

The Burgin Guide

Burning Man Virgins - Start here!

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Before you start

NOTE: I really can't stress this enough, but PLEASE read everything, and take it very seriously!

Assumptions

This documentation project is written with the following assumptions:

- You have never attended Burning Man before
- You're either a member of the **New York Dangerous** camp or you plan to join
- You plan to attend Burning Man @ August 2024
- You have a ticket, or you plan to purchase one

No other assumptions are made, which means this book will attempt to cover everything else, including how to get to Burning Man, what to expect, what to bring, what not to bring, etc.

Create your burner profile

Proceed to <https://profiles.burningman.org/> and create your profile.

Join the NYD Discord Chat

This is where we coordinate with each other, before and after a burn:

<https://discord.nyd.nyc>

Join the NYD Facebook Community

Login to your Facebook and navigate to this group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/NYDangerous/>

And if you are attending the event with the camp, also join this group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/963784897972212>

Read the official survival guide

This is the official BM Survival Guide, read the whole thing! In fact, read it twice:

<https://survival.burningman.org/>

And watch this:

<https://vimeo.com/348884109/0e693cb310>

Some fine folks made this packing list, which is pretty exhaustive (and potentially exhausting!):

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/u/0/d/1t2KvCRFsTvoLiFeo9ewsCgPUFzfgo0Re3AgDq05AdIU/pub?output=html>

And this is a new version of what used to be a legendary Google Doc:

<https://hackmd.io/@climent/Syx6QseMc>

Pay your camp dues

Camp dues change as BM approaches, starting at \$300 on January 1st and stepping up every month:

- On January 1st: \$300
- After February 1st: \$350
- After March 1st: \$400
- After April 1st: \$450
- After May 1st: \$500
- Until August 1st: \$525
- After August 1st: \$600 (Sparkle Pony Rate)

Venmo the dues

Welcome to Black Rock City

Black Rock City, the temporary metropolis created for Burning Man, presents a unique and challenging environment that demands preparation and adaptability. The weather can be extreme, with scorching hot days and surprisingly cold nights. Daytime temperatures often reach well over 90°F (32°C), while nighttime temperatures can plummet to 40°F (4°C) or lower. Participants must pack a wide range of clothing to handle these temperature fluctuations.

Moreover, the playa, the vast alkaline lakebed on which Black Rock City is constructed, is infamous for its dusty conditions. As the event progresses, the playa becomes covered in a fine dust, making goggles, dust masks, and bandanas essential for protecting your eyes and respiratory system. The dust can be invasive, getting into everything, including tents, clothing, and food, so it's crucial to seal belongings in containers and keep them off the ground.

Participants should also be wary of "playa foot," a condition where the alkaline dust and constant walking can cause dry, cracked, and irritated skin on the feet. Wearing closed-toe shoes and regularly moisturizing the feet can help prevent this discomfort.

Despite these challenges, Burning Man's unique environment fosters a sense of community, creativity, and self-expression. Embracing the conditions with preparedness and an open mind allows participants to fully engage in this extraordinary experience and be part of an ever-changing, awe-inspiring temporary city in the heart of the desert.

Playa Dust

These amazing folks went to the Playa before anyone else could get there, in order to collect data about Playa dust in various conditions, and in a controlled environment:

<https://particlecamp.org/particles-playa-baseline/>

Highly recommend you read this, as you consider bringing various types of equipment to the Playa.

The 10 Principles

The TL;DR Version

Here's a super short bullet list of the 10 principles of Burning Man for complete newbies:

1. **Radical Inclusion:** Embrace all and welcome diversity.
2. **Gifting:** Give without expecting anything in return.
3. **Decommodification:** Create a culture free from commercial influence.
4. **Radical Self-Reliance:** Be self-sufficient and accountable for yourself.
5. **Radical Self-Expression:** Celebrate and express your true self freely.
6. **Communal Effort:** Collaborate and work together to build a community.
7. **Civic Responsibility:** Respect rules and take care of the environment.
8. **Leave No Trace:** Clean up after yourself, leaving the place as you found it.
9. **Participation:** Actively engage and contribute to the experience.
10. **Immediacy:** Live in the present and fully embrace the moment.

