

# Equipment Rentals, Clothing and Other Questions (FAQs)



## Kayaking & Canoeing FAQs

### ***Q: Do I need my own boat or gear?***

**A:** No, you do **not** have to have your own boat and safety gear. Many of our novice trips are arranged so that rentals are available on site and are guided, for safety, so that no experience at all is required. After all, everyone has to start somewhere!

### ***Q: Does the club offer lessons?***

**A:** Yes, we do offer lessons, usually on one day in mid or early June. This is a basic beginner, non-certificate lesson, taught by ORCKA certified instructor, which takes about 3 hours. Rental boats and safety gear are provided. While it is possible to go on any of our guided trips without having had a lesson, we strongly recommend that everyone take a lesson – if you know how to paddle properly, you will have less frustration and be able to enjoy yourself more. We also offer pool sessions during the winter and Paddle Canada courses for those who want additional training.

### ***Q: Can I try a trip before I actually join the club?***

**A:** Non-members may participate in one or two outings as a guest, but must be a member of the club to participate in lessons or multi day trips.

### ***Q: Where do you go for day paddles?***

**A:** Many of our day trips take place at locations up to an hour or so from the Burlington area. We paddle on various parts of the Grand River, on Lake Ontario and Burlington Bay, Guelph Lake, Lake Erie and on Georgian Bay.

### ***Q: How do I know which trips I can go on and where there will be rentals?***

**A:** All trips are rated on the schedule according to the experience required. Some trips may require no experience at all, while others may require that you have had a lesson. When in doubt, call or send an email to the trip leader. The schedule will also make note of whether rentals are available on site or near by.

### ***Q: Do you have buses going to any of these paddle trips?***

**A:** No, unlike the hiking and skiing trips, we do not provide bus transport to paddling day trips, partly due to the smaller number of participants and also the difficulty of transporting boats.

### ***Q: Do you have kayak camping trips?***

**A:** Yes, we also offer a number of kayak camping trips. Please note that most of the camping trips offered are considered “wilderness camping”, which generally means water access only and primitive or NO facilities. If you're not sure, ASK. A trip that is described as car camping refers to a regular campground, with the usual facilities.

***Q: Can I go on a camping trip even if I don't have a boat or camping gear?***

**A:** Usually, yes. For example, we have a camping trip to Massassauga Park, which offers mostly sheltered water for the less experienced. That trip leader often offers to look after all the food and cooking. Many club members have extra space to share in their tents, or you can arrange to rent a tent, sleeping bag and Thermarest from Hikers Haven. Swift Canoe & Kayak is located fairly close to the park, and carrying a kayak on your roof is not as difficult as you might think. The outfitter will make sure it's on correctly when you pick it up and other trip participants will be glad to assist you when it's time to reload. Or arrange to car pool with a member who has their own boat, roof racks and space for a second boat. Most club members are more than happy to car pool and the trip leader can also help you connect with others.

***Q: What is a wet exit? It sounds scary!***

**A:** A wet exit is where you deliberately capsizes your kayak and practice the correct technique for removing your skirt and dropping out of the boat. Everyone is nervous about doing a wet exit the first time; that's why we prefer that you do the first one in the calm warm waters of Guelph Lake with an instructor and an assistant right beside you to help if needed. Once you have done one, you will be far less nervous or worried about it. More importantly, practicing the wet exit also includes the recovery – how to empty your boat of water, and get back into it, either with the aid of a paddling buddy or on your own.

***Q: I think I prefer canoeing – do you have any canoe trips?***

**A:** We do offer some day and weekend canoe trips, and we also welcome canoeists on certain kayak trips where we remain in sheltered waters. However, canoes generally require two people and you are responsible for finding your own partner. You can ask the trip leader if there are any others looking for a partner but we will not guarantee we can find one. One reason for the growing popularity of kayaks is the simple fact that they can be paddled solo.

***Q: What is the difference between paddling a kayak and paddling a canoe?***

**A:** There are many, and both have their advantages. A canoe can carry more and larger gear, while a kayak can be paddled in waves that would swamp a canoe. A Kayak is generally faster but the canoe is far easier to portage. Paddling a kayak also requires less effort - okay, I'm prejudiced!

***Q: What kind of kayaks do you paddle?***

**A:** The club is not involved in white water kayaking. We mostly paddle touring or sea kayaks, except on certain river trips where shorter, recreational style kayaks are preferred.

