management and navigation – we can help with all that, too.

1. ***I’m just looking for trail running / walk buddies***

We’re happy for you to use the Facebook Group to let others know if you’re going for a short walk up Mt Ainslie, for example, and are looking for a trail buddy. We would caution you to keep an eye on responses to make sure that 50 others aren’t going to also turn up!

If you’re wanting to advertise something that’s riskier (e.g leading climbs or off-track exploratory walks), please have a chat to us first. We’ll work out the safest way to advertise for buddies, without it being a group-run activity.

We’re happy for the group to be used to make contacts in that way.

We have several sub-groups, just for that purpose. If you’re heading out on a small run, ride or easy paddle, check out our groups for that:

Bike riding (Social/Mountain/Road): <https://www.facebook.com/groups/171333141455390>

Rock Climbing: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/661137931424572>

Trail Running: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1288222424910961>

Sub-groups were established for ‘practice’ type of activities, when we don’t want to set up a formal group activity. However we don’t want to set up any more sub groups, otherwise we risk becoming a collection of inconsistent, random, sub-groups on Facebook and that’s not what we are about.

1. ***I’m (insert age) and am not sure if I’m too old / too young for the group.***

We have a wide variety of ages and experiences in our group – 39% of our members are 30 and under; 31% are aged between 40 and 50 years and 30% are aged over 50.

We think it’s healthy to make friends with women of all ages. We walk to people’s capability, on the day. Someone younger may be slower, someone older could be super fit and want to push the group to go faster - either way, we always walk to the slowest member’s capability. That’s a safety issue for the group plus no one wants to feel like they are that person at the back holding everyone up.

We’re not ageist and we’re asking you to be open minded about age, too 😊. Ultimately our members have a good time on our activities, regardless of everyone’s age.

1. ***Can I bring my husband/boyfriend along?***

Research shows that women feel more supported and learn better, in all-women environments. Women also speak up more and share leadership. Women get better opportunities to lead, when there are only other women in the group, instead of deferring leadership to men.

We know that some women have experienced harassment and/or dating pressure in mixed gender meet-up groups. Whilst we love our fathers/brothers/sons and other male relatives, we want to keep this a women-only group, so that you can learn and participate in a more supportive environment.

Your male relatives and friends are welcome to set up their own outdoor group, if they wish.

Finally, anyone seeking to use the group as a same-sex dating group will also be asked to leave. We’re a harassment-free zone regardless of gender, and we’d like to keep it that way 😊.

1. ***Can you tell me what other groups exists, where I can bring my husband/boyfriend along then?***

We’re a volunteer organisation giving up our spare time to run outdoor activities for you. Please use Google and do your own research 😊.

1. ***Can I bring my friend too?***

If they are a meetup group member and have also RSVP’d to the activity, then yes. Some activities will allow you to RSVP for an additional attendee, and some won’t. We’ll need your friend to also read, understand and agree to the Liability Waiver and Disclaimer.

1. ***Is this a group for lesbians?***

We actually had one bloke ask this. Specifically, no, but we may run a few LGBTIQ activities to support Canberra’s LGBTIQ Festival – Springout. We welcome diversity in our group – it’s one of our principles – so all LGBTIQ members including non-binary or gender queer participants are especially welcome, and we have a discrimination-free zone.

1. ***Do I need special hiking boots?***

We generally don’t recommend hiking boots unless you are doing a more challenging, multi-day pack hike. Even then, it depends on your strength, fitness, balance, etc. Some people hike in barefeet (not recommended!), some in minimalist shoes and sandals, some in trail runners, some in standard hiking shoes, and some in boots. Boots do give a bit more ankle stability, foot and toe protection, but they are also heavier and can cause more leg fatigue for longer walks.

You will need waterproof boots for any snow activities, however. We’ll let you know.

We don’t recommend standard joggers for any pack hiking or longer/more rugged walks however, as they have very little grip. Trail runners with good grip and lugs are generally suitable for most walks (e.g Salomon, Innov8, La Sportiva, Altra).

1. ***How fit do I need to be to participate?***

The activity lead/organiser will specify in the activity description in meetup, what level of fitness is required along with any difficulties associated with the track or activity (e.g any ascents, steep sections, scree, rock scrambling, etc).

Generally, the majority of our activities are about participation rather than fitness, and we walk at a moderate pace, to the slowest member of the group. Where a walk might be a bit faster or specifically designated as a fitness walk, longer in duration and/or distance, or more difficult (including more technical such as off-track or steep in grade or include rock scrambling or roped assistance), we’ll let you know. We also include walk distance information on every walk.

