

Raccoon Mountain Caverns Wild Cave Expedition Checklist

What to Wear:

- Full length pants **are required**. Sturdy pants (such as jeans or cargo pants) with buttons or zippers are recommended as elastic waistbands (sweatpants, leggings, etc.) tend to rip or be pulled down or off when belly crawling. **Shorts are not permitted**.
- Long-sleeved shirts **are required**. Light weight t-shirts or button-down flannel-style shirts work best. Sweatshirts and jackets are too hot, even with the cave temperature at 58 degrees. Keep in mind that low cut shirts may be revealing when crawling. **Short sleeved shirts are not permitted**.
- Sturdy, lace-up, close-toed shoes such as boots or athletic shoes with good traction **are required**. Slip-on, open-toed, and barefoot/five-toe shoes are not permitted, as these are dangerous on the rocks. Note: your feet will go through water.
- Participants that arrive in improper attire WILL NOT be permitted on the tour. No exceptions.
- **No personal caving equipment is permitted on tours**. Raccoon Mountain provides helmets, lights, gloves and knee pads that must be worn at all times during the tour.

Important Information:

- With the exception of the Canyon Crawl tour, all tours have a minimum height requirement of 56" and a maximum weight of 275 lbs. A maximum bodily circumference of 56" applies to all tours. No exceptions can be made to these requirements.
- The Canyon Crawl tour is a moderate tour; the minimum age for this tour 6. The Fossil Crawl, Echo Room, and Waterfall Dome tours are strenuous tours; the minimum age for these tours is 8. The Gypsum Crawl tour is a very strenuous tour; the minimum age for this tour is 10 and previous caving experience is required. No exceptions can be made to these requirements.
- Tours run rain or shine. In the event of prolonged or extreme weather, some tours may need to be rescheduled.
- Tours are physically challenging and not recommended for pregnant individuals, or those with heart conditions or recent surgery. Alert the staff before your tour about any medical conditions that could affect the tour: asthma, diabetes, bad knees or back, autism, claustrophobia, fear of heights, required medications etc. Guides must be aware of these before entering the cave.
- The tour features significant amounts of crawling (hands-and-knees and belly crawling), climbing (with and without ropes), and sliding. The cave is muddy, wet, and slippery at many locations. Raccoon Mountain gear must be worn at all times.
- Do not eat a large meal before your tour. The crawling and climbing portion will tax you, especially if you are not used to extreme physical exertion. Use the restroom before the tour, as restrooms are not available at any point inside the cave.
- Please note that any items brought into the cave are at risk of damage or loss. Food and beverages are not permitted. Cameras are permitted, but tours are fast paced and allow minimal stopping for photos. Recording of the tour in its entirety is not permitted.
- Adult chaperones must actively supervise their group throughout the entirety of the tour. Horseplay, pushing, shoving, jumping, name carving and mud throwing are not permitted, as they can lead to injury or damage to the cave.
- The cave environment and ecosystem is fragile and potentially dangerous. Do not touch or disturb any cave wildlife. Stay on the trail and do not damage the formations or water drops on the formations, as the cave is still actively growing. The entire group stays together for the duration of the tour. No solo exploration is permitted.
- Participants are required to listen to and abide by all instructions from the guide at all times during the tour. Failure to do so may result in injury and/or early termination of the expedition.

After the Tour:

- A complete change of clothes is recommended. Follow guide instructions on de-gearing and post-caving procedure. Bathhouse showers on the campground are available, but please be courteous of others sharing the space.
- Group leaders must maintain supervision of their group while at the bathhouse and leave it in a clean and undamaged state.

Financial Liability:

- **You will be charged an additional fee of \$300 if your group damages or leaves the bathhouse in an exceptionally dirty state.**
- **Under Tennessee state law, there is up to a \$1,000 fine for damage to the formations or cave in any manner.**
- **A fee of \$50 will be charged for use of any emergency toilet in the cave. Any damage to the cave surface from bodily fluids (including saliva) will result in a \$250 clean-up fee. 99% of the time the accidents can be avoided by proper preparation.**

Cancellation Policy:

Payment is due in full when reserving a tour (with the exception of large groups). There are no cancellations or refunds. If you fail to arrive for your tour, we incur all the same expenses and may have turned others away; therefore, guests who fail to show for a tour, fail to arrive at the scheduled time, or back out of the tour will not be refunded the tour price. With at least 48 hours notice, you have the option to reschedule your tour.

Entering the cave indicates acceptance of all policies and financial responsibilities put forth by Raccoon Mountain Caverns. We reserve the right to deny entry or prematurely terminate tours for violation of any rules or policies.