

Your Adventure Your Way

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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

Some walking on lanes and narrow roads without pavements. 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 or app for navigation. In winter conditions the route could be hazardous, especially if covered in snow and ice, and will require winter clothing and footwear. Cat Bells is steep in places with some minor scrambles which will be slippery after rain. Deep water close to the route. If the lake is flooded it may be necessary to identify alternative paths.

Accessibility

There are stiles and steps on the route and paths and less than one metre wide. Terrain is a mixture of tarmac, good path and steep and uneven paths, with some light scrambling. Some paths may be overgrown. Buses available to various points on the route in summer and the Keswick Launch boat service stops at Hawse End Jetty, the closest to Cat Bells – check times before leaving.

Facilities

Toilets in Keswick Bell Close and Booths supermarket. Pubs and lots of places to eat and drink in Keswick. Pub and café in Portinscale, café at Spring Wood, Lingholm and Nichol End. Public bars in some hotels.

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/emercencysms 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, Tom Day & Simon Ainley. Designed by HeylinSmith.com. Cover image: Ludwik Michalek



Walla Crag and Cat Bells walk



203

YHA Keswick

Book your stay now yha.org.uk/stay-203

Hill walk

A stunning walk with an elevated circuit of Derwent Water. Includes an alternative route returning along the edge of Derwent Water after Walla Crag.

Distance: 12.1 miles (19.4km)

Ascent: 841m (2,759ft)

Time: Allow 6h 45m to 10h 15m



Partnered with



Route directions

Map: OS Explorer 1:25k (OL4) English Lakes
— North-western area

Start/Finish: Grid ref NY 267 235

what3words ///thankful.square.blogging

- 1** From the hostel head up the steps and turn right onto Station Street. Cross over at the traffic lights and bear left onto Southey Street.
- 2** Turn right onto Acorn Street, left onto Ambleside Road and right onto Springs Road.
- 3** Continue ahead towards Springs Wood, bear left at the tea rooms and follow the clearly marked path uphill through the wood. The path becomes narrow with steep drops in places.
- 4** Cross the Beck, turn right onto the road and bear right at the sign to Walla Crag.
- 5** Cross the footbridge and follow the path uphill.
- 6** Bear right to follow the path uphill alongside the wall.
- 7** At the cairn, pass through the gate and bear left across the top of Walla Crag - do not get too close to the edge - then follow the path towards the wall.
- 8** Cross the stile and follow the obvious route downhill to the road at Ashness Bridge.
- 9** Turn left and cross the bridge, then follow the road into the woods.
- 10** Bear right onto the obvious path through the woods.
- 11** Turn right, cross Watendlath Beck and follow the well used path through woods to the B5289.
- 12** Turn left and pass Borrowdale Hotel. Take the footpath on the right and follow the track and boardwalk towards the lake. This area often floods it may be necessary to divert on the road via Grange.
- 13** For Cat Bells turn left and cross the bridge known locally as Chinese Bridge. Or to head back alongside the lake turn right.
- 13a** Turn left onto the path beside the B5289, pass the Lodore Falls Hotel and continue along the road.
- 13b** Turn right onto the signposted footpath and follow alongside the road, through the woods.
- 13c** Cross the road at Kettlewell car park and head over the wooden bridge parallel to the road. Then follow the lakeside path (or the roadside path if the water level is high) past Barrow Bay, Lord's Island and Friar's Crag to Lake Road.
- 13d** Bear left and follow the path alongside the park. At the cafe bear right, pass under the subway and turn right onto Lake Road.



Walla Crag and Cat Bells

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



Walla Crag and lakeside

Scan this link to view the route

Distance: 10.1 miles (16.3km)

Ascent: 499m (1,637ft)

Grade: 52 **Time:** Allow 5h 15m to 8h 15m

- 13e** At the road junction turn left, turn right at the square by the Moot Hall and right again (go to **23**).
- 14** Bear left and continue to the road.
- 15** Turn right and after the houses in Manesty take the path on the left.
- 16** Bear left and follow the well-used, steep and rocky track uphill. At the ridge bear right over Cat Bells, then down Skelgill Bank.
- 17** At the road junction follow the sign to Portinscale.
- 18** At the sharp bend in the road take the footpath ahead and follow clear paths through meadows and woodland to Nichol End.
- 19** Bear left and continue to the road, then turn right to Portinscale.
- 20** At the junction turn right, pass the Derwentwater Hotel and cross the river.
- 21** Turn right and follow the good path towards Keswick.
- 22** Turn right, cross the River Greta onto Main Street and head along the pedestrianised road.
- 23** Turn onto Station Street and to the hostel.

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.

