

WALK 76.
RESERVOIRS 76.
21.6 miles. 6 hours 16 minutes.
Map Dark Peak.



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Start at Fairholmes Car Park (171898) Cut across E under the great dam wall then walk N on the road with the reservoir on the L. Pass Howden Dam, then, 100 metres before Howden Clough is reached, go R up a green path through trees (174932). A walk through Clough Woods comes out to a gate then out onto the open clough which is narrow and steep sided. Drop down to cross the stream near Stony Bank Clough then, on a narrow path, climb the L bank above the stream. Soon pass on the R, a small reservoir; with its own overflow; nearby is a metal sign bearing the letters DVWB (assuming its meaning Derwent Valley Water Board).

Continue NE up the clough, the way ahead barred by a huge spur, to negotiate go to the L round the shoulder of the hill. The path is wide and firm. Howden Edge towers up on the opposite side. Follow the narrow path as it goes N gently uphill, taking care not to go off to the R on one of the many sheep paths that can be so distracting in these relatively untrod areas.

Climb gently uphill until the path levels out and begin to get long views to the N, the E ridge dominates the scene, Horse Stone Naze standing erect in the distance. The upper stages of Cranberry Clough begin to appear. Further N, the E ridge forms great bowls beneath its edge, characteristic features of the gritstone area.

The path begins to drop into the head of the clough where the going is decidedly tricky in wet weather. One clough leads into another; all of them narrow with steep abrupt sides indicate the power of the streams that have carved their way through hard rock. Pass a junction of streams at Little Cranberry Clough where the walk now goes NW. Now there is a serviceable path above the stream; a broken wall appears on the other side of the water; now come to Bull Clough where Cut Gate climbs steeply up the nose of the hill and walk W with a view of the W side of the Derwent; here the ground rises towards Grinah.

One of the most popular meeting places of this wild area is here: Slippery Stones and the Derwent Bridge (169952). Turn R and climb steeply uphill NE, directly up the face of the hill to the top; the views are tremendous. Now strike out to the N over the heather; the chances of finding the path are remote. Bull Stones provide a good landmark on the edge to the NE above. Do not lose height, (always good advice), but keep up on the hillside under Bull Stones to work your way around the bowl of Broadhead Clough where Lord Edward's Spring lies below. Look for and pass on the L, the remains of two huts in Broadhead Clough. Pass a shooting butt made of stones.

Keep to the contour with the edge above as the bowl is followed around, walking NW to go under Crow Stones with, here and there, faint paths leading to the top, but few going the way of this walk. Head towards Horse Stone Naze in front to eventually walk under its edge. A path goes around into Stainery Clough where the stream flows down through large boulders; the head of the clough rises well above near the edge itself. Continue walking through the heather on the contour and go SW under Horse Stone Naze with Stainery Clough on the L

There is a path here but it is difficult to find. Continue to the scattered boulders around the nose of the Horseshoe itself, then cut up to the R so as to walk NW under the edge. It can be seen the huge bowl or cwm ahead to the NW down which the thin Derwent Flows. It is a tremendous sight rarely equalled in this wild area. A path exists, so take the path around into Coldwell Clough where to drop down to cross the stream, cross the stream, then continues W through heather, the edge above marked with an outcrop of gritstone in places. Lose height and make for Hoar Clough where the stream flows down its deeply-cut clough from the rocks: clearly above is Shepherds Meeting Stones.

Cross the stream on a path that, in a few metres, passes a rain gauge provided by the D.V. W.B., so the metal signs states. On the L, the huge bulk of Barrow Stones looms up; the edge marked by Dean Head Stones circumscribes the route along the bowl. Ahead, the valley bottom is relatively flat and wide so that a path has been made, perhaps the best encountered so far. Follow the Derwent past a small fall in its far bank and see a spur to go around. The stream has diminished now and the path getting more difficult.

Struggle around a prominent spur then continue through a tricky stage, come to level ground; Barrow Stones is up on the L; this area is the source of the River Derwent. The flat ground now rises like a wall to the edge above where there is a path to Bleaklow Stones. The pull up is short and steep. The path now is on the thin watershed between the Derwent and the cloughs that flow down to the Etherow. It is quite easy to find the path that leads to Bleaklow Stones, but the waking there-after is anything but easy in bad weather when the path leads in and out of a succession of peat and mud on its way upwards however gentle to Bleaklow Stones (112965).

At the Stones look around at the panoramic scene which enfolds and marvel at the typical gritstone scenery of North Derbyshire. How imposing Westend Clough looks! Grinah stands out against the sky. The route to be taken can be seen which goes S then SW over the whale-back of the ridge and along the ground between the Alport and the Westend. Go S from Bleaklow Stones to the Whaleback, dropping on a path, and taking care not to go into the Westend and the Upper Alport Bowl on the R, making now for the ridge (112955), a rounded stretch of land that separates Westend Head from Grains in the Water. Follow a faint path leading ahead, then find

the way through some black areas of mounds and watery mud, then attain the level grass and the path. The view engages attention and the idea of the area covered. The path begins to drop into the pass that extends from the Upper Alport, above the falls, to a clough that leads down into the Westend. Cross this and a path that connects the two big valleys. Climb the opposite bank and find a path needed to go up and over the hill and down to a trig- point which can be seen as soon as level ground is reached. The path leads downhill to marshy ground then up to the trig-point which is always in front; shinning white from afar (129932).

The route now goes to Alport Castles, which is reached quite easily along the same path at 142915. These can be described as the biggest landslide in the country. From this point a footpath goes to the Westend; do not take it, but, at the next wall, go L following the wall on the L. the purpose of this diversion is to get a glimpse of the higher reaches of Ouzeldon Clough.

Walk alongside the wall until it peters out; there is a feint path that also peters out; so the walk needs high stepping through thick (elephant) grass. Drop down a little to get a view of the heavily wooded clough, then cut off R across the hillside, walking on the contour. A feint path soon disappears, come to a broken wall which gives a little assistance; walk SE with it on the R: an almost invisible sheep path helps to stumble through the bushy grass. Eventually, come to Alport Grain; the wall ends, so walk through the grass towards the fenced boundary of Gores Heights. As the walk progresses, on the L is rock outcrops of an impressive nature, and so reach a fence.

Turn R and walk uphill with fence on the L, Gores Height then Lockerbrook Heights on the L. the path levels out and Win Hill to Mam Tor stands out to arrive at a Familiar Ladder Stile and sign to open Country; from this point drop down gratefully on short grass to the next ladder stile over a wall to a footpath junctions at 164890 where a three-armed footpath sign stands. Go L along a wide hard dirt road, walking N with plantation on the R. pass Lockerbrook Farm then, in a few hundred metres a sign directs to the forest walk to Fairholmes. Go R through the broken wall to a wooden step stile, then enter the forest and enjoy a steep descent to the road and the start.