We require you to self-select according to your own level of fitness, experience and competency however the activity lead/organiser has the authority to remove anyone from commencement of the activity, if they consider that person may not be able to safely complete the activity or may impact on the safety of the group (whatever the reason).

The fitter you are, the more you’ll enjoy the activities of course, but we’re not specifically a fitness group. And we won’t ever leave you behind on a walk.

If you have a medical condition (including a psychological condition such as anxiety or personality disorder) that could impact on your ability (or anyone else in the group’s) safe participation (for example: epilepsy, asthma, diabetes, heart conditions), **it is your responsibility to inform the activity lead and ensure you bring any personal medications with you – including instructions for administering, on the walk. We cannot manage yours or the group’s safety, if we are unaware of any significant medical conditions.** (Medical information is managed in-confidence)

And if you’re a fast walker, we ask that you respect the principles of the group along with respecting any slower walkers please, and remain with the group. We will not take responsibility for anyone who leaves the group while an activity is in progress, including people who walk off at the front because of speed.

1. ***Can I geocache whilst I’m on a walk?***

See the comment above. Anyone not remaining with the group and choosing to walk off for whatever reason, will not be considered as part of the group activity or responsibility, and will likely not be permitted on any future walks. It’s a risk for the group leader and others in the group, and possibly yourself, to just walk off during the conduct of an activity. Plus, it’s pretty rude.

So Geocaching on our activities is not permitted.

1. ***I’ve never done much bushwalking / kayaking / abseiling. I’m not very experienced.***

Fantastic! You joined the right group. We have a great mix of experiences in the group – only 5% of our group members are super experienced, a large portion have some outdoor experience, and some of our members are trying our activities for the very first time. Most of our activities are suitable for complete beginners or those with not much experience. If we run a more advanced activity, we’ll specify the knowledge/experience requirements in the activity description.

One of our principles is to help women foster and develop outdoor skills and knowledge (including develop leadership skills, too!) in a safe, supportive and judgement-free way. Think of us like the Girl Guides, only for adult women and without the uniform. Questions are welcome anytime, and no one will judge you for what you do or don’t know. We guarantee you’ll learn something on every activity that we do 😊.

If an activity requires some kind of experience or pre-requisite, we’ll say so in the Activity Description in meet-up.

1. ***Do I need any special equipment?***

The activity lead/organiser will specify in the activity, any required items. For all activities, you should always bring:

* Sufficient water for the duration (and following) the event
* Hat / sunglasses / sun cream
* Decent rain jacket (we recommend *at least* a 2.5 layer Gore-tex jacket)
* Warm weather gear (e.g warm layer jacket / beanie / merino gloves)
* Personal medication with administration instructions/ personal first aid kit
* Appropriate footwear (not standard joggers – trail runners are ok for most walks)
* Emergency [whistle](https://www.paddypallin.com.au/fox-40-sharx-120-db-whistle.html)
* [Emergency space blanket](https://m.paddypallin.com.au/sol-emergency-blanket-survival-orange-ns.html)
* [Snake bandage](https://www.chemistwarehouse.com.au/buy/90006/snake-bite-bandage-10cm-x-10-5m?gclid=Cj0KCQjww_f2BRC-ARIsAP3zarHcARFyf5Ja1eI2xklvs583grlYBiI8I76S_os8evuv5_IkJsPk0PAaAthHEALw_wcB&gclsrc=aw.ds) (Aeroform, Smart or Setopress brands are best – 10cm x 10.5cm)

The Group also has a Gear Library, courtesy of an ACT Government and a MACPAC Fund for Good Equipment Grant. If you don’t have the right hiking or camping equipment for an overnight hike, we have 10 sets of the following we can loan you (high quality and lightweight gear) at a really low fee:

* Backpack / tent / sleeping mat / sleeping bag / headlamp / crockery and cutlery / camp stove

We regularly run gear info sessions too, so if you’re wanting to buy gear but aren’t sure about what or how to actually buy the right piece of kit, come along to our gear info sessions where we’ll explain gear.