These principles form the core values of Burning Man and guide the event's unique culture of creativity, community, and self-expression. Below is the original version that is a bit more specific. If you have never seen this list, please read it carefully.

The original (slightly longer) version

Radical Inclusion

Anyone may be a part of Burning Man. We welcome and respect the stranger. No prerequisites exist for participation in our community.

Gifting

Burning Man is devoted to acts of gift-giving. The value of a gift is unconditional. Gifting does not contemplate a return or an exchange for something of equal value.

De-commodification

In order to preserve the spirit of gifting, our community seeks to create social environments that are unmediated by commercial sponsorships, transactions, or advertising.

Radical Self-Reliance

Burning Man encourages the individual to discover, exercise, and rely on his or her inner resources.

Radical Self-Expression

Radical self-expression arises from the unique gifts of the individual. No one other than the individual or a collaborating group can determine its content. It is offered freely as a gift to others. In this spirit, the giver should respect the rights and liberties of the recipient.

Communal Effort

Our community values creative cooperation and collaboration. We strive to produce, promote, and protect social networks, public spaces, works of art, and methods of communication that support such interaction. We work collectively as a Camp and as Burners to make sure everyone has their best experience possible.

Civic Responsibility

We value civil society. Community members who organize events should assume responsibility for public welfare and endeavor to communicate civic responsibilities to participants, conducting events in accordance with local, state, and federal laws.

Leaving No Trace

Our community respects the environment. We are committed to leaving no physical trace of our activities wherever we gather. We clean up after ourselves and endeavor, whenever possible, to leave such places in a better state than when we found them.

Participation

Our community is committed to a radically participatory ethic. We believe that transformative change, whether in the individual or in society, can occur only through the medium of deeply personal participation. We achieve being through doing. Everyone is invited to work.

Immediacy

Immediate experience is, in many ways, the most important touchstone of value in our culture. We seek to overcome barriers that stand between us and a recognition of our inner selves, the reality of those around us, participation in society, and contact with a natural world exceeding human powers.

Checklist - What to bring

Basic mandated necessities

Due to the extreme climate at Black Rock City, Burning Man has specific guidelines and requirements for attendees, and while it's essential to be well-prepared, they do not have an exhaustive list of basic necessities that will result in denial of entrance. However, here are some crucial things that every attendee should have to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience:

- Ticket
- Government-Issued ID
- Personal Shelter
- Enough Water (1.5 Gallons per day)
- A large enough reusable water bottle
- Food and Snacks
- Appropriate Clothing
- Sunscreen and Sun Protection
- Lighting
- Trash Bags
- Positive Attitude and Respect

Same list but with explanations

1. **Ticket:** You must have a valid ticket for the event to enter Black Rock City.
2. **Government-Issued ID:** A valid photo ID, such as a driver's license or passport, is necessary for identity verification.
3. **Personal Shelter:** You need some form of shelter, like a tent or RV, to protect yourself from the elements.
4. **Enough Water:** You must bring enough drinking water to sustain yourself for the duration of your stay. The desert environment is harsh, and staying hydrated is crucial. BM recommends 1.5 Gallons per day.
5. **Food and Snacks:** Bring an adequate supply of non-perishable food and snacks to keep you energized throughout the event.
6. **Appropriate Clothing:** Pack clothing suitable for hot days and cold nights in the desert. Be prepared for extreme temperature variations. There will also be dust storms, bring a mask and dust goggles.
7. **Sunscreen and Sun Protection:** The sun can be intense, so bring sunscreen, hats, sunglasses, and other forms of sun protection.
8. **Lighting:** Bring lights or headlamps to navigate the city at night, as it can get dark.
9. **Trash Bags:** Burning Man has a strict "Leave No Trace" policy, so you must be prepared to pack out all your trash and dispose of it properly.
10. **Positive Attitude and Respect:** While not a tangible item, a positive and respectful attitude is essential for the communal experience at Burning Man.

