

Walla Crag and Cat Bells

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

Fell walk

Distance: 12 miles (19.3km) **Ascent:** 846m (2,776ft)

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

Map: OS Explorer 1:25k (OL04) English Lakes – North-western area

Start/Finish: OS Locate NY 267 235 **what3words** ///thankful.square.blogging



A stunning walk with an elevated circuit of Derwent Water. From the hostel turn right onto Station Road and bear right onto Southey Street. Turn right onto Acorn Street, left onto Ambleside Road and right onto Springs Road to Springs Wood. Follow the clearly marked path uphill through the wood, which becomes narrow with steep drops in places. Cross the Beck, turn right onto the road and bear right at the sign to Walla Crag. Cross the footbridge and follow the path uphill. Cross the stile and traverse the top of Walla Crag – take care not to get too close to the edge. Cross another stile and follow the obvious route downhill to Ashness Bridge, turn left onto the road, then bear right onto an obvious path through the woods. Turn right, cross Watendlath Beck and follow the well used path through woods to the B5289. Turn left, pass Borrowdale Hotel and take the footpath on the right. Follow the track and board walk to the edge of the lake, then bear left to the road. Turn right and after the houses in Manesty take the path on the left. Follow the well used, steep and rocky track up to Cat Bells, then along the top and head down on a very well used path with some scrambling in places. At the road junction follow the sign to Portinscale. At the sharp bend in the road take the footpath ahead and follow clear and easy paths through meadows and woodland to Nichol End. Turn right onto the road to Portinscale. At the village turn right, pass the Derwentwater Hotel, cross the river and take the good path on the right to High Hill. Turn right, cross the river onto Main Street, along the pedestrianised area, left onto Station Street and back to the hostel.

Hazards

Caution on road sections, many do not have pavements. Some light scrambles on the descent from Cat Bells. 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. Scrambles on the descent from Cat Bells will be slippery after rain. Do not take this route if the area south of Derwent Water is flooded – continue to Grange to cross the river.

Accessibility

There are stiles and steps on the route and gates and paths 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 with brambles, nettles, holly and low hanging branches.