***What should I have in a first-aid kit?***

For our more remote walks - where there is no mobile phone reception or an ambulance is >1 hour away, check if your Walk Leader will have a first-aid kit on the walk. You should always bring some of your own items, regardless. As a minimum – as a group walk member, we suggest you carry the following:

* In Case of Emergency Card (with any allergies and your emergency contact information) [www.geticecard.com) attached to the outside of your pack
* Snake bite bandage (Aeroform / Smart or Setopress brands are preferred)
* Assorted blister materials (e.g. Hiker’s wool / duct tape / Moleskin patches / Fixomul tape / Rocktape blister tape / Scholl blister gel pads )
* Hand sanitiser
* Gastro-stop / Ibuprofen and/or Panadol / Non-drowsy antihistamine / electrolytes
* Sunscreen
* A pee rag and/or toilet paper (see Q. 21)
* Personal Medications + instructions on dosage / how to administer

If you’re walking without the group, here’s a [link](https://womensadventure.net/f/hiking-first-aid-kits) to a more comprehensive, but still lightweight, First-Aid kit.

First-aid support may not be available on all activities – we’ll specify where no one has first aid skills so you can decide whether to attend or not on that risk. We’ll also ask before the activity whether someone attending has and can offer first-aid support.

1. ***I don’t have transport – can I get a lift?***

Generally we’ll try and minimise the number of vehicles that require parking at an activity, and car pool where possible. That’s good for the environment, too 😊

So if you need a lift, place a call-out in the Discussion section of the activity on meet-up. If someone is willing and able to give you a lift (and most times they can), they’ll respond and you can arrange things privately.

For ‘away’ trips that require longer travel (e.g >1 hour driving), it’s courteous to offer petrol money to the driver. We’ll calculate an estimated per person figure and put that in the activity write up, to keep the amount fair between everyone.

We haven’t yet had anyone who couldn’t attend because they couldn’t get a lift.

1. ***I don’t know anyone else attending and am a bit shy / socially anxious / worried about meeting new people***

We understand completely. All of us who have participated in the group, at one point, it was our first activity and we didn’t know anyone either. Several times a year we’ll run a small coffee meet and greet activity and/or a new member walk, where you can come along for a chat, we’ll talk about the group / how we operate / how things work / what kinds of activities we have on, you can ask questions, meet the organisers and other new members or existing members.

If you’re feeling especially concerned, just message the Activity Lead and let them know this is your first time, and we’ll look out for you and make sure you are introduced and feel welcomed 😊.

1. ***Do you have insurance coverage for participants?***

No, because we’re a meet-up group which isn’t a legal entity and therefore we can’t take out insurance in the name of a meet-up. Be aware than any adventure/outdoor business has insurance for their protection and not yours - if you’ve ever tried to claim against someone else’s car insurance in a motor vehicle accident, you’ll understand this principle. Having insurance is not an appropriate risk-management technique.

Instead, we practice good risk-management applicable to outdoor organisations and bushwalking clubs.

Where walks have greater risk, we may develop a risk plan, carry a first-aid kit, have navigation skills, group leadership experience, and take a Personal Locator Beacon. Where we don’t have these skills or equipment on a more remote walk, we’ll let you know.

For our less risky walks (e.g. Urban walks where mobile reception is available and/or ambulance is likely a maximum hour away), these skills and equipment may not be available – we’ll let you know so that you can decide whether to attend the walk or not, on that basis.

We don’t let just anyone lead a more risky activity – we need to make sure our risks are covered off. If you’re concerned about how we’re managing something, please contact the Group Organiser. Our priority is to keep everyone safe and have all return home safely, at the end of the activity.

We strongly recommend you have your own ambulance cover, Private Health Insurance and Domestic Travel Insurance (for third-party activities, especially any away or high-cost commercial activities) because we cannot cover this or any other evacuation or rescue cost arising from any of our activities.

1. ***Why can’t you increase the number of participants on a walk? I can’t get a spot!***

See the paragraph above – we practice sound risk management. That means, the bigger the group size, the higher the risk of an incident occurring and the more difficult it becomes in managing both the group and the incident should something occur (e.g. group member gets lost).

We think it’s also pretty irresponsible to have a big group of people tramping all over a national park path, at any one time. It’s frustrating for other users of the path also (having to pass a large group on a trail for example), and having large vehicle numbers try and park in any one spot.

We appreciate that opening up more spots on an activity would be better for allowing more participation - it’s just not responsible of us to do so.

We also think it’s more personable in keeping the group small. You get to meet and chat with others, rather than have cliques develop.

What we’d love to see instead, is more people volunteering to run more activities 😊.

1. ***Are there snakes?***

Between October and March – when temperatures rise over 20 degrees, snakes are much more active. Yes, we have seen snakes occasionally. But you’re far more likely to see one in a Canberra suburb, than out bushwalking. We generally don’t’ walk much over the months of December (everyone is busy organising Chrissy stuff) or January either – because people are away on family holidays and the risk of heatstroke increases significantly.