***Q: I have my own boat – what else do I need?***

**A:** If you own your own boat, always check with the trip leader as to whether it is suitable for any trip you are planning to take. Fibreglass boats are not recommended for rocky rivers and short, recreational boats are not suitable for Georgian Bay. Also if you plan to attend an outing with your own boat, you must carry the mandatory safety gear. Please note: regulations say you must carry a PFD – however, the Halton Outdoor Club requires that you wear your PFD at all times while on the water.  
Happy Paddling!

***Q: What type of clothing do I need to bring on a paddling trip?***

**A:** It depends on the weather, but generally quick dry or synthetic clothing is best, along with water shoes or sandals that you don't mind getting wet or muddy. I usually recommend that everyone also have a complete change of dry clothes available in a dry bag just in case.



**Hiking FAQs**

***Q: What type of clothing do you recommend for a hiking trip?***

**A:** Breathable layers, if you're not sure, come out a few times and talk to experienced hikers or your trip leader, they can guide you accordingly. Also check out the links for an outfitter store closest to you for some guidance. In inclement weather it is beneficial to have wind or rain gear to make that hike more comfortable. Some hikers enjoy a hiking stick, these can be purchased, one or two is the preference of the hiker.

***Q: What do you recommend for proper foot ware on a hiking trip?***

**A:** This is a very important question, because a good fitted pair of hiking boots or shoes is absolutely essential. It's the difference between getting blisters or not. Good hiking boots can last you a very long time and make that hike so much more enjoyable.

***Q. Do I need to be a member to come on Halton Club hikes?***

**A.** Yes. If you're going to hike regularly on club hikes or participate in trips we would expect you to become a club member. We are very happy if you come on our hikes our outings as a guest of a current member. We will ask you to sign a waiver if you are a guest.

***Q. Is it okay to hike in sneakers?***

**A.** Sneakers are great for brief outings on well-maintained, flat trails. But many hiking trails can be muddy or have crumbling surfaces, rocky outcroppings, and roots. There is nothing like a good pair of hiking boots for added support, protection and safety. Sneakers offer no protection from mud and cold water leading to blisters and other foot troubles.

***Q. Is it okay to throw away biodegradable items, like apple cores and banana peels?***

**A.** No one likes hiking a trail littered with other people's trash. While items like apple cores and banana peels will eventually biodegrade, food leftovers of any kind diminish the outdoor experience for the hikers behind you as well as habituate the animals to human "leftovers." We recommend you carry out whatever you carry in and dispose of it properly elsewhere.

***Q. How much water should I carry?***

**A.** You should always have water with you, even in cold weather. In hot weather you can easily go through three liters on a 15km hike.

***Q. Should I use a hiking stick?***

**A.** It depends entirely on you. Many hikers enjoy using a stick, or walking staff, even though they are in great physical condition and have a good sense of balance. Some hikers use an adjustable walking stick or a trekking pole (or sometimes two) for stability on challenging terrain. Trekking poles are not only helpful for stability on an ascent; they also help take some of the strain off of your knees on the way down. The height of your stick is a matter of personal preference. Most fixed-length sticks are shoulder height or higher. Adjustable poles offer the added versatility of telescoping down to a short length. If you encounter a really steep climb or just don't want to use your pole(s) for a while, you can strap them on your pack.

***Q. What foods should I bring on a day hike?***

**A.** For day hikes, we have found that bagels, pita bread, fruit such as oranges and apples, and gorp, chocolate or energy bars are ideal – foods that pack a lot of energy and won't disintegrate on the trail. Many hikers pack traditional European-style lunches of bread, cheese, fruit and hard meats that don't require much refrigeration, such as pepperoni or summer sausage.

***B. If I own a dog can I bring him on trips?***

**A.** The answer is usually no. Very rarely a leader will say dogs are O.K. Never assume you will be able to bring your pet on a hike to be on the safe side, don't.

