

Planning a Trip to Tombstone Park

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1. Park Website and Map

Tombstone Park website:

<http://env.gov.yk.ca/parksconservation/tombstonepark.php>

2. Tombstone Campground

The Tombstone Campground is located at km 71.3 of the Dempster Highway. It costs \$12 per night per accommodation unit (a limit of 2 accommodation units per site) to stay in Tombstone Campground. Firewood is free. If you are a Yukon resident (with a Yukon Healthcare card) you can purchase an Annual Permit for \$50.00, which allows unlimited camping for the season. If you are a Yukon resident and over 65 years of age, a seasonal permit is free. There is a 14 day maximum stay at any Yukon Parks front country campsite. We do not have a reservation system for Territorial campgrounds. It is on a “first come, first served” basis.

3. Tombstone Interpretive Centre

The Tombstone Interpretive Centre is located at km 70 on the Dempster Highway and offers interpretive displays, presentations, guided hikes and special events. The centre will also have current information about trail conditions, bear sightings, road reports etc.

4. Backcountry Camping Permits

If you plan on camping in the backcountry at **Grizzly, Divide or Talus Lakes** you will need a Backcountry Camping Permit. Space is limited so plan ahead. You can book your permits on a first come first serve basis at the Tombstone Interpretive Centre in person or in advance at **1 - 867-667-5648**. Backcountry camping permits are \$12.00 per night per tent. The permitting system is designed to protect the backcountry lakes, wildlife habitat and visitor experience. You are free to wilderness camp anywhere else in the park without permits. Please practice **'Leave no Trace'**. <http://www.leavenotrace.ca/principles>

5. Bear-proof Food Canisters

Bear Proof Food Canisters can be rented at the Tombstone Interpretive Centre for a \$40 fully-refundable deposit. It is very important that you store attractants in bear-proof canisters while in the backcountry. This means food, toothpaste, sunscreen, mosquito repellent.

6. Traveling with Dogs in Tombstone Territorial Park

Due to the sensitive habitats and short summer season, it is very important to reduce disturbances by dogs to both wildlife and plants in the area. We ask that you keep dogs on a leash and under control at all times. Doggie bags are located at many of the trail heads. Please put dog feces in garbage bins. If **traveling with dogs in the backcountry**, please pack out all dog feces or deposit it in backcountry outhouses. Dogs must be leashed at backcountry campsites to reduce impacts to plants, animals and other hikers. Dogs must be leashed while crossing Marmot Meadows on the route to Grizzly Lake to give wildlife space. Animals have a very short season to prepare for winter. It is important they are able to conserve and use their energy gathering food and raising young, rather than spending the afternoon running away from our amused pets.

7. Front Country Trails (Day Hiking)

1. Grizzly Creek to Monolith Lookout

Distance to the Lookout:	3 km
Time:	1 ½ hours – 2 hours (one way)
Difficulty:	Moderate to Difficult
Start point:	Km 58.5 Dempster Highway

Description: This popular trail begins from the parking area at Km 58.5. After about 1.5 km there is a widened area by Cairns Creek. After this point the trail starts gaining substantial elevation. Upon reaching the lookout you are rewarded with spectacular and often breathtaking views of Mt. Monolith.

2. Goldensides

Distance:	1.7 km
Time:	1-2 hours (one way)
Difficulty:	Difficult
Start point:	Km 74.5 Dempster Highway

Description: Take a right turn off the Dempster Highway at Km 74.5 just north of the Tombstone viewpoint. Follow the road up to the radio tower where you will find the trailhead marked by a large blue GOLDENSIDES sign. Follow colored flagging where present. Be aware that the **route is VERY steep** (up to a 60% slope) all the way to the summit. From the top of Goldensides, hikers have an exceptional 360 degree panoramic view of the surrounding landscape, including Discovery Ridge, North Fork Pass, and Fold Mountain.

3. North Klondike

Distance:	1.6 km
Time:	½ hour – 1 hour (one-way)
Difficulty:	Easy to Moderate
Start point:	Tombstone Campground

Description: The trail begins at the back of Tombstone Mountain Campground, in between Sites 18 and 19. Whether you are seeking an early morning walk, afternoon hike, or evening

stroll, this trail is fairly undemanding physically while still providing beautiful views of the surrounding area.

4. Hart River

Distance:	9.5 km to Park boundary
Time:	up to 3 hours (one way)
Difficulty:	Easy to Moderate
Start point:	Km 78 Dempster Highway

Description: The Hart River Winter Road begins near the summit of North Fork Pass and heads 100 km east to a mineral exploration site abandoned in the late 1960s. To access this trail, there is parking area located on the west side of the highway at km 78 of the Dempster Highway and the trailhead is almost directly across the road - you can't miss it. This trail travels through the bottom of the wide valley and often has several muddy sections. Tracks in the mud indicate it's frequently traveled by large mammals including bears.

