



Virtual Trainer Course Model

Facilitating Leave No Trace Trainer Courses During the COVID-19 Pandemic

**Note: Trainer Courses may be facilitated using this virtual format through December 31, 2021 (may be extended based on CDC, state, or federal guidance)*

Overview

Given the current COVID-19 pandemic in the US and globally, the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics (the Center) understands the need for continued Leave No Trace training despite the inability to offer in-person trainings for the foreseeable future. To that end, the Center has developed the following guidelines to help Leave No Trace Master Educators offer Trainer Courses using available technology while adhering to the [National Training Guidelines](#) as closely as possible. As noted below, there are a few requirements that must be met to offer Trainer Courses using this virtual format, and numerous suggestions and recommendations for meeting the various curriculum standards. While we understand that Leave No Trace is generally taught and learned best in the outdoors, we have adapted by allowing some level of flexibility with the Trainer Course model.

Leave No Trace Trainer Course

Like Master Educator Courses, Leave No Trace Trainer Courses emphasize skills and techniques essential to Leave No Trace minimum impact outdoor ethics and education. A [Leave No Trace Trainer Course](#) is a modified version of a Leave No Trace Master Educator Course. These courses do not teach basic travel, camping or other outdoor skills, nor do they provide outdoor instructor certification. Sample Trainer Course curricula and other resources are available through the Center or <http://www.LNT.org/>. Additional links to resources are below.

Chapter 11 of the Master Educator Handbook is devoted to the mechanics and curriculum for Leave No Trace Trainer Courses. Instructors are highly encouraged to use this valuable resource

to make sure that the required Trainer Course curriculum is adequately covered and to ensure course quality. Additionally, the Trainer Course [Step-by-Step Guide](#) and Trainer Course [Flow Chart](#) can be helpful resources.

Trainer Course: Lead Instructor

The lead instructor for a virtual Trainer Course must be a Leave No Trace Master Educator.

The lead instructor should have training and experience in outdoor leadership/instruction of outdoor skills. Additional qualifications:

- Maintain appropriate levels of emergency medical certification. At a minimum, the lead instructor should maintain current certification in Standard First Aid and CPR. *Note: this requirement will be waived provided no portion of the virtual Trainer Course is taught in-person.*
- Master Educators wishing to offer Trainer Courses two years or more after completing their original Master Educator course must also complete the [free, online Leave No Trace Master Educator Refresher Course](#), and must retake the refresher every two (2) years thereafter in order to remain qualified to offer Leave No Trace Trainer Courses.
- Additionally, any Master Educator offering Trainer Courses must be a [current member](#) of Leave No Trace or part of a [Community Partner organization](#).

Trainer Course: Co-instructors

A co-instructor is not required for the virtual Trainer Course but is strongly recommended for course quality. Co-instructors can be either a Leave No Trace Master Educator or Leave No Trace Trainer. Additional qualifications:

- Co-instructors should have experience as teachers/trainers within their respective organizations, including instruction on at least one overnight Leave No Trace course.
- Co-instructors should also have training and experience in outdoor leadership/instruction of outdoor skills.

- At a minimum, co-instructors should maintain current certification in Standard First Aid and CPR. *Note: this requirement will be waived provided no portion of the virtual Trainer Course is taught in-person.*
- If co-instructors are Leave No Trace Master Educators, those individuals must also complete the [online Leave No Trace Master Educator Refresher](#) course within two (2) years of taking their original Master Educator Course, and must retake the refresher every two (2) years thereafter in order to remain qualified to co-instruct Leave No Trace Trainer Courses.

Trainer Course: Enrollment

Virtual Trainer Courses must have a minimum of four (4) course participants as this better ensures a quality experiential learning opportunity for all participants. In the event that meeting the minimum number of participants is not possible, the Center may grant an exception on a case-by-case basis. The Center should be contacted **prior** to offering any Trainer Course with fewer than four (4) participants. The maximum number of participants for virtual Trainer Courses is twelve (12), the Center strongly recommends that organizations and individuals offering Trainer Courses strive to keep the instructor to student ratio low to enhance learning opportunities.

Given the high level of interest in these courses, the Center recommends posting your course to our website if it is open to the public. To post your course to the Center's site please email a brief course description including dates, times, costs, contact and registration information to training@LNT.org.