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## **Cycling FAQs**



### ***Q: I noticed there are two cycling groups in the club. Which one is the right group for me?***

**A:** The answer depends mainly on you, how fit you are and what equipment you have. The “Road Tourers” use mostly touring bikes with narrow tires and will mainly ride on Roads. They will cover distances on weekend day trips of 50 – 75 – 100 – 120 km or on evening trips up to 50 km during the week. In contrast the “Trail Riders” will ride hybrid and mountain bikes with thicker tires and will mainly ride on off-road trails such as recreational multi use trails or rail trails, but rarely on roads, unless it is necessary to get from one trail to the next trail. Distances covered by the “Trail Riders” due to the equipment and terrain, are generally shorter, 30 to 50 km on weekend day trips and approximately 20 km on evening trips during the week.

### ***Q: What do I do if I want to join a ride?***

**A:** Come out to the start location of the ride before the start time of the ride to get ready. The trip leader will provide you with a map of the route and a summary of the ride. The schedule will indicate where an RSVP is required. Generally RSVP’s are only required where there is a social event following the ride and the host needs to know how many people to prepare for.

### ***Q: What should I bring for a ride?***

- A:** Bike in good working order
- Helmet (mandatory)
  - Water
  - Spare tire and repair kit
  - Mirrors recommended
  - Lunch unless otherwise noted on the schedule
  - Sunscreen
  - Cell phone

### ***Q: How hard are the rides? Can I do it?***

**A:** For “Road Tourers” the schedule lists the distances available and a brief description of each ride. You ride at your own pace and can stop and take a break when you want. We do not race, take your time and enjoy the ride! For “Trail Riders” the schedule lists the distance of each particular ride and a brief description. Trail Riders always ride together as a group at a moderate pace. We do not race, take our time and enjoy our ride.

### ***Q: What kind of bike do I need?***

**A:** “Road Tourers” use road bikes, mountain bikes and hybrids. The long and faster riders of the Road Tourers use touring (road) bikes. Choose whichever bike, distance and speed you want to use on each outing. The “Trail Riders” use hybrids and mountain bikes only.

***Q: What if it rains?***

**A:** “Road Tourers” rides will not be cancelled due to weather once we get into May. Often dreary days turn out to be fabulous biking days! If it rains during your ride, brake carefully as it will take longer to stop. In contrast “Trail Riders” will cancel rides if the prognosis is for intermittent rain for the day. You will be informed by e-mail of a short notice change.

***Q: Are there any over-night cycling trips?***

**A:** Yes! There is an over-night cycling trip in June this year to the New York State Finger Lakes. Please see newsletter or website for more details.

***Q: Are there buses to get to where we’re going to cycling?***

**A:** Unlike other club outings, we do not provide buses for cycling trips (not feasible with bikes!) Therefore you are responsible for getting yourself to the meeting location.

***Q: Are there rides during the week?***

**A:** Yes, “Road Tourers” rides every Wednesday night, starting at 6:00 pm. “Trail Rider” also ride every Wednesday, but starting times vary from 6:00 to 7:00 pm, depending on the time of the year. Starting times are given in the schedule.

***Q: Can I come on a ride if I’m not a HOC member?***

**A:** Yes! You are most welcome to join us for a ride or two rides before becoming a member. You will be required to sign a waiver form before participating in a ride. Guests must become a member in order to participate in trips outside of Ontario.

***Q: What if I have a great route that I would like to share with the group?***

**A:** We are always looking for new routes and ride leaders. Please contact Scott Currie, the cycling scheduler for the Road Tourers at 905 890-8071 or Joe Lechner, the Trail Riders Coordinator at [jlechner@sympatico.ca](mailto:jlechner@sympatico.ca)



## **Skiing/ Snowshoeing FAQs**

***Q: I would like to try out skiing/snowshoeing, but don’t have any equipment.***

**A:** If you want to start off with your old skis and as long as they are in good condition, come on out with them and see how they perform. Snowshoes at all stages of age are acceptable. Most of the ski destinations have rentals for skis and snowshoes. Check the newsletter Ski Schedule and Descriptions of Skiing Destinations for those who do. Also our links on this site to our equipment outfitters will also be able to assist in fitting you out with new skis (or snowshoes) to suit your level. We recommend a carry bag for skis or snowshoes during transportation. Some snowshoers use hiking sticks, again that is the snowshoers preference.

***Q: What type of clothing to you recommend for Cross Country Skiing/Snowshoeing***

**A:** Breathable layers, if your not sure come out a few times and talk to experienced skiers or your trip leader, they can guide you accordingly. Also check out the links for an outfitter store closest to you for some guidance.