8. Backcountry Routes (Overnight Trips)

Camping at Grizzly, Divide and Talus Lakes is limited and requires permits. Permits are \$12 per tent per night. Camping is permitted only on the hardened tent pads, one tent per pad.

1. Grizzly Lake

Total Distance:	11.5 km (one way)
Time:	6-9 hours
Difficulty:	Very Difficult
Start point:	Km 58.5

Description: *(See Grizzly Creek - Mt. Monolith Lookout for description of the trail to the Lookout)* After the Lookout the route continues along the ridge and has an elevation gain of 800ft. Most hikers report that the trail is difficult due to elevation gain, side-hilling and unstable terrain. Much of the trail travels over steep loose rocks. It takes on average 7 hours to hike all the way to the lake. Some people do it in 5 hours and some in 10 hours depending on your pace, physical condition, ability and weather. Grizzly lake has 10 tent pads, a cooking platform, grey water disposal and an outhouse. Please use the Cook Shelter platform for cooking. Dispose dish water, cooking water, and toothpaste in the grey water barrel to reduce impact on waterbodies and to avoid attracting wildlife. It is very important to reduce our impact by using hardened surfaces such as marked trails and tent pads, not starting fires, and keeping dogs under control at all times. *Camping at Grizzly Lake requires backcountry camping permits.*

2. Divide Lake

Distance:	6 km one way (from Grizzly Lake)
Time:	3-5 hours
Difficulty:	Difficult
Start point:	North side of Grizzly Lake

Description: Ascend Glissade Pass on the north side of Grizzly lake - when you are in the campground, go back on the trail past the creek and you will come to the boulder field. Stay on the right side of this field and just keep going up to the pass. The pass is very steep with loose

rocks on the north side of the pass. Watch for the trail on the north side of the pass that goes to Divide Lake. Divide Lake Campsite has 10 tent pads, cooking platform, grey water disposal and an outhouse. Please use the cooking platform for cooking. It is conveniently located close to the bear-proof cache to accommodate your cooking needs. Dispose dish water, cooking water, and toothpaste in the grey water barrel to reduce impact on waterbodies and to avoid attracting wildlife. It is very important to reduce our impact by using the tent pads provided, staying on marked trails, not starting fires, and keeping dogs under control at all times. *Camping at Divide Lake requires backcountry camping permits.*

3. Talus Lake

Distance:	6 km one way (from Divide Lake)
Time:	1.5 - 3 hours
Difficulty:	Easy to moderate
Start point:	west side of Divide Lake

Description: When departing from Divide Lake, from the end of the camping area follow the path south then west through the willows towards Tombstone Pass which is in the bottom of the valley. Look for green flagging, which will take you up out of the willows. Talus Lake has 10 tent pads, cooking platform, grey water disposal and an outhouse. Please, use the cooking platform for cooking, and dispose of water in the grey water barrel to avoid attracting wildlife. Please us the Cook Shelter platform for cooking. It is very important to reduce our impact by using the tent pads provided, staying on marked trails, not starting fires, and keeping dogs under control at all times. *Camping at Divide Lake requires backcountry camping permits.*

4. North Klondike Valley - Divide Lake

Distance:	16-18 km
Time:	6-9 hours
Difficulty:	extreme
Start point:	Divide Lake or Tombstone Campground

Description: This route is extremely difficult, potentially dangerous and not recommended. You will encounter thick brush, lots of mud, several creek crossings, and the area is an animal travel corridor so surprise encounters with large mammals are likely. Visibility is poor and the creeks can be noisy. It is recommended to get to/from Divide Lake using the Grizzly Creek/Glissade Pass route instead.

9. Trip Planning

- Plan your trip well in advance.
- Be realistic with your timelines and miles traveled. It's not your destination; it's the route along the way that can make the difference between an enjoyable trip and disaster.
- Know the park regulations and guidelines.
- Plan for all types of weather even in summer; the weather can change in a second and snow can fall any time.
- Plan to be self sufficient for at least 2 days longer than your planned trip. This way you have extra rations if you get lost or weathered in.
- Complete the checklist and leave it with a responsible friend. Notify them of your return.
- Know the type of terrain in which you will travel and the wildlife that lives there.
- Be prepared for Bear country and know what to do if you see a bear.

10. Further reading

There are several books on the market that can help you plan your trip and learn more about the Tombstone region, such as *Traveler's Guide to Yukon's Tombstone Range* and *Blackstone Uplands*. Department of Environment has some safety literature available: *Into the Yukon Wilderness* is an excellent pre trip guide.

11. Pre- Trip Check List

Use this 2 page check list to plan your trip and leave it with a responsible friend

Trip details

Startday.....month.....time

Intended return.....day.....month.....time

Notify RCMP if not back by.....day.....month.....time

Purpose of trip.....

Intended route.....

.....

Intended return route

.....

.....

Finishing at

.....

Maps used (numbers)

.....

.....

