

# Blaze Your Own Trail



METROPARKS  
TOLEDO



If you've hiked any of the trails at your Metroparks you know they are marked with colored trail signposts like this.



Other parks and National Scenic Trails are marked with blazes – painted slashes on trees along the trail:



In areas where there are not as many trees, rocks are used to show the way:

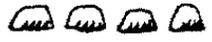
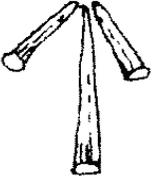
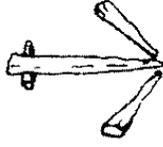
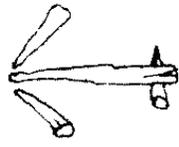
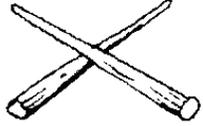
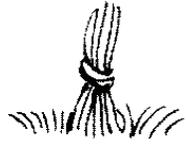
Unlike the modern marker at the top of the page, early pioneers and native peoples used slashes in tree bark at about eye level to guide their way to springs, good hunting areas or back to their homes.

Sometimes trees were bent into distinctive formations to make them easy to see from afar. One such “signal” tree in Texas, OH, is thought to mark a safe river crossing on the Maumee River. Not all deformed trees are signal trees as some trees are naturally deformed by lightning or other trees falling on them. Look at these well-known signal trees from White County, IN (top) and Akron, OH (bottom).

You can make your own backyard trail for someone else to follow using items found outdoors – sticks, stones, leaves or seeds. **Use the trail sign list on the back of this sheet** or make up your own trail key and challenge a friend or a family member to follow your trail. You could lead them to something cool that you've discovered – a nest, a hole in a tree, a tunnel dug by a winter mammal, or maybe a flower pushing its way up through the soil. Once they've followed the path you built have them make one for you to follow.



# Trail Signs

	STRAIGHT AHEAD	TURN RIGHT	TURN LEFT	DO NOT GO THIS WAY
ROCKS				
PEBBLES				
STICKS				
LONG GRASS				
NUMBER OF PACES IN DIRECTION INDICATED				
I HAVE GONE HOME				