

Cave Safety

All undeveloped caves, by their very nature, contain some risks. Make your trip a safe and enjoyable one by being prepared and careful. Just about all caves contain some risks which are common to the underground environment, such as loose rocks, low ceilings, low tight passages, slippery surfaces, and unstable and uneven floors. Be prepared by wearing the proper cloths and carrying the proper equipment, staying within your group's capabilities, and using common sense.

- Leave word with someone stating what cave you will be visiting and an approximate return time.
- Never go caving alone. Always have 3-4 people in a group.
- Each person in the group must have three independent light sources and extra batteries. Matches, candles and glowsticks are not considered light sources.
- Wear a helmet, preferably UIAA approved, to protect against low ceilings and falling rocks. Use a chinstrap to prevent losing your helmet and light.
- Mount your main source of light on your helmet to free your hands for climbing.
- Wear sturdy footwear such as boots that protect the ankle and have non-leather, non-skid, non-marking soles.
- Bring gloves and kneepads if necessary.
- If your are going to in the cave for an extended period, carry water and food for each person.
- Stay within your abilities and experience level to avoid injuring yourself and to avoid damaging the cave.
- Avoid drowning by not entering gypsum caves or other storm drain types of caves if there is a threat of rain.
- Bring your own ascending and descending devices and be experienced in their use, for caves requiring rope work.
- Always watch for and avoid poisonous creatures such as snakes and insects.

Before you go, use the [CAVE SAFETY CHECKLIST](#).