

Notes on Climbing Mt. Hakusan

1. Watch the weather. Conditions can change quickly in the mountains, particularly on a high peak like Hakusan. Even if the weather looks good, be sure to check the forecast, and be prepared to cancel or change plans, especially during typhoon season. Hike or climb at your own risk, and do not climb at night.
2. Hakusan is an active volcano. Be sure to check conditions and warnings before beginning your climb.
3. Arrive early. Hiking in the dark is dangerous, so start from the trailhead early. If you're staying on the mountain, arrive at the hut or camping ground at least a few hours before sunset.
4. Be ready for emergencies. Always carry rainwear, warm clothing, a change of clothes, plenty of water, and emergency food.
5. Share your plans. Everyone climbing Hakusan is required to fill out climb report forms before starting the ascent. These forms are available at all trailheads. Be sure to inform friends or family of your route and schedule as well.
6. Look, but don't touch. The National Parks Act forbids the collection of animals, plants, or rocks from the mountain. Bringing foreign plants or animals into the park is also forbidden. Anyone caught doing so will be fined.
7. Stay on marked trails. For your own safety and to protect the delicate alpine plant life and the mountain itself, avoid going off-trail.
8. Warn the bears. If hiking alone, use bear bells, a radio, or other means of making noise to alert bears to your presence and avoid startling them. Attacks are rare, but all hikers should take precautions.
9. Hike off-peak. From late July through August, the trails and huts will be crowded on weekends or holidays. Visit on weekdays to avoid the crowds.
10. Watch for winter-like conditions in spring and autumn. Even on warm days, conditions on the mountain can quickly turn cold and snowy. Always check weather forecasts and carry clothing and gear appropriate for snowy conditions.
11. Carry out your garbage. There are no garbage disposal facilities on the mountain, so climbers are required to carry out everything they bring in.
12. Bicycles or other wheeled vehicles are not allowed on Hakusan.
13. Camping in tents is only allowed at Minami Ryugabanba.

In case of emergencies, dial 110 for the police. English-speaking officers are not common, so speak slowly and use a few key words, such as "Hakusan," "climbing," and "accident." The police will contact a translator and return your call. If you are using a mobile phone, they will usually be able to pinpoint your location.