Trainer Course: Insurance

General liability insurance for Master Educators is a standard requirement for Leave No Trace Trainer Courses. The details of the required insurance can be found in the [National Training Guidelines](#), the [Training Agreement](#), or in the Master Educator Handbook. *Note: this requirement will be waived provided no portion of the virtual Trainer Course is taught in-person.*

Required Components for the virtual Trainer Course Model

1. **Prior** to running the course, Master Educators interested in running a Trainer Course using this virtual format **must email training@LNT.org** a detailed outline of their

planned course. This outline must include information about how instructors will be meeting the requirements of the virtual trainer course guidelines including the technology being used, how students will be presenting their teaching topics, and additional resources that will be used to support student learning.

2. Lead Instructor must be a Leave No Trace Master Educator
3. Co-instructor should be a Master Educator or a Trainer
4. Instructor(s) must have access to the necessary technology to conduct a course of this type (Zoom, Skype, Google Hangout, GoToWebinar, etc.)
5. Instructors must distribute the [Course Participant Acknowledgement, Assumption of Risks, Release and Indemnity Agreement](#) and participants must sign (e-signatures acceptable). Copies must be submitted electronically to the Center.
6. Instructor(s) must submit copies (electronic) of course evaluations from participants to training@LNT.org upon course completion
7. Instructors must submit Trainer Course rosters [here](#) upon course completion.
8. **Instructor(s)** must take the Center's online **virtual Trainer Course – [Post Course Evaluation](#)** which is designed to provide *Instructor* feedback on how the virtual course format worked, its strengths, its deficiencies, its benefits, or its drawbacks. This information is critical as the Center evaluates the applicability of this model for future courses.

Core Components for Trainer Course Curriculum – How to meet the requirements using the virtual course format

1. **A minimum of sixteen (16) total hours of experiential instruction:** Instructors are encouraged to do their best to provide the full 16 hours of total instruction to the extent possible. This will help ensure a meaningful and effective Trainer Course experience for all participants. **While it is best to have a co-instructor for Leave No Trace Trainer Courses, the Center will waive this requirement for this virtual course format from April 1 – December 31, 2020.**

2. **The role and function of a Leave No Trace Trainer:** Instructors should use the [National Training Guidelines](#) to provide this information to course participants. While the PDF version of the Guidelines could simply be disseminated to course participants, we highly encourage instructors to offer this content as a stand-alone lesson for course participants using available technology.
3. **The principles and ethics of Leave No Trace:** This is the core of the Trainer Course, and should be covered by both the instructor(s) and through the student teaching topics. The Master Educator Handbook, www.LNT.org, and the Center's various social channels such as YouTube are excellent resources for this information. Additionally, there are a variety of supplemental resources for each principle linked below.
4. **Teaching skills and techniques and student learning styles:** Chapter 2 in the Master Educator Handbook is devoted to the *Principles of Education*, and provides excellent information on teaching techniques and teaching methods.
5. **At least one student led teaching exercise by each participant:** A 10 to 15-minute teaching topic should be presented by each course participant. All course participants should create and submit a teaching outline for their topic to the course instructor(s) *prior* to the course. Outlines are then shared with all course participants. Instructor(s) and other participants should provide feedback for each lesson either in real-time or via other electronic means (email, Word document, Google doc, etc.). The student-led sessions can be accomplished in a variety of ways:
 - Participants could teach live via Zoom, Skype, Google Hangouts, Facetime, or other video conference service to all other participants.
 - Participants could record their teaching topic and submit prior to the course to be shared with all course participants via YouTube, Zoom, etc.
 - Participants could video themselves demonstrating the skill or putting the Principle they are assigned into action outdoors (backyard, local park, open space, etc. if allowed or available).
6. **Overview of the National Leave No Trace program:** This information is contained in the Center's standard PowerPoint Presentation, which can be downloaded [here](#). Each slide contains presenter notes to help guide you as you facilitate this section. It

is highly encouraged that this PowerPoint is shared live with participants using a video conference service.

7. **The role and function of the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics:** This information is contained in the Center's standard PowerPoint Presentation, which can be downloaded [here](#).

