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[Home](#) > Types of Activities

Types of Activities

Archive - this page was replaced around 1 April 2019

The Ottawa Outdoor Club offers a range of outdoor activities throughout the year:

- [bicycling](#) (spring, summer, and fall)
- [canoeing](#) (spring, summer, and fall)
- [cross-country skiing](#) (winter)
- [hiking](#) (spring, summer, and fall)
- [skating](#) (winter)
- [snowshoeing](#) (winter)
- [walking](#) (spring, summer, and fall)

A detailed [schedule of activities](#) ^[1] is available.

Overview

The Club offers both members and non-members day outings every week and out-of-town outings on many weekends.

Events start at the times and locations shown in the [schedule](#) ^[1]. Register for an activity at the meeting location before the registration time noted for the specific activity.

For information on costs, what to bring for trips, and what is expected of participants, please refer to the [trip registration and responsibilities](#) ^[2] and [trip guidelines](#) ^[3] pages. [Transportation costs](#) ^[4] are shared.

Lead a Trip

Is there somewhere you would like to go and you don't see it on the schedule? Suggest it to the

appropriate coordinator and consider leading it yourself. Leading a day or evening trip is reasonably easy. If you haven't led a trip before and feel a bit nervous about doing so, talk to the coordinator anyway. We'll specifically pair you with an experienced leader; along with this. In addition, our trips typically have experienced Club leaders along for the event as regular participants, and many of them would be happy to give you a hand.

Usual Meeting Locations and Times

The table below shows the *usual* meeting times and locations. For any specific event in which you're interested, please check the schedule for the exact time and location, because they can vary.

Day and duration	Event	Meeting / registration time	Usual meeting location
Wednesday morning & afternoon	Hiking or Snowshoeing , dependent on conditions	Meet and register before 10:00 AM	At the back of the Sandy Hill Community Centre, 250 Somerset Street East (map ^[5])
Wednesday evening	Canoeing	Varies by week; please check the schedule	At the back of the Sandy Hill Community Centre, 250 Somerset Street East (map ^[5])
Thursday evening	Casual walking followed by dinner	Meet between 6:00 and 6:15 PM	Odd-numbered dates: outside of the Dow's Lake Pavilion (in inclement weather, just inside in the lobby) (map ^[6]) Even-numbered dates: by the statue in front of the Supreme Court on Wellington Street (map ^[7])
Friday evening	Skating on the canal	Meet on the canal at 7:00 PM by the change rooms near the NAC or at 7:20 PM at the Pretoria Street Bridge benches	
Saturday morning & afternoon	Bicycling Snowshoeing Canoeing	Meet and register before 9:45 AM	At the back of the Sandy Hill Community Centre, 250 Somerset Street East (map ^[5])
Sunday morning & afternoon	Hiking Cross-country skiing		

Bicycling

Coordinator: Melodie Mortensen, 613-224-1247, cycle at ottawaoutdoorclub.ca

For all events, please check the [event listings](#) ^[1] for details, as the meeting day, time, and location can vary. Please register by the departure time shown. Destinations will vary.

During the spring, summer, and fall, bicycle trips are planned for many **Saturdays**, leaving in the

morning and returning mid- to late afternoon.

Non-members are welcome on our trips; we ask for a small [participation fee](#) [8].

We usually meet outside near the downstairs back door of the **Sandy Hill Community Centre**, or under the tree nearby. If it's cool, we sometimes meet just inside. The Community Centre's address is 250 Somerset Street East, between Sweetland Avenue and Nelson Street; the parking lot and the back entrance where we meet are accessible from around the corner on Sweetland Avenue ([map](#) [5]).

Several out-of-town weekend trips are usually planned.

Use of a helmet is mandatory when bicycling with us. Also, we strongly encourage you to carry a spare bicycle tube and repair kit.

During warmer weather, we might plan a stop for a swim. Sometimes, even when not planned, we may decide to go for a swim anyway!

A level of difficulty is provided for each bicycling trip:

- **L1:** Mainly flat, distances up to 40 km
- **L2:** Some hills, distances up to 60 km
- **L3:** Challenging hills, distances up to 80 km
- **L4:** Exceeds L3

Canoeing

Coordinator: Mike McCurrie, canoe at ottawaoutdoorclub.ca

For all events, please check the [event listings](#) [1] for details, as the meeting day, time, and location can vary. Please register by the departure time shown. Destinations will vary.

During the late spring and summer, we try to schedule two canoe trips per week: one weekday evening and one day on the weekend, usually **Sunday**. We are generally back at the Community Centre by about 7:00 PM for day trips and around 11:00 PM for our evening paddles.

