

WALK 73.
RESERVOIRS 73.
22.2 miles. 6 hours 20 minutes.
Map Dark Peak.



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Start at Fairholmes car park below Derwent Dam (171898). Walk N on the W side of the reservoir as far as Howden Dam, then follow it into the Westend Inlet. Where the road does a U-turn, leave on the L and take a stile to the L of a gate at 154928. Walk NE through Ditch Clough Plantation as far as a footbridge for vehicles. Continue NW with stream on the L. walking on a hard, dirt track for taking shooters to the grouse moors on Ronsley. Leave the track before it rises high above the stream, at a point where the trees on the L come to an end, then walk alongside the River Westend, first NW then W.

The going is not easy; but there is room for a path; the stream flows down over gritstone slabs; the hillsides are steep. Pass Dry Clough on the R; a few trees are scattered here and there. The valley now is quite wide. Ahead see the fine interlocking spurs which could confuse in misty weather. The waters of Grinah Grain come down the clough, not an impressive stream, but from the distance, see what a striking valley it has carved through the gritstone. Only powerful streams could do this to such a resistant rock.

Here look for a path that climbs the hillside and allows walking much more easily high above the stream which is on the L. The valley now gets narrower the further walked. Raven's Clough comes down from the L; then further up the walls of a sheepfold marked on the map at 131946. Soon appreciate the scene, the valley base widens out into a flat area where the stream meanders before cutting its way down through a large mound or hillock just below. The great spur comes

nearer, blocking the view ahead, and soon the path having entered and left a small clough on the L, descends to the valley floor and arrive at the waters of Deep Grain that flow down from a clough on the R that does not look at all forbidding; in fact it gives the disarming impression that the top lies just around the corner. However, continue to follow the main stream past a rain gauge that is marked on the map. Does anyone ever come to measure the rainfall? Go 200 metres beyond Deep Grain and come to a clough on the R at 122951. The temptation, especially in mist, would be to go straight on; but now with a variation, go R up this clough, going N. in only 100 metres the clough divides in two. Bear L up the major clough, climb a wet bank, then, stream on L continue clough-hopping. The valley is now V-shaped; fragments of path appear here and there; pass a small pool in the stream, always climbing gently, crossing and re-crossing the stream until the head is reached. Pass a tiny feeder clough on the R and pull up into a basin where there is still work to do, but the stream has almost disappeared beneath the grass; still continue W.

Above now stands Grinah Stones against the sky, a fine reward for a struggle up the enclosed valley. This is alas! What can be missed in bad weather? This is now Westend Head. The views now around are impressive.

Proceed N and hit a pataha which seems to follow the contour going NE. leave this after a while and strike out for the top and Bleaklow Stones (112965). The views are panoramic: down below lies the Westend with its contributory cloughs, this view is nothing short of magnificent. There are some neatly executed carvings on the Trident which may be examined.

The next stage of the route is to walk along the staked path as far as Hour Clough. Of the several paths leading off, take the correct one ensuring that it does not lead to Grinah. It soon bears NE then N, and all the way it follows the thin patch of ground which is the watershed between the N and the Derwent to the S. In just over a mile and a half from Bleaklow Stones, the path switches abruptly E. In about 15 minutes come to a prominent landmark: a stone shaped like a toadstool. There are several sets of letters and a date 1894 carved into the stone.

From this point, go S over trough ground, no path, towards the edge of the valley of the Upper Derwent until an outcrop of boulders is reached at Dean Head Stones. Turn and walk E again, passing more stones on a faint and intermittent path probably made by sheep, and come to Shepherd's Meeting Stones 143981 at the head of Hoar Clough.

A path comes up Hour Clough from the Derwent; however, continue E along the edge over rough ground, the aim, now, being to work the way around the huge bowl of land that rises up from the valley so as to reach Horse Stone Naze. Pass more rock outcrops, much larger this time. Continue around the head of Coldwell Clough to get to Horse Stone Naze which is over 1700 ft. high.

The next stage is to reach Cut Gate. Turn to walk N to reach the path left not so long ago. To the E, the land falls away into Stainery Clough. In front is Horse Stone, a prominent if small landmark. The route to the N is hard going over long tough grass and heather with a few groughs to negotiate. When the path is reached turn R on it: it is now a long slog along the watershed, thankfully on a discernible path which allows normal walking. The land rises gently; stakes appear at intervals; Crow Stones stand out on the R. Pass Cat Cloughs Head and Stainery Clough Head, and eventually turn to walk S; this comes to a Trig Point at 177969. Another short stretch to reach a fine cairn at Cut Gate (186961).

Now aim for Howden Clough. Bear ahead and walk past the post rising from the cairn and calculate where to turn onto a footpath and walk under the edge where above Margery Hill stands; below on the R see Cranberry Clough. Descend over very rough ground; the worst of this walk until a path is reached that takes the walker into Howden Clough. The path improves; pass Stoney Bank Clough and descend into Howden Clough where there is a neat little reservoir and a post bearing the letters DVWB. Cross the stream just below the dam and enter Clough Wood. A short and pleasant walk reaches the road alongside the reservoir. Walk S through delightful scenery with the reservoir on the R back to the start.