***Q: How do I reserve a seat on a day bus trip?***

**A:** You send in a cheque for \$20 (the bus fare) made out to Halton Outdoor Club, dated with the date of the trip. On the back write the trip date, destination and indicate if you want to board the bus in Oakville. The mailing address is: 3310 Palmer Drive, Burlington, ON, L7M 1X3. The cheque will not be cashed until the date of the trip. Cheques must be received at least one week before the trip.

***Q: What happens if I have sent in a cheque and have to cancel later?***

**A:** You can cancel your reservation up to the Thursday evening before the trip and your cheque will be destroyed. After Thursday, your seat is confirmed and your cheque will be cashed.

***Q: What happens if I decide at the last minute that I want to go on a trip?***

**A:** You can make a telephone reservation (**leave a message at 905-634-2012**) during the week before the trip. The cost is \$25, which you pay, preferably by cheque, when you board the bus. If you make a telephone reservation and do not show up and do not cancel by Thursday evening you still have to pay for the seat which has been reserved for you.

***Q: Are ski lessons available?***

**A:** Lessons are given at the beginning of the season. See the section of the web site on "Ski Lessons".

***Q: How can I find out the destination for day trips?***

**A:** A schedule is published in the November issue of the Newsletter and on the web site. Changes to the schedule may be necessary for weather or snow conditions and these are announced on the club message machine and on the Bulletin Board of the web site.

***Q: What kind of skis should I buy?***

**A:** If this is the first time you have done cross-country skiing, we suggest you rent equipment once or twice to make sure that you are going to enjoy the sport. Basically, there are two types of skis – waxable and waxless. With waxable skis you use wax on the base to help the ski to grip and glide in various snow conditions. Waxless skis have a pattern on the bottom to help grip. They are a little slower than waxable skis. Get advice from a good ski shop to meet your particular goals and budget.

***Q: Are there are any other costs for day bus trips?***

**A:** Yes, every resort we visit has trail fees to cover the cost of creating and maintaining the trails. The fee varies by resort and is shown on the ski schedule in the Newsletter and on the web site. The trail fees are paid in cash and collected on the bus. The trip leader buys all the

trail tickets and gives them to the skiers. You may also want to bring a small amount of cash for refreshments at the resort.

***Q: Do I need to bring a lunch and drink?***

**A:** Some of the resorts have a cafeteria, but most people bring a lunch, which you can eat in the chalet. You should bring a drink to take with you on the trail.

***Q: How long and how difficult are the trails?***

**A:** All of the resorts have a variety of trails. There are short and easy trails for beginners and longer trails for those looking for a greater challenge. Before starting on a trail make sure that it is suitable for your skill level. If you are not familiar with the trails, it is a good idea to start on a shorter trail before you commit yourself to a long trail. Seek advice from other club skiers if you are not sure of the most appropriate trail for you.

***Q. What kind of skies & boots are currently suggested for newcomers to the sport?***

**A:** The most important part of selecting new skis is getting the camber right for the skier's weight. This section under the foot needs to be subjected to the paper test available at stores such as Tumblehome in Burlington, Velotique in Toronto, and at resorts such as Highlands Nordic and Hardwood Ski and Bike. This important test is not available at department stores, sport stores, or Canadian Tire. Most Club members have Salomon boots. Some resorts sell NNN bindings which require a different boot. See Instructor's Corner articles 3, 4, 5, and 21 on the Web site in the Ski Lesson section. We strongly suggest waiting until after you have taken the Club's ski lesson's before purchasing.

***Q: Do I really need to wax my skies?***

**A:** All skis require wax. There are two kinds of skis. One is called waxless (a misnomer) and the other waxable. Both types of skis require glide wax on the tails and tips. Classic waxable skis also require kick wax in the wax pocket, the section under the foot. Waxless skis can also be waxed with Swix Easy Glide, a liquid applied on the whole length of the ski. Skating skis have glide wax on the entire length of the ski.

***Q: What kind of waxes do I need for my skies?***

**A:** The type of skis you have determines the wax needed. Classic waxable skis need glide wax on the tails and tips and kick wax under the foot. Classic waxless skis require glide wax on the tails and tips and Swix Easy Glide in the kick area or only Easy Glide on the whole ski. Skating skis require glide wax on the entire base. See Instructor Corner article #21 Waxing for Fun on this Web Site under Ski Lessons for information on waxing classic skis.

