

# A Guide to Urban Hiking



**Urban Hiking** (verb): taking a walk through your neighborhood or city with a sense of adventure!

Find natural beauty and fun obstacles right outside your front door! Explore the urban environment around you by wandering through your neighborhood and nearby parks; visiting landmarks and cool buildings; and appreciating the connection between city and nature.

## How to get ready for your adventure:

**Step 1:** Plan your route- Use Google Maps to locate green spaces, landmarks, or anything else you want to explore within walking distance of your house. Plan your route and get excited about what you're going to see along the way. Remember to choose roads that aren't too busy so you can focus your senses on your hike. Prioritize safety: keep to side streets or look for areas with bike lanes where traffic is usually lower.

**Step 2:** Dress and pack appropriately- Check the weather – grab a jacket, hat, and sunglasses, if you need them and don't forget your sunscreen! Reflective gear may be important too. Put a water bottle and a snack in your bag and hit the pavement with a family member!

## Ways to add adventure to your hike:

- **Sing a hiking song.** Sing a Girl Scouts hiking song while you explore your neighborhood.
- **Find nature all around you.** Take breaks to look up at the sky, watch the clouds, feel the sun on your face, and listen to the birds. Wander through the green spaces and parks you find and see what trees, grasses, bugs, and critters live there. Notice differences and similarities along your route.
- **Write in a journal.** Journaling is a great way to record your experiences and your observations as you learn new things about your neighborhood.
- **Learn about your town's history and culture.** As you walk around you might find old buildings and landmarks that you've never noticed before. Write about what you find and look it up when you get home. When was your city founded? Who used to live in your area? What traditions/buildings/businesses have remained and what is different now?
- **Work on a badge.** Incorporate a badge requirement or two and work toward earning outdoor badges along the way. Get with your troop to log miles towards your Bronze Boot Award.
- **Share your story with us!** We'd love to hear about how you are exploring your city and neighborhood while enjoying nature! Send photos of you/your girl(s) to [news@gseok.org](mailto:news@gseok.org).