

Hiking with your Smartphone

With all of its capabilities, a smartphone is a useful tool to bring along on your hike.

Among other things, a smartphone can store maps and directions, navigate with the built-in GPS, take pictures and videos, tell time, wake you up in the morning, record sounds, play music, store books, and call for help if you have cell coverage.

Here are some tips for hiking with your smartphone:

BATTERY POWER

A dead smartphone isn't really all that smart ☹️

Begin your hike with a fully charged battery.

Consider carrying a power bank for emergency recharge.

Turn off WI-FI + BLUETOOTH to save power.

In No-Coverage areas, cell phones constantly scan for towers, which eats up battery power.

To prevent this, enable FLIGHT MODE, and only disable Flight Mode if you need to call or text.

LOCATION uses lots of power, so leave it off except when really needed.

The ultimate way to save power is to leave your phone turned off until needed.

GPS NAVIGATION

Navigation apps such as Google Maps and Map.me use the GPS chip in your smartphone, and will work offline in FLIGHT MODE, as long as LOCATION is enabled.

If you need to save power, leave LOCATION off and only switch it on for a few minutes when you want to check your location.

***In order to work offline, you first need to open your navigation app with your phone on a Wi-Fi connection, and download the map of your area to your phone.**

***As with any GPS, you should practice at home before you head to the woods.**

WATER PROTECTION

Sealing your phone in a Ziploc freezer bag can provide good protection from water damage.

ETIQUETTE

Putting your phone on VIBRATE will prevent tech sounds from disturbing the wilderness.

Carry a compass and printed map or sketch of your hiking route with North indicated...just in case.

Dave Suttie, October 2018