Keep in mind that this list is not exhaustive, and there may be additional items you'd like to bring for your comfort and safety. Burning Man encourages participants to be self-reliant and to prepare for a wide range of conditions. Always check the official Burning Man website for the latest guidelines and requirements before attending the event.

Optional: Radio

BM runs a Radio Station called BMIR on 94.5 FM. Bringing a radio capable of tuning to that station is a good way to stay in touch with what's going on.

Extra comfort items

BM has been going on for a while, which means:

- The event has grown, resulting in phenomenons such as the Exodus (Can take 8 hours sometimes!)
- A bunch of things are now known to either be working, or not working, at Black Rock City
- People have come up with a list of things that enhance comfort during and after the event

Luxury items

This is not an exhaustive list. Please add your own items you feel have enhanced your experience:

- A good pair of **comfortable** sunglasses (duh).
- Ear plugs that are comfortable enough to sleep with.
- Protective gloves for when you need to do physical labor.
- Chapstick for your lips & Vaseline for your nose, it can get pretty dry out there.
- Body lotion, for your face, neck, arms, hands, and feet. Your skin will get super dry if you don't use this.
- Saline Nasal Spray to clean your sinuses from Playa Dust.
- A fresh set of comfortable clothes, packed in a ziplock bag, to wear during or right after the Exodus.
- Sanitary wipes for the Porta Potties (aka "Portos") / Shower Wipes (anti-bacterial).
- One last battery bank you avoid using during the event, to charge your device(s) during/after Exodus.
- Bag with camel back drinking bag + extra mouth piece (they tend to break)

Extra Luxurious Playa Experience

- eBike + A way to store the eBike Key

Facilities

Power

The camp has solar panels, which charge a 14KW/h LiFePO4 battery bank. This provides enough power for the two fridges, two freezers in the kitchen, as well as the DJ equipment in the lounge, the radio station, and air conditioning for the kitchen and kitchen radio.

As for how **you** can use it: The camp can only provide power for the charging small devices such as phones, tablets, lights/flashlights, portable speakers, etc. so you should not count on getting any more power than that.

RVs will have to have to rely on their own power / generators, since camp power system is already spoken for, and not enough will be left to power even a single RV. So in other words, if you need more power than is needed to charge a phone, bring your own.

First Aid

We should have first-aid kits in the camp. If the injury or illness are too much for the camp to handle, there are **Emergency Services medical stations** on the 3:00 and 5:00 plazas, and on the Esplanade at 5:15. All stations are identifiable by a red cross on top of the buildings. The stations are staffed by emergency health care providers (doctors, nurses, medics, etc.) who donate their time and medical expertise to the city as their gift to us all.

Showers

Showers are part of camp services, and remember to only use them when absolutely needed. It is entirely possible to clean yourself with sanitary anti-bacterial wipes. If you do shower, wet yourself quickly, close the water, soap up, and then rinse yourself as quickly as possible. Getting rid of the gray water the showers produce is complicated. It has to either be evaporated, or picked up by expensive grey water elimination services. If too much grey water accumulates, and if not properly treated, bacteria / mold / viruses may grow in that water, making them into black water which may also stink, pose a health risk, and is more complicated to dispose of.

Whatever you do, **do not pee in the showers**, and use simple soaps such as Dr. Bronners.

Bathrooms

Portable toilets will be provided for all participants and are serviced regularly. Use these facilities only for their intended purpose — not for dumping garbage or your personal potty bags. Putting anything other than human waste and one-ply toilet paper (2-ply or other kinds of toilet paper damages USS servicing equipment) into the portable toilets makes pumping nearly impossible and threatens the survival of the Burning Man event. **DO NOT PUT TAMPONS, TRASH OR HANDY WIPES in the portable toilets. THIS MEANS YOU!! IF IT WASN'T MADE BY YOUR BODY, DON'T PUT IT IN THE**

POTTY!!

Put the toilet lid down when you're done, as it helps keep odors under control.