If we’re walking in more remote areas where we know there may be snakes (e.g Mt Ginini), we’ll recommend you wear Gaitors.

Always carry a snakebite bandage, and know how to use them. If you don’t know, just ask us and we’ll show you how to properly apply one.

Some useful stats about snakebite: Only 2-3 people per year in Australia, die from snakebite. Approximately 3,000 people are bitten every year, and 76% of those bitten are men trying to catch and kill snakes around the house. Only 10% of people bitten require some type of antivenin. You’re 11 times more likely to die from lightning strike, than you are from snake bite.

The person leading the walk is on ‘snake patrol’ anyway, so you’ll usually get advance notice of any snake sightings, and we help the group safely navigate one if we come across it.

1. ***Can you run the walks at a different time/day please? I can’t attend when they are currently on / Can you run another one?***

Everything we do in the group, is run by volunteers. All the group admin, social media, researching and trying out new walks, liaising with any activity providers, organising activities, promoting activities, responding to any questions that participants have, and then actually running the activities – is all by volunteer effort.

Because activity leaders are therefore kindly giving up their personal time to do all this and run the activity for you, we leave the date/time of the activity completely at their convenience. If you’d rather participate on a different date/time, we suggest you contact the Group Organiser to offer to run one at an alternative day/time that suits you, instead 😊.

***Can you send a reminder notice when an activity is open for RSVP’s or if a spot becomes available? Can you remove me from an activity?***

Please see the above description about our volunteer effort, and have some consideration about what you expect us to do 😊. Thanks !

Put on your big girl pants and get yourself organised. Some people set alarms on their phones to remind themselves when things open for RSVPs. If you can’t yet RSVP to an activity, that’s because it hasn’t opened yet, or it is full. The date and time that it is open for RSVP’s is always on the activity description on meet-up.

Please manage your attendance status, yourself 😊.

1. ***Why isn’t there a waitlist?***

We once spent an entire weekend contacting 35 people on a waitlist, only to be informed they had all made other arrangements. As we are all volunteers, we have better things to do with our time than contact people on waitlists 😊. If there is a spot available on an activity on meet-up, you can take it. Some people will ask to be put on a ‘waitlist’ on the activity descriptions, but we can’t honor that as people’s availability changes and it’s a huge time burden for us, in trying to do the ‘right thing’ in contacting those people.

**If there is a spot available, you can take it. It’s up to you to regularly check back on availability.**

We encourage you to subscribe to updates or changes for activities on your meet-up settings, and then check back in regularly in case a spot becomes available. Often a spot will become vacant the night before an activity or on the morning of, so check back often.

1. ***Can I advertise my hairdressing business in the group?***

C’mon. We don’t want to be spammed with irrelevant advertising. So no.

Occasionally we will do a post giving permission for those members with businesses, the opportunity to promote their business in the comments section of that post. Sometimes we ask for a bit of shameless self-promotion of your @insta account if you have a relevant outdoors / adventure account.

Please keep things on topic.

There are also other pages for [selling outdoor goods](https://www.facebook.com/groups/559158251476547/), but we don’t mind if you want to advertise the occasional relevant, outdoors thing in the group.

If you have any questions generally about walks, gear etc, please just use the brains trust of the group and ask away!

What we don’t appreciate is people who just join our group wanting to advertise, and then make no effort to engage with the community or offer anything helpful or useful in return.

1. ***I’m passionate about stopping animal cruelty. Can I post about that in here, too?***

There’s lots of non-adventure stuff that we support, too. But people see that stuff posted everywhere else, so please keep posts on topic to adventure-related issues. If we delete your post it doesn’t mean we disagree with it, just that we don’t want to spam everyone with information that isn’t relevant to women’s adventuring or the outdoors in Canberra.

Please keep things on topic.

1. ***Can I advertise my other Meet-up (or commercial) Group walk in here, or do walk research for other groups using yours?***

We are massive supporters of other community groups. In fact, our members have raised over $5,000 through various participation fundraising activities within our group (e.g. Bloody Long Walk).

We’ve donated over 200 hours of volunteer effort also supporting other community groups.

We’ve provided training opportunities for, and often promote other community groups. Groups like Escape Your Comfort Zone, Girls and Bikes ACT, Mums and Bubs / Meet and Move; Mum’s Exercise Group Australia, First Hike Project – these are all other community groups that we support and have supported previously.