Vehicle(s)	Make	Colour	License Plate	Location
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Brief Description of Equipment (Colour of tents, jackets, and packs)



Pre-trip checklist (page 2)

Description of trip members

	Person 1	Person 2	Person 3	Person 4
Last name				
First name				
Age				
Height				
Weight				
Hair and skin colour				
Medical problems				
Physician				
Hat colour				
Coat colour				
Shirt/sweater				
Pant colour				
Footwear type				
language				

Skill profile

Survival training				
Outdoor experience				
First aid				
Avalanche awareness				
Skier				
Snowshoer				
Other				

12. Suggested Backcountry Equipment

Maps

Compass/GPS

Matches/lighter (in a water proof container)

Water bottle

Pocket knife

First aid kit

Flashlight with spare batteries

Sunscreen

Fire starter (for emergency only)

Bear spray

Hat, Balaclava, Gloves (even in mid-summer it can be near freezing)

Rain/wind gear

Thermal underwear

Change of clothes, at least 3 complete sets

Extra socks

Light shoes

Hiking boots

Bear Proof food canister

Cooking stove

Fuel

Cook wear

Eating utensils

Plate and mug

Spatula

Extra Zip lock bags (for packing out garbage)

Tent

Small tarp

Extra pegs

Spare rope/line

Sleeping bag

Sleeping mat

Survival kit

Whistle

13. STAYING SAFE IN BEAR COUNTRY

BE BEAR AWARE

Learn as much as you can about bears (their preferred habitats, seasonal foods etc.) before you come to Tombstone. During your travels be on the lookout for fresh bear tracks and signs. If a bear is present use extra caution. Stay alert and don't camp in the area.

REDUCE ODOURS IN CAMP

Don't bring any smelly foods. Pack food in airtight containers, ziplock bags and keep in a bear proof container. At night keep the container at least 100 metres away from camp or in the bear proof caches. Cook well away from your tent. Don't bring food into your tent. Avoid cosmetics.

DON'T SURPRISE A BEAR

Wear bear bells on your packs, clap your hands or shout or sing when traveling in thick forest, thick willow and near rushing streams. Stay alert and look all around you.

CARRY PEPPER SPRAY

Keep it easily accessible and know how to use it. Do not spray your tent with it because it is an attractant. It is designed to be sprayed right into the bears face from 3 - 5 meters away.

DON'T APPROACH A BEAR

If you see a bear don't approach for a better photo. Take a different route or leave the area altogether.

14. Tombstone Park Guidelines & Area Regulations

Because Tombstone Territorial Park is a pristine environment and any impact on it lasts a very long time we have to set out guidelines for its protection and to ensure visitor satisfaction.

CAMPFIRES

When camping in the Tombstone campground free wood is provided for use within the fire pits. But please try to keep fires small and only after 4.00pm. Our Forests are shrinking! Campfires are not permitted in the Grizzly, Divide and Talus Lakes backcountry campsites. Fires are not advised in the backcountry. There is little or no firewood. It is best to use lightweight stoves for cooking.

CAMPING

Camping at the Tombstone campground is a nominal fee per night \$12.00. Campers self register in the envelopes provided in campgrounds. Firewood is provided for fires in fire circles provided. Please use firewood sparingly and be respectful to other campers down the road. Bonfires are discouraged. Respect fire bans!

HIKER REGISTRATION

Voluntary hiker registration forms are located at all popular routes. This registration is for data purposes only. Please help us determine visitor use that will aid us in future planning. We encourage you to register your overnight trips with a friend for safety reasons and to aid in search and rescue if an accident occurs.

PETS

All pets must be under control at all times.

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

There are many such resources in the Park and it is illegal to damage or remove any of them. Please treat all sites with the respect they deserve and leave them as is.

OFF ROAD VEHICLES

No off road vehicles are allowed off road in the park except along the Hart River Road. Snow machines are allowed but only after 12" of compact snow is present.

WILDLIFE SIGHTINGS

Keep your distance from ALL wildlife. Use binoculars and telephoto lenses for closer study. This is to protect you and to protect their wildness. We invite you to share all your wildlife sightings with the interpretive staff. The information you provide is valuable for data purposes.

15. LEAVE NO TRACE PRINCIPLES

WHAT IS 'LEAVE NO TRACE'?

It means exactly what you might think - to enjoy your outdoor camping adventure to the fullest, and afterwards leave no sign that you were ever there.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Tombstone Territorial Park is becoming increasingly popular. More visitors result in more impact. We can use Leave No Trace practices to protect the unique features and wilderness of Tombstone Territorial Park.

Alpine and sub-alpine areas are among the most fragile ecosystems because of the severe conditions and the short growing season. What may seem like a harmless activity can cause long term damage.

SOME SIMPLE GUIDELINES:

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare
2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
3. Properly Dispose of Waste
4. Leave What You Find
5. Minimize Campfire Impacts
6. Respect Wildlife
7. Be Considerate of Other Visitors