Additional course components to consider

- Consider having participants take the free [Online Leave No Trace Awareness Workshop](#) as part of the Trainer Course before the start of your virtual Trainer Course. This 30-45 minute course will help orient participants to Leave No Trace before your course begins.
- Consider having participants watch 1-3 videos on the [Center's YouTube channel](#) for additional learning opportunities. As the course instructor, make an effort to select videos that will be relevant to your participants. Suggested video resources are linked below.
- Have participants read and learn about the [Center's research efforts](#) and facilitate a discussion regarding the science that supports Leave No Trace.
- Ask participants to come prepared with a pre-packed daypack as if they were going on a day hike with a group. Have each participant share the contents of their pack on screen with the group to show how they have prepared for the course.
- Consider adding any of the following Leave No Trace topics into your course as additional teaching topics for participants:
 - [Leave No Trace considerations during COVID-19](#)
 - [Leave No Trace and social media](#)
 - [Leave No Trace for youth](#)
- Play the “**Ethics Game**” with participants via Zoom or other online platform using the “raise hand” function if available. Alternatively, each participant could have three cards (1,2,3 or A, B, C) that they could hold up on screen to indicate which item they've chosen/which group they're in.

- The **Authority of the Resource** technique should be taught on the course to the extent possible. See numerous links below.
- **Outdoor Ethics** should broadly be covered on the course. Chapter 9 of the Master Educator Handbook is devoted to this topic, including a lesson plan. Use this resource or tap into other resources found [here](#).
- All participants should fill out a **course evaluation** – preferably electronic but paper will suffice.
- Consider bringing all course participants together for an in-person session (e.g. to play the Ethics Game) if or when state or local group size limits allow. This could facilitate a more robust closure to the course. *Note: If there is an in-person portion of the course, all requirements as set forth in the National Training Guidelines must be met (e.g. co-instructor, first aid certification, insurance, etc.).*

Additional Resources

General

- [Leave No Trace Master PowerPoint Presentation Deck](#)
- [Leave No Trace Basics Video](#)
- [Rules or Ethics - What is Leave No Trace? \(blog post\)](#)
- <https://lnt.org/research-resources/>
- [Leave No Trace Research Library](#)
- [Leave No Trace Research Bibliography](#)
- [Leave No Trace Video Library](#)

Principles of Education

- How to Effectively Communicate Leave No Trace [video](#)
- Teaching Methods and Learning Styles [video](#)

Principle 1

- [Plan Ahead and Prepare - Overview](#)
- How to Start Hiking the Leave No Trace Way [video](#)
- What's On my Pack [video](#)
- What's In My Pack [video](#)
- Repackage Food to Minimize Waste [video](#)
- Pack Light in Any Weather [video](#)

Principle 2

- [Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces - Overview](#)
- How to Pick a Campsite [video](#)
- Wilderness Words: Crust [video](#)
- Traveling on Durable Surfaces [video](#)
- Outdoor Travel: Concentrate vs Disperse [video](#)

Principle 3

- [Dispose of Waste Properly - Overview](#)
- Dog Doo Solutions [video](#)
- How Long Does it Last [video](#)
- How to Pee Outside [video](#)
- How to Poop Outdoors [video](#)
- How to use a WAG bag [video](#)
- How to Wash Dishes Frontcountry [video](#)
- How to Wash Dishes in Backcountry [video](#)

Principle 4

- [Leave What You Find - Overview](#)
- It's Better Here [video](#)
- Stop the Spread of Invasive Species [video](#)
- Food for Thought [video](#)
- Rock Cairns and Leave No Trace [video](#)

Principle 5

- [Minimize Campfire Impacts - Overview](#)
- Cook it on a Camp Stove! [video](#)
- Campfire Soup [video](#)

- Campfire Alternatives [video](#)
- How to Build a Mound Fire [video](#)
- How to Use a Fire Pan [video](#)

Principle 6

- [Respect Wildlife - Overview](#)
- Three Tips to Respect Wildlife [video](#)
- How to Use a Bear Canister [video](#)
- PCT Bear Hang [video](#)
- Do You Know the Thumb Trick? [video](#)

Principle 7

- [Be Considerate of Other Visitors - Overview](#)
- Sharing the Trail with Leave No Trace [video](#)
- How far is 200 Feet? [Video](#)
- Tips for Handling Crowds [blog post](#)

Authority of the Resource

- ["Authority of the Resource" article by George Wallace](#)
- [5 Steps of "Authority of the Resource"](#)
- [Video: Authority of the Resource and Effective Communication](#)

Should you have questions about this course format or need additional resources, please contact training@LNT.org.

Thank you for your continued support of Leave No Trace training!