



THE DUKE OF
EDINBURGH'S AWARD
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ADVICE ON THE USE OF MOBILE PHONES ON EXPEDITIONS

Mobile phones have become part of everyday life for much of the British population. I'm sure many of you will have your phone with you most of the time and can't imagine a time when you didn't, however, for your expeditions we would ask you to consider the following.

The Expedition section of the award aims to allow you to plan, prepare and undertake an unaccompanied, self-reliant journey with an agreed aim. It should be a challenge in terms of working as a team, physical demands, exploring the environment and journeying for several hours each day. This part of the Award also aims to allow you to enjoy and appreciate the environment and develop an awareness of your surroundings. So where do mobile phones fit in with this?

Mobile phones can be a useful tool if an incident occurs and you need help. They may allow you to contact your supervisor to ask for assistance, however, do remember that mobile phone reception in rural areas is patchy at best. You need a signal and battery power. Your training in first aid, reading maps and planning escape routes is likely to be more useful than a mobile phone.

Mobile phones are also very disruptive to everyday life. Texting, playing games etc can be very anti-social and will run down your battery power. It will also distract you from your surroundings and reduce your enjoyment of what is going on around you! Using a phone whilst on the move is also a major trip hazard especially on uneven ground. An expedition is about team work and journeying away from everyday distractions.

Finally, in case you need to use your phone in an emergency, please remember to have your supervisor's contact number saved in your phone. These are the people to call – follow the instructions on your safety card – they can provide assistance and get additional assistance, if required. Do not phone your parents or friends - while you may want to let them know what is going on, this again will run your battery down, may prevent you calling your supervisor for help and will definitely worry them! If necessary, your supervisor will phone the base contact who will contact your parents.

So in summary:

-  Mobile phones can be taken for use in an emergency
-  Mobile phones should not be used for texting, gaming, etc during expeditions
-  Mobile phones should be fully charged and topped up before setting off
-  Save your supervisor and base contact's phone numbers to your contact list
-  Do you all need your phones? Think about how many you actually need
-  If help is needed, contact your supervisor