INTO THE DALES: A GUIDE FOR VISITORS

A guide for new visitors to the Yorkshire Dales



ADVENTURE. COMMUNITY. ACTION.



Into the Dales
British Mountaineering Council
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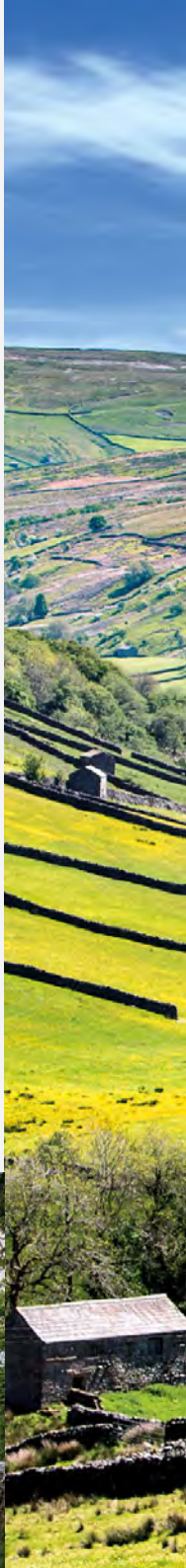
YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK

The wild places of Britain have something for everyone. Walking can benefit both your physical and mental health, it can provide a space for solitude or a place to connect with others, bringing people together.

You don't need to spend thousands on specialist equipment, there are no entrance fees, no winners or losers – just yourself, your family and friends, enjoying the freedom and adventure that the hills and mountains provide.

Despite its simplicity, there are some things you need to know to get started. Upland areas can be hazardous places but a little bit of knowledge goes a long way. It is important to be prepared with some basic equipment to enjoy hill walking as safely as possible. .

This booklet was created by the British Mountaineering Council and Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority. It is intended for new visitors to the Yorkshire Dales National Park and aims to highlight important things to know, acting as a reference for learning skills in more depth. If you develop your skills incrementally and build on past experience, you can minimise risks and enjoy exciting and inspiring days in the hills.





YORKSHIRE DALES
National Park Authority

BMC



BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL



The BMC is for everyone who loves the uplands and for those who are keen to discover them for the first time. We are proud to champion the interests of climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers and, with the support of our 80,000 members, are fighting to protect the outdoor environment so that people of all backgrounds can pursue their own adventures - both now and for future generations.

We campaign for freedom of access and the right to roam, we fund footpath repairs and run campaigns to clean up our hills and we lobby the Welsh and UK governments to pass outdoor friendly legislation; continually working for improved access to places we love.

Since 2016 our flagship Mend Our Mountains campaign has raised over £1 million to prevent environmentally harmful erosion by supporting the repair of paths, bridleways and bridges which underpin our experiences in the great outdoors.

By rallying walkers, climbers, outdoor users, businesses and charities behind this cause, we have funded vital path repairs in all of our national parks and on iconic peaks including Scafell Pike, Yr Wyddfa (Snowdon), the Yorkshire Three Peaks, the Munros of Scotland, the moors of Exmoor and Dartmoor, and the South Downs Way.

From tips on how to get started, opportunities to get involved, or if you're ready to take your passion to the next level, visit **thebmc.co.uk/hillwalking** to find out more and join the growing movement of people discovering the hills and making their voices count.

Members also get superb benefits like a subscription to the BMC's magazine Summit, a 10% discount in over 700 outdoor shops, and access to BMC travel insurance specifically tailored to hill walkers.

To see the range of membership options, go to **thebmc.co.uk/membership**

If you have any hill walking-related questions, or any suggestions for what the BMC could do better for hill walkers, please send them to **office@thebmc.co.uk**

ADVENTURE. COMMUNITY. ACTION.

BMC CAMPAIGNS

Mend Our Mountains

The BMC's Mend Our Mountains initiative is a call to action for everyone who values the hills, mountains and landscapes of Britain.

It's come a long way from our very first, 'one-off' crowdfunding drive in 2016. Since then we've raised close to a million pounds, and we're set to raise even more in the coming years. We've empowered people and professionals to look after our wild places, and we've collaborated to build a coalition of more than fifty outdoor organisations who care just as much as we do.