We’re incredibly generous with our time and knowledge too, and believe that everyone in the community benefits when we help each other. So if you’re involved in another group, please - come and say hello. Don’t sneak around.

Please also respect the time and effort we’ve put into building this community, all through voluntary effort, and don’t abuse that. Using our efforts to advertise and promote another group that you’re part of isn’t okay - unless you’ve had a chat to us first.

Sometimes we get commercial operators in here, too, scouting for ideas. If commercial operators want to copy what we do, we must be doing something right! If you’re a commercial operator sneaking around, it’s not really okay to be taking for-profit ideas from a community group built on volunteer-effort . Maybe go join a Business Network instead, please.

If you’re a sensible commercial operator, you’ll want to work with us and use the 4,000 odd-membership base we have, to help support your business (No, we don’t accept paid advertising, but chat to us about a possible joint activity!).

***Can you STOP SPAMMING ME WITH MEET-UP EMAILS***

We once had someone shout that at us. Please, bring your manners to the group. We don’t control the communications you receive from meet-up, except those we specifically send just to you, using the private messages function. Yes, it is an awful, ugly app but it’s the best we have for managing our attendance, that doesn’t require a second mortgage.

**You** get to adjust and control how many notifications you get for what, in the app settings (Android and iphone).

Click on your profile photo at the very top right hand section of the app

* Click on the three vertical dots that come up
* Click ‘Manage Notifications’
	+ Under ‘Push Notifications’ – go adjust whatever you don’t want notifications about (be careful to leave “Messages” on please – we would hate for you to miss something because you had that functionality turned off. We do use private messages if we sometimes to contact you personally about something specific).
	+ Under “Email Updates’ – go and turn off everything that you don’t want notifications for.

Simple!

1. ***What if I have to pee on a walk?***

Firstly, we’d encourage everyone to bring and use a [pee rag](https://lotsafreshair.com/2020/03/10/what-the-heck-is-a-pee-rag/). It sounds a bit ick, but it’s really environmentally friendly.

If you have to leave the track for any reason, make sure you let someone know! We’ll stop up ahead and wait for you. Just ducking off the track and not telling anyone, is the best way to get lost!

Just squat behind a tree or rock, whatever, and then pee. Using a pee rag means no awful toilet paper is left on the track.

And if it’s number 2’s? We abide by the Leave No Trace Principles which means you’ll need to bury that and any accompanying toilet paper. We always have a trowel and some loo paper on all walks, or a [poop bag](https://thedyrt.com/magazine/gear/wag-bag-camping-waste/). There is nothing worse than encountering a human turd, or turd + toilet paper on a walking track. Dig about 12 – 20 cms deep and cover it up, please. And never, ever burn toilet paper. That’s a great way to start another bushfire.

Finally, you’ll also need to carry out any used period gear such as pads or tampons – please don’t leave, bury or throw tampons or pads in the bush.

1. ***I have a complaint***

We do appreciate ***genuine*** feedback – positive stuff - as much as where we could make improvements. Please contact the Group Organiser if you have concerns or suggestions. And if you have nice stuff to say, you are welcome to leave us some comments on our [Facebook Page](https://www.facebook.com/womensadventureACT/).

But please remember, **all of this is run by volunteers**. It’s super easy to criticise something or tell people what they ‘should be doing’ instead, and then do nothing to contribute positively to the group. So before you give a not-so-great view about something, think about whether it’s really a big deal or is just your individual preference or view about how you think we should run things. If you’d like to help out or you think you could really make a positive difference in the group, we welcome all volunteer efforts, immensely!!

1. ***I LOVE WHAT YOU DO, can I shout you a coffee?***

Yes, PLEASE, we’d love that! The group costs a lot to run, not including personal expenses that all walk leaders incur in using their own gear (e.g. Personal Locator Beacons), petrol in driving out to do walk reccies, buying maps and walk books and/or having navigation app subscriptions. So coffee donations are most welcome via Paypal, here:

paypal.me/womensadventureact

1. ***Can I pay a spot forward?***

We ran a trial of this during 2021, and had no takers for several pay-it-forward spots. We just had to refund everyone who had paid it forward.

If you can’t afford the walk (or overnight hike) fee, just let us know and we’ll waive it for you <3

1. ***Any secrets for cheap gear?***

Yes! Mention our group, and Paddy Palin’s in Braddon will give you 10% discount, as will Mont in Fyshwick.

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