

The Brow Hike - Hints & Tips

Completing the Brow Hike requires a range of different skills. It is a common feature of successful teams in the hike that they have spent time preparing and practicing for the hike, often for a number of weeks beforehand.

First Steps

Read through this information, the Advice for Competitors, and the hike booklet several times to make sure that you understand it all.

Look at the personal and team equipment requirements and make sure that your Leader can provide the cooking and camping equipment needed.

Check, and check again, that the ages of your team members fall within the requirements. All members must be aged between 11 and 15 on the day of the hike and the total age of the team added together must be no more than 56.

Now Practice

Nothing is as good as going on a practice hike. Each time you go, build up the distance and the weight you can carry. It is impossible to practice good map reading and compass work indoors. Get out and practice again and again, with your team.

Ask your Leader to run an evening of problem solving and teamwork tasks to help you practice for the incidents. This could also count towards the Creative Challenge for Scout Troops.

Try putting your tent up with your other team members to make sure everyone knows how to do it. Try doing it in the rain, or on a windy day to see if you can still manage it. Make sure you can pack it away again afterwards and remember this will get harder if it is cold or wet at camp.

Try cooking the meals you will be eating on the hike. Make sure you know how to clean your stove sufficiently to pack it away, using as little water as possible. You will probably need to take a cloth or brillo pad and a tea towel to help you to do this.

Make sure you know how to assemble and light your stove correctly and safely.

At the Start

You will be advised of your team's start time in writing on receipt of your entry form. We operate a staggered start with teams leaving at four minute intervals.

On arrival at the start, you will need to check in. All members of your team will need to have arrived before you will be able to check in.

You can leave your uniform at the start to change into on completion of the hike.

Teams are then called to kit check. You will be required to produce each item on the kit list for inspection. Failure to do so may result in a loss of points, or in extreme cases disqualification.

You will then be required to re-pack your rucksack.

Your team will be given time to plot the routes for the Navigation Test legs. Your team's maps will be checked to ensure all the hike checkpoints, and the routes for the Navigation Tests have been correctly marked on.

5 minutes before you are due to set off you will receive your final briefing and a visual check will be made to ensure that your rucksack has been properly re-packed and that you are wearing the correct clothing and footwear etc.

When your departure time comes, you will be released.

At Checkpoints

All members of the team should arrive at checkpoints together. Teams are not permitted to divide or link up with other teams, except in an emergency (see the emergency rules in the hike booklet). On arrival, give your team number to the marshal and this will be recorded, with your arrival time. At most checkpoints you will take part in an incident which should be a challenge or a test of your knowledge/skills. This will enable you to score further points. The incidents form the largest part of the mark scheme so the better you do, the higher you will be placed at the finish.

Failure to visit any checkpoint on the published route will result in your team being unable to complete the hike and receive a placing.

Once you have completed the incident, you should leave the checkpoint. No time is allowed for waiting at checkpoints once you have completed the incident.

Whilst walking on Navigation Test legs, keep an eye out for the Observation Signs. These will be A4 sized signs with the Brow Hike logo on and date on. Each will contain a code which you must record. The codes must then be handed to the marshals at the next checkpoint for scoring. Not all teams will follow the same route, so not all will collect the same codes – if you have not followed the correct route, you will have collected the wrong codes and will lose marks.

At Camp

On arrival at camp, you will book in and will be told the site rules. All teams will be given a bin bag for collection of any rubbish.

Find a space to pitch your tent. Pitches need to be kept tidy and free from litter at all times. Any litter left on your site after departure will result in deduction of points.

Fresh, clean drinking water is provided on site for drinking and cooking meals. You will also be able to re-fill your water bottle before you set off on the Sunday morning.

Do not start cooking evening meals until at least 5pm. Once your meal is cooked, make sure campsite staff marks it before you start eating. Do not cook too close to your tent as this is a fire risk. Tent porches are designed for storage—not for cooking in!

If the weather is bad, change into your dry clothes and then stay in your tent, keeping warm and dry.

Teams are not permitted to leave the campsite under any circumstances between booking in on Saturday night and booking out again on Sunday morning.

We operate a staggered start again on Sunday morning with teams being grouped based on their walking time for Saturday. You will be advised your start time for Sunday morning on the Saturday evening. You must leave on time on Sunday morning as no allowances will be made for any teams starting late. Hike staff will come round to help you achieve this.

The Finish

On arrival at the finish, you must ensure that you are booked in. Leave your rucksack and muddy boots in the garage area before moving through to the church hall.

Find your uniform and change into it, ready for the presentation.

As teams arrive, they will be provided with a hot meal before the presentation.

Please do not leave before the presentations have been made and do invite Leaders, parents and friends to attend—it could be your team that receives a trophy!

Hike Control

This is where all the information about your progress and the points you have scored is gathered together. A breakdown of the marking system is shown at the bottom of this page.

Take the time to ensure you understand the above marking system as this will help you to improve your team's performance on the hike.

We hope the above tips will help you to get the most out of the Brow Hike and to obtain the best placing you can.

Above all, enjoy the challenge, and enjoy being out and showing the world you can be independent.

Area	How tested	Points	%
Incidents	<i>7 x incidents, each worth 50 points</i>	350	35%
Navigation	<i>20 points for quality and accuracy of route plotting from Grid References. 10x Observation Markers, each worth 10 points</i>	120	12%
Speed	<i>Max score 190 points for Saturday, 160 for Sunday. Minimum score 80 each day</i>	350	35%
Food	<i>Saturday evening meal and Sunday breakfast marked out of 40. This breaks down as 10 points each for: 1. Hot Food 2. Suitability of Food 3. Amount of Food 4. Adequacy of cooking equipment</i>	80	8%
Leadership	<i>Team Leader assessed at 4x Incidents, out of 25 marks at each</i>	100	10%
TOTAL		1000	100%