At its core, MOM is a nationwide grassroots effort to support everywhere that people walk, climb, camp and explore. You can help us continue this vital work by checking out **thebmc.co.uk/mend-our-mountains**

No Moor BBQs:
Help us extinguish disposable BBQs

Each year, moorland fires have a devastating effect on wildlife, livestock and people, and can often destroy the underlying peat that is crucial in our fight against climate change. Worldwide, peatland contains more than 550 gigatonnes of carbon, twice as much carbon as all of the world's forests.

Never use disposable BBQs in moorland and grassland areas, they cause fires without you even realising, by heating the ground underneath the tray. Stick to camping stoves or sandwiches.

We're calling on government to make the use of disposable barbecues on open moorland a criminal offence with a severe penalty attached for anyone in breach of this.

CLICK OR SCAN

Watch our No Moor BBQs campaign clip here

CLICK OR SCAN

Help us – send a letter to your MP our online form only takes 30 seconds



Hills 2 Oceans:
Removing Mountains of Waste

We're excited be working alongside YHA (England and Wales) to launch Hills 2 Oceans litter picking hubs at some of their key hostels across England and Wales, to encourage the hill walking and climbing community to help remove mountains of waste.

Hills 2 Oceans is calling on everyone to get involved in a litter pick to help remove litter and plastic from our hills, mountains and crags, so it doesn't end up in our oceans.

By providing free litter picking equipment (bags and pickers) at participating hostels, visitors will be able to use these when they are out and about in the great outdoors, helping to protect and preserve our natural environment and tackle local litter.

CLICK OR SCAN

Find participating hostels here

THE CLIMATE PROJECT

The Climate Project

Make a real difference to the local landscapes that you love and the global climate crisis. We've teamed up with Moors for the Future for an exciting new project.

Out on our wild moorlands grows an amazing plant called sphagnum. When sphagnum is growing healthily, this little plant powerhouse takes as much carbon out of the atmosphere as a tropical rainforest. Help to support the planting of this incredible environment.

CLICK OR SCAN

Sponsor one square metre of Sphagnum for £25

YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY




YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

The Yorkshire Dales National Park was designated in 1954. This was in recognition of its extraordinary natural beauty, the diversity of its wildlife habitats, its rich cultural heritage and its fantastic opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Covering 2,179 square kilometres (841 square miles) the Yorkshire Dales National Park straddles the central Pennines in North Yorkshire and Cumbria and also includes a small part of Lancashire.

The role of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

Our role is clearly defined in Parliament by our two statutory purposes.

These are:

1. **To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park.**
2. **To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area by the public.**

In pursuing these purposes, we are also required: to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Park.

To sum up, we are here to conserve and enhance the National Park and to help others to share in and enjoy it.

YORKSHIRE DALES
National Park Authority

10 reasons why the Yorkshire Dales is a special place...

1. Ancient drystone walls and field barns
2. Waterfalls
3. Yorkshire Three Peaks
4. Cycling
5. Flower-rich upland hay meadows and pastures
6. Limestone scenery
7. Caves
8. Dark sky
9. Moorland
10. Livestock farming

HOW TO GET HERE

Train

The two National Rail services covering the Yorkshire Dales area are the Leeds-Morecambe line and the famous Leeds-Settle-Carlisle line.

This gives fantastic access to the Dales on one of the most spectacular train journeys in England. After Settle, the train stops in the National Park at Horton-in-Ribblesdale (perfect access for the Yorkshire Three Peaks), Ribblehead (to explore the iconic viaduct), Dent (the UK's highest main-line station), Garsdale (for bus services connecting to Hawes) and Kirkby Stephen.

There is also the heritage Wensleydale Railway which runs from Northallerton to the edge of the National Park at Redmire.

By bike

The trains to Skipton and Ilkley and on the Settle to Carlisle line all carry bikes. No booking is required and space can be limited, so rush hour services are best avoided. Many people ride into the National Park from surrounding towns or by following recognised cycle routes such as the Way of the Roses. There is a wealth of information available on our dedicated cycling website – **cyclethedales.org.uk**

Coach and bus

Nearby towns such as Lancaster, Penrith, Skipton, Leeds, Harrogate, York, Ripon, Northallerton and Darlington are served by National Express or Megabus coaches, and a range of local bus services.