Non-members are welcome on our trips; we ask for a small [rental and participation fee](#) [8].

We usually meet outside near the downstairs back door of the **Sandy Hill Community Centre**, or under the tree nearby. If it's cool, we sometimes meet just inside. The Community Centre's address is 250 Somerset Street East, between Sweetland Avenue and Nelson Street; the parking lot and the back entrance where we meet are accessible from around the corner on Sweetland Avenue ([map](#) [5]). From there, we car-pool to pick up the canoes. If you have a vehicle, we recommend that you bring it, as extra vehicles are always useful when carrying canoes. (We have all of the equipment to mount canoes on a vehicle.)

Daytime and evening trip destinations are many times in Gatineau Park or on the Gatineau River.

We occasionally offer

- weekend canoe-camping trips. These may range from Algonquin Park to the west, Charleston Lake to the south, and la Vérendrye or parc Tremblant and other parts of the Laurentians to the north and east
- canoe skills and safety training
- other special events, such as moonlight paddles, pub excursions, and our summer solstice BBQ

When the weather allows, we usually stop for a swim during our trips, so if you like swimming, don't forget your bathing suit! Sun-bathing is always an option.

For our canoe trips,

- no pets are allowed
- please bring a lunch or evening snack unless otherwise noted
- please bring plenty of water for the day
- please check the difficulty level of the trip beforehand to ensure that you will enjoy it
- we provide all canoe-related gear such as personal flotation devices (PFDs), paddles, and canoes, etc.
- according to [federal regulation](#) [9],
 - it is mandatory for each participant of a guided excursion to wear a life jacket or personal flotation device (PFD) at all times while in the canoe. You will not be permitted to participate if you do not wear one
 - **cold water:** when the water temperature is less than 15° C, procedures must exist to protect people from the effects of hypothermia. On these days, **we strongly urge you to bring**, at a minimum, a change of socks & underwear in a zip loc bag, and ideally, a complete change of clothing. If you don't have your own complete change of clothes and you get wet, we will have some extra outer clothes. You may not make a fashion statement in our clothes, but you'll be dry and warm! We'll have these with us in dry bags or equivalent.

A level of difficulty is provided for each canoeing trip:

- **L1:** Small lakes and / or slow moving rivers; no portages; up to 10 km paddling. Suitable for novice paddlers
- **L2:** Larger lakes and / or swift rivers; possible wind, waves, current, and / or portages; up to 15 km paddling. Previous paddling experience and good physical fitness preferred
- **L3:** Very large lakes and / or rivers; possible wind, waves, and / or current; significant portages; up to 25 km paddling. Previous paddling experience and good level of physical fitness required
- **L4:** Exceeds L3

Hiking

Coordinator: Robert Bultitude, hike at ottawaoutdoorclub.ca

For all events, please check the [event listings](#) [1] for details, as the meeting day, time, and location can vary. Please register by the departure time shown. Destinations will vary.

From March or April to November or December, we meet every **Sunday morning**.

Non-members are welcome on our trips; we ask for a small [participation fee](#) [8].

We usually meet outside near the downstairs back door of the **Sandy Hill Community Centre**, or under the tree nearby. If the weather is poor, we sometimes meet just inside; when we do, please come far enough inside so as not to block the entryway. The Community Centre's address is 250 Somerset Street East, between Sweetland Avenue and Nelson Street; the parking lot and the back entrance where we meet are accessible from around the corner on Sweetland Avenue ([map](#) [5]).

Most hikes are in Gatineau Park. During warmer weather, many times we plan a stop for a swim. Sometimes, even when not planned, we'll decide to stop for a swim anyway! During the transition periods (usually April and November, we might hike more in the Greenbelt in Ottawa so as not to damage the snowshoeing and cross-country-skiing trails.

In addition, several out-of-town weekend trips are planned.

We hike at the speed of approximately 3 km per hour. A level of difficulty is provided for each hiking trip:

- **L1:** Easy. Defined trails, gentle inclines, distances up to 8 km
- **L1.5:** Medium. Defined trails, rolling terrain, possible bushwhacking (under 1 km), distances up to 12 km. See additional note below.
- **L2:** Hard. Rough trails, steep, possible bushwhacking, distances up to 20 km
- **L2.5:** Very hard. Rougher trails, steeper, possible bushwhacking, distances up to 20 km, elevation gains up to 500 m
- **L3:** Very hard, with extra distance. Possible scrambling over rocks, distances up to 30 km, elevation gains up to 600 m
- **L4:** Exceeds L3. Distances over 30 km, elevation gains up to 1,000 m
- **L5:** Exceeds L4. Long, steep hikes, or hikes requiring sustained hiking all day. Elevation gains over 1,000 m

Note about L1.5: A level 1.5 hike is considered a standard hike that uses the [Wolf Trail](#) [10] (the most well-known trail in the Park) as a baseline. If you've done the Wolf Trail (8 km with an elevation gain of 200 metres), you can do an L1.5 hike. L2s would be considered somewhat more difficult than the Wolf Trail (longer distance and more elevation gain).

