

# RIGHT OF PUBLIC ACCESS

*Right of public access = Don't disturb, don't destroy.*

## Introduction

Sweden's right of public access allows us to explore and walk around in nature. It's what allows us to play in the forest, swim in the waters, and use the beaches, as well as pick flowers, berries, and various mushrooms, as long as they are not protected by law. Thanks to this right, we are even allowed to spend the night in nature if we want.

However, the right of public access not only gives us rights but obligations as well. When spending time in nature, it is important to be considerate of nature, wildlife, landowners, and other visitors. You may not, for example, pass through residential land, gardens, plantations, or fields with growing crops. Nor may you ride motorised vehicles in nature.

Human-generated rubbish does not belong in nature, as animals can get caught in plastic bags, injure themselves on pieces of glass, or eat harmful objects thinking they are food. It is therefore important to always take all our rubbish with us and dispose of it in the proper place. Feel free to bring someone else's rubbish as well if you find any. Together, we can take responsibility for making sure that the right of public access continues to function as intended.

## Fishing

If you want to try your luck fishing, you are welcome to do so using hand gear along the coasts as well as by our five largest lakes: Vänern, Vättern, Hjälmaren, Mälaren, and Storsjön. To fish in other waters, you need a fishing permit or other permit.

## Nature reserves and national parks

Sweden has many wonderful nature reserves and national parks. They are there to protect and preserve valuable natural environments. It is important to keep in mind that there can be special rules that may affect the right of public access when you're out in nature reserves and national parks. As a visitor, it is your responsibility to find out what rules apply in the specific location you have chosen for your outdoor adventure. Rules for nature reserves and national parks can often be found on signs around the area. You can also contact the relevant municipality or administrative board.

## Lighting a fire in nature

If your stomach starts rumbling and you want something to eat, nature is the perfect place to make a delicious meal. You are obviously welcome to prepare your food using your own portable stove, but thanks to the right of public access, you may also light a fire in nature, as long as outdoor fires are not prohibited where you are. Fires may only be lit under safe conditions. Always have an adult with you. Choose a place where there is no risk of the fire spreading. Never light a fire on bare rock or where there is risk of damage to nature.

Bringing your own firewood is always a good idea, as tree branches on the ground may be home to or building materials for various animals. Never pick branches from living trees or bushes. Make sure that there is access to plenty of water by your fire. Put out the fire carefully before leaving it, either by letting it burn out completely or by smothering it with sand or dirt. Then pour lots of water on it and make sure there are no remaining embers or smoke.

## Hygiene and waste

If you want to freshen up with a dip in the water or wash off your dinner plates, you are welcome to use the surrounding watercourses. If you are washing up, it is important to use soap and shampoo that are not harmful to the environment. The same goes for dish-washing detergent. Please wash your dishes on land and dispose of the used water some distance from the watercourse. This allows the ground to filter the water before it flows back into the lake, sea, or river.

Do not leave behind any rubbish, food scraps, or traces of personal hygiene management in nature. Feel free to use any public toilets available or dig a hole with your toilet shovel. Please put the toilet paper in a bag and dispose of it in the nearest garbage bin. No one wants to see used toilet paper flying around out in nature.

## Camping

There is not much that beats spending the night in nature. Thanks to the right of public access, you can camp for one or a few nights on someone else's land, as long as there are just a few of you. Remember to pitch your tent far enough from any house so that you do not risk disturbing those who live there. You are not allowed to dig, build, or otherwise alter nature in order to improve your campsite. If you want to camp with a group or if you plan to stay for several nights, you need to find out who owns the land and ask for their permission first.



FRILUFTS  
FRÄMJANDET