Bus services within the National Park run throughout the year linking the main towns, villages, and popular attractions, with additional services running during the summer months mainly on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Using the bus is an excellent way to enjoy the spectacular scenery without having to worry about keeping your eyes on the road. It also helps reduce congestion and parking problems, and opens up the possibility of some fantastic linear walks, allowing you to walk back to your car.

Full details of services, timetables, and ticket offers operating in the Dales can be found on the Dales Bus (**dalesbus.org)** website.

Please note that some services are infrequent so you may find it helpful to use a journey planner such as those on either Traveline (**traveline.info**) or West Yorkshire Metro (**wymetro.com**) to plan your day. National Park Visitor Centre or Tourist Information Centre staff may also be able to offer assistance and advice.

We have also written a **Coach Driver's Guide** to help those bringing excursions into the Dales.



Visit our website to find out more about how to get here:

CLICK OR SCAN

Travel information

CLICK OR SCAN

Yorkshire Dales National Park PDF Map



ALL ABILITIES WALKING

Everyone has the right to access the countryside in the Yorkshire National Park. Choose from our Miles without Stiles downloadable routes, perfect for wheelchairs, pushchairs and a post-pub-lunch amble. You can also buy route cards at National Park Visitor Centres.

Miles Without Stiles routes

Our Miles Without Stiles routes are suitable for those in wheelchairs, buggies and even dogs who can't negotiate stiles easily. They are all under two miles. The routes are colour-coded depending on the type of surface and gradient.

CLICK OR SCAN

More information about the routes here



Toilets

There are a number of accessible toilets which can be found in and around the National Park, including Changing Place facilities. All our car parks have toilets with RADAR facilities, with the exception of Linton Falls. Most of the accessible toilets require RADAR Keys.

CLICK OR SCAN

More information about accessible toilets here

Wheelchair Hubs:

There are a few places where all-terrain wheelchairs or a Tramper can be hired. These are specially designed to be used out in the countryside. There is a page on the Access the Dales website (**access-the-dales.com**) which gives details on how and where you can hire them, there are also suggestions of suitable routes where they can be used such as Aysgarth Falls, Malham Tarn and Ingleton Nature Trail.

