

Safe Kite Flying

Do you have a clear space to fly? A bystander walking under your kite could get injured. Very taut lines, especially if made of nonstretch Kevlar or similar fibers, can cut and wound.

Is a source of electricity near? Since a strong gust or unexpected windshift may cause you to alter your position, keep at least 100 yards clear of even smaller electric cables. Be aware that power companies are prepared to sue over damage to their property.

Are you in control of your kite in the wind conditions present? If you are being dragged by the wind, consider what might happen if a strong gust occurred.

Similarly, do you have the correct line for the wind conditions present? If the line broke, would your kite land safely?

If you are flying near a roadway, consider the potential distraction factor in your flying. If a driver watching your kite perform loses attention, a motorway pileup could occur.

If you fly near an airport's traffic zone, do not endanger aircraft by your actions. If you fly there regularly, consider contacting the airport and informing control officers to alert them.

Does your flying disturb wildlife? Noisy kites-----particularly loud stunts-----can cause action by conservationists. Kiteflying may be banned in a whole area, and not just a specific nature center.

Since human safety easily evolves into animal safety, it is worth pointing out that animals are known to gnaw on and even eat kite materials left behind, notably string. Swans have been known to ingest fishing line, to their detriment. For esthetic and humane reasons, clean up your flying area before you leave it.

Excerpted from the U.K. Kiteflier newsletter

Kite

*So many things our children love!
They love kites, among others.
Once flying, the kites are like the dove,
Shining beyond words.
Starring in the blue of the sky,
The children unite with their kites,
Into the freedom, up and high.*

*And when their kites,
Snap lines
From the small hands,
So happy, so very happy they grow,
Though they well know
That the kites are gone*

And never back will they come back.

*Should we frown at their indifference?
For it is their lives
Flying away with clouds?
But are these children not
Like the kites?*

*How shiny are the kites we had
But where are they now, does anybody know?
How we doted on them!
But now our hands hold which lines?*

(Turkish poem forwarded by Wim de Wildt, Holland)