

Information for new walk leaders

Each year the Ramblers offers thousands of walks all over England, Scotland and Wales. Leading walks is the most popular volunteer role at the Ramblers.

This factsheet guides you through how to get started in this exciting and popular role.

1. Chat to your committee

Have a chat with people on your committee to find out what its like to be a walk leader in your group and to help decide if this role is right for you. They can tell you more about what it involves and how they can support you.

2. Get recorded

All volunteers must be recorded on our volunteer website, [Assemble](#).

This will give you access to volunteer news, all the important documents and updates from the Ramblers. It is also essential for our insurance that walk leaders are recorded with the Ramblers. Assemble is the central place for volunteer support and information.



If you're not recorded yet and cannot access Assemble, simply ask your committee to email us at volunteersupport@ramblers.zendesk.com and tell us:

- Your name
- All groups you will lead walks for
- Email address
- Membership number (if you are a member)

3. Welcome and induction

The Ramblers volunteer welcome

Your group will welcome you into your role and ensure you know what's involved and highlight the key information you need.

If you are new to volunteering with us, we have a short **Ramblers Volunteer Welcome** e-Learning course.

Just go to the training tab on Assemble to complete this short induction.

• Support and questions

Your local committee will be in touch and help you know where to get help and support for the different questions you might have. Take some time to get to know who you can speak to about things like:

- advertising your walk on the Group Walks and Event management system (GWEM)
- sharing photos and stories of your walks on social media
- safely storing your risk assessments
- claiming expenses

You will also hear from staff at the Ramblers who are here to make sure you get the most out of volunteering with us. They will let you know about any training, events, and networking opportunities that are open to you.

4. Training

Role specific learning

We have developed e-Learning training that has been designed for volunteer walk leaders. It's called **Walk Leader Foundations**.

You can access it by going to the training tab on Assemble.

Take a preview of the **Walk Leader Foundations** course here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=He7noQnnD6A&feature=youtu.be>

Take some time to complete this course. It will help to build your confidence and give you the key information and foundations for your role.

Specific guidance and support materials are available on the **Document Hub** on Assemble. Once you are recorded as a walk leader all these documents will be available to you. Some of the most important documents for walk leaders include:

- Risk assessment guidance and template
- Incident reporting forms
- Ramblers guide to insurance

5. Your first walks

It is natural for you to feel a little nervous on our first few walks, but your group will be a good source of support. Experienced walk leaders can act as great buddies and mentors to help you find your feet and build your confidence.

Ask someone from your group, who you know and trust, to help you lead your first walks. Or spend some time with them as you are planning a walk to get their tips and advice.

Having a coffee with a trusted group member after a walk can be a good chance to reflect on what went well, and anything you may do differently next time.

We have a factsheet on **Buddying new walk leaders** that you can find in the Document Hub on Assemble.

6. Keeping up to date

Throughout the year, we offer you different opportunities to meet with other walk leaders, develop new skills and keep up to date on changes. Look out for information on:

- Online meetings and conversations
- Face to face training courses
- e-Learning opportunities
- Volunteer and membership events and gatherings

We promote these events through our monthly Volunteer Newsletter and by email, so keep an eye on your inbox for the latest learning and development opportunities.

7. Developing your skills

The skills you need will be determined by the kinds of walks you lead. You don't need any formal qualifications to lead walks with the Ramblers, but you may choose to develop more advanced skills in navigation, first aid, or walk leadership.

You can take advanced training with providers such as:

Mountain Training Association. They coordinate thousands of courses across the UK by a range of providers. www.mountain-training.org

National Navigation Awards Scheme. NAAS coordinate navigation training across the UK by a range of providers. www.nnas.org.uk

Other training providers are also available in different parts of GB. Check out their credentials and reviews to ensure you get the very best in quality and experience.

8. Here for you

If you are in **England and Wales** stay in touch by emailing us at volunteersupport@ramblers.zendesk.com

In **Scotland** you can email the team at walkleadership@ramblers.org.uk



Related factsheets

- ✓ Recruiting and inducting new walk leaders
- ✓ Buddying new walk leaders