

Criticality of preparation and equipment in hiking and trekking activities: a systematic review

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First Author	
Last Author	
Authors	Sahri, S; Raharjo, BB; Nasuka, N; Sumartiningsih, S; Fuchs, PX; Kresnajati, S; Sugiarto, S; Festiawan, R;
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Abstract	<p>Outdoor activities like hiking and trekking require appropriate preparation and equipment. However, many adventurers underestimate the importance of these factors, leading to increased risk and adverse events. This study aims to deliver a comprehensive review of existing literature on preparation and equipment requirements for hiking and trekking and to identify prevalent challenges during these activities. The review considered papers with English full-text, listed in MEDLINE/PubMed or Google Scholar, published between January 2000 and June 2023. The search method focuses on potential obstacles during the trip and equipment preparation and risks during hiking and trekking. Following the PRISMA 2021 guidelines, 14 papers were considered for detailed review. Two articles investigated hiking experts whereas the other studies included experts and beginners. The following preparative measures and equipment were identified as crucial: appropriate clothing, maps, compass, first aid kit, extra food and water, good physical fitness, and outdoor-related skills (e.g., orientation and medical proficiency). The reviewed studies had methodological flaws and were susceptible to bias. This review identifies common risks and best practices with respect to preparation and equipment for hiking and trekking. It contributes to outdoor adventure safety, potentially reducing risks and the likelihood of adverse events and enriching outdoor experiences.</p>
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Author	RIFQI FESTIAWAN, S.Pd, M.Pd