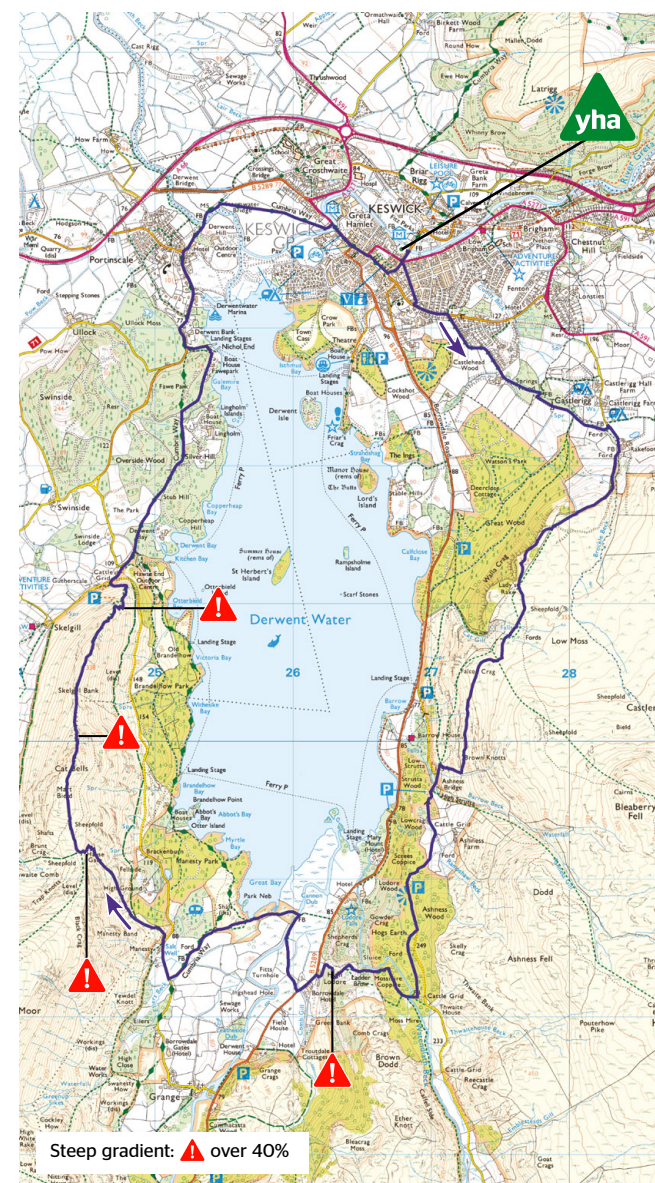
Points of interest

The route is all about the far reaching views and the flora and fauna of deciduous woods, marsh and moors.

Facilities

Toilets in Keswick Bell Close and Booths supermarket. Pubs and lots of places to eat and drink in Keswick. Cafés on route including at Springs Wood, the Borrowdale Hotel, Lingholm, Nichol End and Portinscale.

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.



Steep gradient: ⚠ over 40%



Thank you for choosing to walk from our hostel.
We hope you have a great time.

Walking in the national landscapes of England and Wales is part of YHA's heritage. With hostels on National Trails, in National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, YHA plays a unique role in the nation's walking community.

To make it easy for everyone to enjoy walking from YHA hostels, we have curated three walks – an easy, moderate, and more challenging option. They have all been graded – the higher the grade, the more challenging the route.

Before you go:

- Check the local weather forecast (mwis.org.uk).
- Check the tide times for coastal routes (tidetimes.org.uk).
- Get the right clothing, footwear and kit for the route and weather.
- Ensure you have enough time to complete the route before dark.
- Download the OS Locate and what3words apps to your phone.
- Contact 999 by SMS text (must pre register by texting 'register' to 999) (relayuk.bt.com/emergencysms).
- Plan your walk by completing the YHA route notification card it helps Emergency Services if you get into difficulties or fail to return from your walk when anticipated (yha.org.uk/route-card).
- Ensure your entire group have the fitness and skills to complete the route.
- For further information on how to stay safe visit adventuresmart.uk

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

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



Scan or click to shop
for OS maps online
osmaps.com/yha

Share your walks



What to wear

- Base layer and mid layer.
- Walking trousers.
- Warm jacket(s).
- Take extra layer(s).
- Hat, gloves and neck gaiter.
- Sun hat, sun cream and sunglasses.
- Waterproof jacket and trousers.
- Cushioning walking socks.
- Walking shoes or boots.

Kit

- Map, compass and GPS device or OS Map app on your phone.
- Water, lunch and high energy snacks.
- Charged mobile phone and portable charger.
- First aid kit.
- Head torch, spare batteries.
- Watch.
- Whistle and survival bag.
- Rucksack, with waterproof cover or a dry bag or plastic bag inside.
- Medicines or toiletries you would usually use.

You might also want to take

- Spare socks, hat, gloves.
- Balaclava.
- Leg gaiters.
- Waterproof baseball cap (handy if you wear glasses).
- Walking poles.

- Bivi bag or group shelter.
- Spare food and hot drink.
- Duct tape (handy for fixing things).
- Penknife or multitool.
- Tissues and hand sanitiser.
- Plastic bags to take away your rubbish or dog poo.

In case of emergency

- Call 999 (or text 999 if pre-registered) and ask for the Police.
- Use OS Locate or what3words to provide a detailed description of your location.
- If you need to attract attention shout or give six blasts on a whistle at regular intervals. In low light flash your torch six times at regular intervals.
- If you can send someone for help, they need to know your location (grid reference), number of people in the group and the nature of the emergency.
- Help could be some time coming so whilst waiting make the casualty comfortable.
- Keep the casualty warm and dry using spare clothing. Use coats or rucksacks to insulate them from the ground.
- Remember the rest of the group could be getting cold whilst waiting. Use an emergency shelter or find a sheltered location.