

# The Sport of Rock Sitting

By Suze Hargraves

My friend Kate has introduced me to a new sport. It's called "rock sitting". Wait...how can something called "rock sitting" be a sport? Well, there's a catch to the sitting part. You have to hike to the rock.

Finding your rock takes some preparation. First thing you'll need are good walking shoes or boots. No flimsy footwear please. Consult with one of our many local outdoor equipment stores for the best advice on finding footwear that is appropriate and safe. Easy hikes may seem like a stroll, but conditions on any trail can deteriorate as a result of weather, use and unfortunately, even abuse. A pair of hiking boots will keep you safe and help prevent injury.

Secondly, you need to find a trail that's appropriate for your fitness level. The National Forest Service makes that easy for us. Go to [www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/white\\_mountain/recreation/hiking/index.php](http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/white_mountain/recreation/hiking/index.php) and scroll down on the page to find a list of local hikes complete with level of difficulty, mileage and more. Go easy on yourself for the first few hikes. Work up to more difficult hikes by building up your strength, endurance and general health. Remember that the goal of the hike is to enjoy nature, get some exercise and do some quality rock sitting.

Once you've hiked to your rock, you can do any number of things that enhance your well-being. I highly recommend some quality meditating time, but you may prefer to do some form of art like sketching or photography, spend quite time with a hiking partner or just catch some rays. All of these activities do one thing: they relax you. The object of rock sitting is to relax, enjoy nature and be inspired by our amazing location here in the White Mountains.

No matter where your rock is, there are some things you have to remember to get there safely. The White Mountain National Forest Service and New Hampshire Fish and Game offer important information on the responsibility of hikers and "rock sitters" alike at [hikesafe.com](http://hikesafe.com). You need to know and understand the Hiker Responsibility Code before you go:

## **Hiker Responsibility Code**

**You are responsible for yourself, so be prepared:**

**With knowledge and gear.** Become self reliant by learning about the terrain, conditions, local weather and your equipment before you start.

**To leave your plans.** Tell someone where you are going, the trails you are hiking, when you will return and your emergency plans.

**To stay together.** When you start as a group, hike as a group, end as a group. Pace your hike to the slowest person.

**To turn back.** Weather changes quickly in the mountains. Fatigue and unexpected conditions can also affect your hike. Know your limitations and when to postpone your hike. The mountains will be there another day.

**For emergencies.** Even if you are headed out for just an hour, an injury, severe weather or a wrong turn could become life threatening. Don't assume you will be rescued; know how to rescue yourself.

**To share the hiker code with others.**

Get out there, use your body and find your rock.

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