

Caving with the POC

What is caving?

Caving, or spelunking, is the exploration of underground caverns. It can include walking, crawling, rappelling, and climbing. The enjoyment comes from getting away from this wonder of concrete and red brick, challenging yourself physically and mentally, seeing the beauty of the formations, and generally getting really dirty.

What do I bring for inside the cave?

- Helmet***
 - Main light source *** (POC lights take either three C or three AA batteries. I would suggest the C batteries, they last roughly eight hours. AA lasts about two and a half hours, so if you buy these, bring several sets. Batteries left in the lights from the trip before are no good.)
 - Froggy*** (Or any other small pack to carry your stuff)
 - Caving clothes (you will never wear these clothes outside a cave again. Goodwill is a great source.) One of the best setups starts with poly-pro long underwear. (Avoid cotton.) Add an old wool sweater. (Cotton should be avoided.) For the legs try old dockers. (Denim tends to constrict movement but will work. Again try Goodwill)
 - Socks - poly-pro and wool are the best. Try to avoid cotton, again.
 - Footwear - Old army or hiking boots are the best. They provide better support for the ankles and better traction in the cave mud.
 - Gloves and kneepads are highly recommended.
 - Food - We usually stop on the road for breakfast and dinner. Lunch will be in the cave. Your hands will be muddy, so bring something that can be eaten right out of the wrapper. Also bring something non-alcoholic and non-carbonated to drink.
 - Additional light sources (several per group)
 - First Aid Kit (one per group)
 - Map of the cave
 - Cameras are optional. Don't bring expensive ones. Disposables with a flash are fair for close up pictures. Be sure to put them in something watertight if possible. It is a good idea to put everything in plastic bags or nalgene bottles so it won't get soaked.
 - Nalgene*** can be used to store drink or stuff you don't want crushed like food and batteries, etc.
- *** Can be checked out from the POC

What do I bring for outside the cave?

- A complete change of clothes. (Include a towel and shoes)
- A large trash bag to put your dirty things in. You can carry this bag folded up inside your helmet to use for emergency warmth while in the cave as well.
- Money for food and gas.

Is caving dangerous?

If you're not careful, then caving can be very dangerous. But the POC is careful. Only seasoned veterans can lead trips. We carry maps and look over our shoulder, because things look very different on the way back out. We also carry first aid kits and are trained in first aid.

What is the NSS?

The National Speleological Society is an organization for the advancement of cave exploration. We are trying to firmly establish the POC grotto status with the NSS. The more members we get the better we stand with the NSS. Student membership in the NSS is \$22 per year. The POC will pay ten of that, if you show a genuine interest in caving.

Final Reminders

Unless otherwise specified, trips will leave from the back of the Co-Rec. Please have your food, batteries, and a full tank of gas ahead of time. Depending on the trip and destination, a Wal-Mart stop may be possible, especially on callouts. Contact the caving consultant if you have further questions.

Take nothing but pictures, leave nothing but footprints, kill nothing but time