Some hike descriptions indicate that these hikes include bushwhacking, which involves going off-trail and navigating through the woods. Depending on the density of the terrain, this can be challenging and arduous. Speed is roughly 1 km per hour, and the length of the bushwhack will usually be listed in the hike description. We offer two types of bushwhacking hiking trips:

- those led with a map and compass
- those led with a GPS

Please be aware of the limitations and difficulties with map and compass bushwhacking hikes before joining. Typically, GPS-led bushwhacks offer a more direct (and therefore easier-to-manage) route to destinations and back to the trailhead.

Skating

Coordinator: John Young, 613-232-9143, skate at ottawaoutdoorclub.ca

For all events, please check the [event listings](#) [1] for details, as the meeting day, time, and location can vary. Please be ready to go by the departure time shown.

This is a casual skate of a few kilometres along the Rideau Canal on **Friday evenings** when the Rideau Canal Skateway is open. Depending on what part of the canal is open, we generally meet at 7:00 PM at the change rooms on the ice near the National Arts Centre / Mackenzie King Bridge ([map](#) [11]). If you would prefer a shorter skate, can't make it for the 7:00 PM meeting time, or would like a place to park your car, you can join the group on the ice at about 7:20 PM at the Pretoria Bridge benches, closest to Loblaws ([map](#) [12]).

On the canal, you can recognize the leader by his distinctive red and black "Canada" toque.

Because conditions can change quickly, it's worthwhile checking on the state of the canal at the [National Capital Commission web site](#) [13] not long before the scheduled skate.

After the skate is over, we refortify ourselves at a local establishment.

There is no non-member's fee for these skating outings; everyone is invited to join us at no cost.

Cross-Country Skiing

Coordinator: Paul Gallagher, 613-882-5446, ski at ottawaoutdoorclub.ca

For all events, please check the [event listings](#) [1] for details, as the meeting day, time, and location can vary. Please register by the departure time shown. Destinations will vary.

During the winter months, we meet every **Sunday morning**.

Non-members are welcome on our trips; we ask for a small [participation fee](#) [8].

We usually meet just inside the **Sandy Hill Community Centre**. The Community Centre's address is 250 Somerset Street East, between Sweetland Avenue and Nelson Street; the parking lot and the back entrance where we meet are accessible from around the corner on Sweetland Avenue ([map](#) [5]).

Destinations are usually in Gatineau Park.

In addition, several out-of-town weekend trips are [scheduled](#) [1] that include either or both of cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.

Information about the state of the cross-country ski trails in Gatineau Park is available at the [National Capital Commission web site](#) [14].

A level of difficulty is provided for each cross-country skiing trip:

- **L1:** Groomed/tracked trails, easy hills, distances up to 15 km
- **L2:** Groomed/tracked trails, more difficult hills, distances up to 25 km
- **L3:** Possible back country, challenging hills, distances up to 30 km
- **L4:** Exceeds L3

Snowshoeing

Coordinator: Emily Galvao, 902-599 4549, snowshoe at ottawaoutdoorclub.ca

For all events, please check the [event listings](#) [1] for details, as the meeting day, time, and location can vary. Please register by the departure time shown. Destinations will vary.

During the winter months, we meet every **Saturday morning**. As of 15 November 2017, there are hikes on Wednesdays that will change to snowshoe outings once there is sufficient snow on the ground.

Non-members are welcome on our trips; we ask for a small [participation fee](#) [8].

We usually meet just inside the **Sandy Hill Community Centre**. The Community Centre's address is 250 Somerset Street East, between Sweetland Avenue and Nelson Street; the parking lot and the back entrance where we meet are accessible from around the corner on Sweetland Avenue ([map](#) [5]).

The Club has some [snowshoes that may be rented](#) [8] for use during one of the Club's day or weekend excursions. If you're interested in renting a pair of snowshoes, please contact the leader a number of days before the snowshoeing excursion, since not all leaders will have immediate access to the snowshoes. You will have to discuss with the leader if it is possible to obtain the snowshoes.

In addition, several out-of-town weekend trips are [scheduled](#) [1] that include some or all of cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.