***Q: Does the club organize guided trail skiing for newcomers?***

**A:** Not as a general rule. Only during Club sponsored ski lessons will you receive guided trail skiing. But your Bus Captain may arrange to set you up with some one on the bus and take you under his or her wings.

***Q: Is there a meeting time for lunch for club members?***

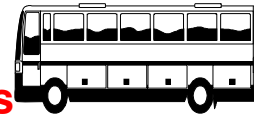
**A:** No

**Q: *Where does the club meet for lunch?***

**A:** Either on the bus or in the Resort Chalet,

**Q: *Are there lockers?***

**A :** Usually not, but there may be an open area in the chalet where you can leave your stuff. You may be safer to leave your stuff on the bus.



## **Transportation, Bus & Carpooling FAQs**

**Q: *What means of transportation is used for club activities away from home?***

**A:** The activity schedule will always indicate if there will be transportation provided including the fee for that transportation. We will either indicate that you are

1. To transport yourself to a meet place
2. Car pooling
3. Yellow Bus (school bus) or
4. Motor Coach for extended trips, such as our x-country ski and snowshoe destinations, or extended skiing or hiking trips up to week long trips.
5. We travel by air if trip takes us across the Continent or off shore.

**Q: *What preparations do I need to make before I go on a trip?***

**A:** Always bring full identification, health cards, blood type, phone number of person to call in case of emergency. Always bring water, snacks, lunch, sun screen (bug spray) and a hat. Depending upon your trip length and the weather are advisable for most of these disciplines.

Tag all your items with your name and phone number for ease of locating in case of an emergency or misplaced item.

**Q: *What time should I be at the bus?***

**A:** The bus departure time is always given. Bus will always leave on time. Bus will not wait for anybody. Please plan on being at the event at least 15 minutes before the given time ESPECIALLY if this is your first time. There are waivers to sign, introductions to be made, attendance to be taken, and questions to be answered. It's a hectic time for the Event Coordinator and they don't have time to deal with latecomers.

**Q: *I'm running late or I'm lost - will you wait for me?***

**A:** No - It is your responsibility to get to the bus on time.

**Q: *Can I meet at a different spot than the official bus-pickup location?***

**A:** In rare Situations, when your hometown is on the bus route.

***Q: Can I bring children?***

**A:** Usually yes, but they are your responsibility.

***Q: Can I bring my dog?***

**A:** No, dogs are not permitted on busses.

***Q: What if I don't want to sign the HOC waiver?***

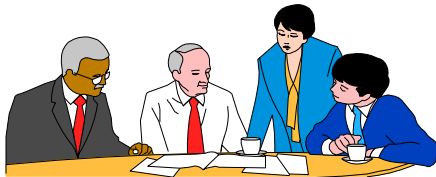
**A:** If you do not understand, agree to, or sign the HOC waiver, you will be unable to participate in the event.

***Q: At what time do have to be at the carpool location?***

**A:** Plan to be there at least 15 minutes before departure time.

***Q: I am running late or got lost – will you wait for me at the car-pool location?***

**A:** As a general rule no. But there may be a situation where an exception may be made if contact can be made with the co-ordinator.



**FAQs about the Club Newsletter, Membership & Operational Quiries**

***Q: What are the publishing deadlines for the Club Newsletter?***

**A:** The deadlines (2010) are Jan. 10<sup>th</sup>, Mar. 10<sup>th</sup>, May 27<sup>th</sup>, Aug. 10<sup>th</sup> & Oct. 15<sup>th</sup>

***Q: When are the Newsletters mailed out?***

**A:** The newsletters (2010) are mailed out Jan. 28<sup>th</sup>, Mar. 28<sup>th</sup>, Jun. 14<sup>th</sup>, Aug. 28<sup>th</sup> & Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup>.

***Q: If I sign up for membership in the Spring, do I have to pay the full cost?***

**A:** That depends. If you are a First-time applicant, you will be able to buy a half year single membership for \$20.00 or a \$35.00 half-year family membership as of May 1st. However by November the 1<sup>st</sup> you are expected to renew your membership at the full prize. Current members pay the full prize on renewal, whether it's in the Fall or in the Spring. They are not entitled to half year memberships.