TRAILS OF HACKETTSTOWN STATE PARK

Tucked within Hackettstown State Park are nine official trails, totaling almost five miles. For such a small area, the terrain is quite diverse and encompasses mixed hardwood upland forests, hillsides, a hemlock ravine, and freshwater stream environments. The Black River, fed by the Trout and Rhinehart Brooks, runs through the middle of the park. The Black River is flanked by massive boulders that create scenic pools and waterfalls. There are numerous picnic tables tucked in among the forest and along the stream. The trails of Hackettstown allow for exploration and enjoyment of this glacial valley.

Haki Trail
LT Blue • 0.32 miles • Hiking Moderate • Connector trail to river on gravel path

Trailhead On Main Trail about 0.4 miles from the parking lot. Haki Trail gently descends along the forested hillside above the Black River. The trail joins the river just at the confluence where Trout Brook and the Black River meet. There is a restroom building and many picnic tables in this area. The confluence of the brook and river is a very scenic location.

Main Trail
White • 0.7 miles • Hiking Easy • Runs through middle of park and connects to all trails

Trailhead At the southeast corner of the main parking lot. Main Trail travels the forested ravine hillside beginning along Trout Brook, turns south above the Black River and ends along Rhinehart Brook. The five-foot-wide packed gravel trail runs through the middle of the park, providing access to most of the other trails. The high point of the trail is on a shallow ridge with picnic tables among a grove of trees across from the playground. A walk down Main Trail and returning on Riverside Trail is a great way to see much of the park and its unique areas.

Playground Trail
Green • 0.35 miles • Hiking Easy • Shortcut to playground area

Trailhead Off park entrance road just past the maintenance building. Look for small road and gate on left. Playground Trail heads southeast on a five-foot-wide asphalt path through a hardwood forest. The trail runs along a hillside and leads directly to the playground area, then continues to join with Main Trail across from the picnic area.

Riverside Trail
Red • 1.8 miles • Hiking Moderate • Follows along river edge

Trailhead On left (east) side of Main Trail, approximately 0.75 yards from park office. Riverside Trail, the longest trail, leads the visitor along the three major waterways in the park. Trout Brook and Rhinehart Brook are both tributaries which flow into the Black River. Riverside Trail follows a single-track, dirt path with natural obstacles as it travels alongside the creeks of this rocky ravine. Riverside Trail is very scenic with vistas, waterfalls and pools, fishing access, and many picnic tables along the way. Trail conditions vary depending on weather and water levels.

Three Pools Trail
Blue • 0.12 miles • Hiking Easy • Six-foot-wide, packed gravel

Trailhead On Main Trail approximately 0.5 miles from the parking lot. Three Pools Trail descends along a moderate grade hillside and leads down into the ravine along the Black River to scenic flat-water pools in between small drop-off and cascades.

Upland Trail
Pink • 0.5 miles • Hiking Easy • Loop trail along ridge

Trailhead On Playground Trail. Upland Trail loops around the wooded uplands above the Black River. The trail leaves and rejoins Playground Trail and travels through hardwoods and cedar trees on a packed gravel and grass-covered path. There is a viewing platform and overlook on the north side.

Waterfall Trail
Purple • 0.1 miles • Hiking Moderate • Short trail to waterfalls on Trout Brook

Trailhead On Main Trail. Waterfall Trail is a short trail that descends from Main Trail and joins Trout Brook just above a series of waterfalls and pools. The trail is a six-foot-wide asphalt and gravel path that descends a moderate grade slope to meet with Trout Brook. There is a wide bridge to cross to connect to Riverside Trail. Just downstream of the bridge, the creek drops over a series of large boulders with small pools and cascades.