Information about snowshoeing in Gatineau Park is available at the [National Capital Commission web site](#) [15].

A level of difficulty is provided for each snowshoeing trip:

- **L1:** Defined trails, gentle inclines, distances up to 5 km
- **L2:** Possible off-trail, steeper inclines, distances up to 10 km
- **L3:** Possible off-trail, challenging hills, elevation gains up to 300 m, distances up to 15 km
- **L4:** Exceeds L3

Walking

Coordinator: Carol H., walk at ottawaoutdoorclub.ca

For all events, please check the [event listings](#) [1] for details, as the meeting day, time, and location can vary. Please register by the departure time shown. Destinations will vary.

For casual hikers, this Level 0.5 walk is a great way to stretch your legs for 1 - 1½ hours each week. If you're new to the Club (or if you've been with us for awhile), our evening get-togethers provide a friendly way to meet Club members in an informal setting. Our destination may include the Arboretum or Hogs Back Falls—the destination varies with whimsy and the weather—but we always wind up at a pub or eatery by the end of the evening for a late dinner and some friendly conversation.

This event runs every Thursday evening from April to October, starting from the designated departure point (see below). Meet us at the departure point a little after 6:00 PM for a 6:15 PM departure.

For the Thursday walks, we alternate between downtown and Dow's Lake according to the following schedule:

- On **odd-numbered dates**, we meet at the Dow's Lake Pavilion, 1001 Queen Elizabeth Drive ([map](#) [6]). Free parking is available after 6:00 p.m. on Adeline Street and Norfolk Street, northeast of Carling and Preston. On cold and / or damp days, we often congregate inside the main entrance of the Dow's Lake Pavilion; otherwise, look for us outside on the ramp leading into the building.
- On **even-numbered dates**, we meet near the statue ([map](#) [7]) on the west side of the lawn in front of the Supreme Court at 301 Wellington Street. Parking is generally available after 5:30 PM in the National Library / Public Archives parking lot between the Supreme Court building and the Library / Archives, as well as on Sparks Street west of Lyon Street. **Swimming & OC Transpo alert:** we sometimes walk to Westboro Beach on the Ottawa River, eat at the café there, and then take OC Transpo ([fares](#) [16]) back to our starting point. If the weather's good and we're at the beach, swimming is an option, so come prepared if you're interested.

We recommend that you dress for the weather, especially during the spring when evening temperatures can be highly variable. This includes using footwear suitable for muddy and / or partially snow-covered pathways.

There is no non-member's fee for these walks; everyone is invited to join us at no cost.

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Links

[1] <http://ottawaoutdoorclub.ca/events/index.php>

[2] <https://www.ottawaoutdoorclub.ca/club/./trip/registration-responsibilities>

[3] <https://www.ottawaoutdoorclub.ca/club/./trip/guidelines>

[4] <https://www.ottawaoutdoorclub.ca/club/./trip/fees%23transportation>

[5] [http://maps.google.ca/maps?q=Community+Centre+near+Sandy+Hill,+Ottawa,+Ontario&hl=en&sl=45.425594,-](http://maps.google.ca/maps?q=Community+Centre+near+Sandy+Hill,+Ottawa,+Ontario&hl=en&sl=45.425594,-75.678824&ssp=0.016069,0.026157&vpsrc=0&hq=Community+Centre&hnear=Sandy+Hill,+Ottawa,+Ottawa+Division,+Ontario&t=m&layer=c&cbll=45.42288,-75.677045&panoid=uTpKtfXjjmbJhZqrUc9KSA&cbp=11,277.43,,0,14.7&fill=45.421709,-75.678527&fspn=0.007274,0.026157&z=16)

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[6] <http://goo.gl/maps/OgTj>

[7] <http://goo.gl/maps/6PeH>

[8] <https://www.ottawaoutdoorclub.ca/club/./trip/fees>

[9] <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/SOR-2010-91/page-7.html?txthl=guided#s-303>

[10] https://s3.amazonaws.com/ncc-ccn/documents/gp_trailfactsheet-2014_e3_wolf.pdf?mtime=20170515093810

[11] <http://g.co/maps/qv8e6>

[12] <http://g.co/maps/uddu2>

[13] <http://www.canadascapital.gc.ca/places-to-visit/rideau-canal-skateway/ice-conditions>

[14] <http://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/cross-country-skiing-in-gatineau-park>

[15] <http://www.ncc-ccn.gc.ca/places-to-visit/gatineau-park/things-to-do/snowshoeing-gatineau-park>

[16] <http://www.octranspo1.com/tickets-and-passes>