



Health and safety guidelines for participants

Health and safety guidelines

Whilst undertaking your litter picks, you do so at your own risk. Do not undertake any activity you believe to be unsafe. The Environment Agency does not provide any public liability insurance. Please make sure you or your organisation have appropriate insurance where necessary.

General guidance

- Always follow the most up to date COVID 19 guidance for your area
- Wash your hands after completing your litter pick
- Ensure at least one other person is always present
- When carrying litter sacks, only fill the sacks with as much litter as you can comfortably lift
- If children are involved, make sure there is sufficient adult supervision and that the children are aware of which items are not safe to pick up

What to wear and take with you

- Always wear appropriate sturdy footwear
- Cover any cuts with surgical tape and/or a waterproof plaster.
- Wear gloves and ideally use a litter picker.



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- Wear clothing appropriate to the weather conditions
- In the sun cover up your skin, wear a sun hat and sunglasses, apply sun cream when necessary
- Always carry a drink of water and take frequent breaks to avoid heat stress.
- In cold or wet weather wear warm clothing and waterproofs if necessary

Hazards to look out for

- Be aware of environmental hazards e.g. electric fences, steep drops, uneven surfaces
- Take care near water. Do not go within two metres of a river, lake or the sea
- Take care near roads, use pavements or designated footpaths
- Check if fields contain livestock before entering. Only enter if safe to do so
- Be aware of the [risk of ticks](#), make sure skin is well covered particularly if walking in long grass. Check yourself for ticks and seek medical attention if required



Health and safety guidelines for participants

- Avoid causing harm to wildlife. If you are on a protected site (e.g. National Nature Reserve or Site of Special Scientific Interest) make sure you have permission to be there at that time. Avoid disturbing nesting birds (most common between March and September) and other [protected species](#).
- Take care not to transfer invasive [non-native species](#) to or from any location where you carry out a litter pick. Make sure clothing and equipment is cleaned before and after each use.
- Report any fly-tipping or illegal waste dumping to your local council. Use this webpage to find out who to contact in your local area <https://www.gov.uk/report-flytipping>.
- Avoid sharp, heavy or potentially dangerous items, including hazardous or poisonous substances, report these to the **Environment Agency incident hotline 0800 80 70 60**.
- Do not pick up discarded needles, report these to your local council and they will dispose of them. For a list of how to report different hazards or environmental incidents visit [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)