

Your Adventure Your Way

Explore the world around you with OS Maps. Routes, mapping and navigation across the UK whenever and wherever you need it.

Find out more at os.uk/osm



Scan to download the app:



YHA Members: Head to the member benefits area at yha.org.uk/walk-os to find your discount code for an OS Maps Premium subscription

Hazards

This is a high-level mountain route so proper preparation and equipment is necessary. The higher parts of the route regularly have low visibility, make sure you know where you are at all times and have a map and compass for navigation. In winter conditions the route will become slippery and dangerous, especially when covered in snow and ice – mountaineering skills and equipment will be required. The high sections are very exposed to winds and storms with limited shelter. Steep drops alongside the path in places. Careful navigation required throughout but especially on leaving the summit of Fairfield. Road crossings. Some walking on lanes and narrow roads without pavements. Do not cross Galava Fort if the river is flooded, remain on Borrans Road. May be cattle grazing near the fort.

Accessibility

This is a physical route with stiles and narrow, steep and rocky paths – hands may be required in places.

Facilities

Toilets at YHA, in Ambleside and Rydal Hall. Shops – including walking shops in Ambleside. Food and drink at YHA, in Ambleside, Rydal Mount (seasonal) and Rydal Hall.

Before you go:

- Check the local weather forecast and whether there is enough daylight to complete the walk (metoffice.gov.uk).
- Ensure you are wearing suitable clothing and footwear for the route and weather, and that you take the right kit – learn more at yha.org.uk/walk-skills.
- Download the OS Maps and what3words apps to your phone.
- To be able to contact emergency services by text visit relayuk.bt.com/emergencysms or text 'register' to 999.
- For more information on staying safe in the outdoors visit adventuresmart.uk.
- Complete a route notification card (yha.org.uk/route-card) to provide essential information for the Emergency Services if you do not return when expected.
- Check all members of the group have the fitness and skills to complete the route.

In case of emergency:

- Contact 999 and use OS Maps or what3words to help pinpoint your location.
- To attract attention shout or give six blasts on a whistle at regular intervals. In low light flash a torch six times at regular intervals.
- If you can send someone for help, they need to know your location, number of people in the group and the nature of the emergency.

For more walks or information on route grading and timings go to yha.org.uk/map-guidance

If you encounter problems with this route contact walking@yha.org.uk

Walking has been at the heart of YHA since 1930, helping people access the great outdoors. Today, YHA continues to make adventures possible with mapped routes and affordable hostel stays across England and Wales. Our hostels are ideal for walkers, with drying rooms, self-catering kitchens, and great trails from the doorstep. We're committed to making adventure accessible to everyone, with walks for all abilities and guided walking events that connect people to nature, heritage, and each other.

Supported by

Share your walks



Produced by Matt Overd (<https://walkingpace.uk>). Contributions from Ludwik Michalek, Simon Lightowler & Simon Ainley. Designed by HeylinSmith.com. Cover image: Nigel/AdobeStock



Fairfield Horseshoe walk



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YHA Ambleside

Book your stay now yha.org.uk/stay-181

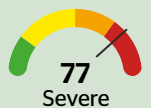
Mountain walk

A long and strenuous, but fairly straightforward mountain walk bagging the Wainwright summits of Heron Pike, Great Rigg, Fairfield, Hart Crag, Dove Crag, High Pike and Low Pike. Superb views throughout or an opportunity to practice compass navigation if the cloud is down!

Distance: 13.5 miles (21.7km)

Ascent: 1,103m (3,619ft)

Time: Allow 7h 45m to 12h



Partnered with



Route directions

Map: OS Explorer 1:25k (OL7) English Lakes – South-eastern area and OS Explorer 1:25k (OL5) English Lakes – North-eastern area

Start/Finish: Grid ref NY 376 030
what3words ///jots.feasts.cliff

- 1 From the hostel turn right, cross the car park and head alongside the lake.
- 2 Bear right to Borrans Road and turn left.
- 3 Turn left into the park and bear right to pass the remains of Galava Fort.
- 4 Continue to the river and turn right.
- 5 Turn left, then bear right before the bridge onto Rothay Road (signposted Town Centre) and pass the playing fields.
- 6 Turn left onto Compston Road.
- 7 Turn left onto Rydal Road.
- 8 After crossing the beck at Scandale Bridge turn right onto the track through the iron gates.
- 9 Follow the track past Rydal Hall.
- 10 Turn right onto the small road, head steeply uphill and follow signs for the steep ascent of Nab Scar. Remain on this path to Heron Pike.
- 11 Continue to Great Rigg and Fairfield.
- 12 Carefully identify the correct onward path east. Follow a line of cairns to Hart Crag and continue to Dove Crag, High Pike and Low Pike.
- 13 At High Brock Crag take the footpath on the left to High Sweden Coppice. This path avoids the scrambly outcrops on the path alongside the wall.
- 14 Cross Scandale Beck onto Nook Lane.
- 15 Turn left onto Smithy Brow, right onto North Road and left onto Rydal Road.
- 16 Turn right onto Market Place, continue onto Lake Road and to the hostel.

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Scan this link to view this route on the OS Maps App – also a route profile and GPX


1km / ½mile

 Café/Takeaway/Shop

 Toilets

 Pub

Steep gradient  over 20%  over 30%

OS map legend - find out what the other symbols on this map mean os.uk/explorerlegend



This route has been created by YHA to provide inspiration and to aid planning and preparation of your walk. It doesn't replace the need for an OS Map or the OS Maps App to navigate your walk safely. Digital maps are a guide and do not always reflect the conditions on the ground, ensure you are aware of your immediate surroundings.