CLICK OR SCAN

More about Wheelchair Hubs and how to hire a Tramper

RISK

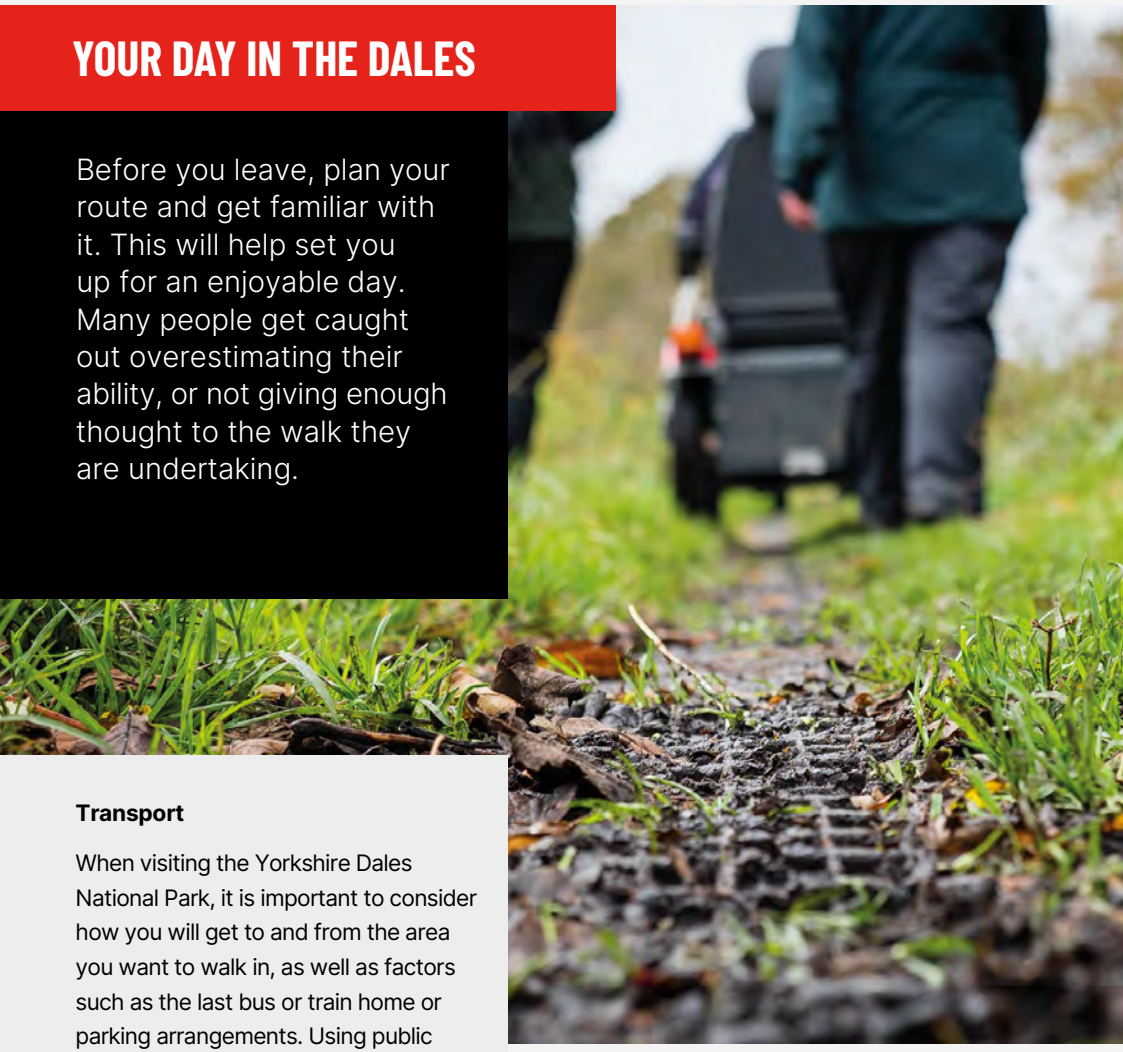
The hills and mountains contain a range of hazards, from steep ground and rock fall, to hypothermia and heatstroke. Hill walking in winter brings its own risks, like avalanches and whiteouts. Managing these risks boils down to having the right level of skill and experience relative to the difficulty and seriousness of your adventure. An important part of developing your mountain awareness is judging whether your own skills are sufficient for whatever you are planning. Accidents can happen due to circumstances out of your control, such as rock fall, and first aid training can make all the difference in these events. All hill walkers should be familiar with basic emergency procedures, as outside help will always take time to arrive. Check out the 'Emergency procedures' chapter on p52 for more information.

Overcoming risk can be a hugely rewarding experience in itself and learning to manage risk outdoors can help you deal with it better in everyday life. It can also teach you profound lessons about yourself, other people, and your own abilities – the biggest being you are often capable of more than you realise.



YOUR DAY IN THE DALES

Before you leave, plan your route and get familiar with it. This will help set you up for an enjoyable day. Many people get caught out overestimating their ability, or not giving enough thought to the walk they are undertaking.



Transport

When visiting the Yorkshire Dales National Park, it is important to consider how you will get to and from the area you want to walk in, as well as factors such as the last bus or train home or parking arrangements. Using public transport is a great way to reduce emissions and can free you up to do point-to-point walks as well as circular ones. If you do prefer to drive, why not consider sharing lifts with friends and family, or even putting your ride on the BMC's Liftshare page where you can share rides with other BMC members.

CLICK OR SCAN

Transport information here

CLICK OR SCAN

Check out the BMC's Liftshare site to share a ride with another hiker



Weather

Hill and mountain weather can change very quickly with sunshine and blue skies giving way to torrential rain and mist. General weather apps often don't account for changing conditions in the mountains hills. Forecasts designed specifically for hill and mountain users are available for popular areas and can be accessed online, often completely free (see the 'weather section' p43 for more information).

Timing

It is important to consider the length, elevation and terrain of your walk which will all contribute to the time it takes to complete (see 36 for more information on pacing). Factor in time for breaks, and the walking pace of everyone in your group. Don't be afraid to be generous with the amount of stops you make. You might consider stopping after a steep climb for example, or at a viewpoint. On beautiful days it can be amazing to have lunch at the top of the hill, but be aware that wind and rain at the summit can be a lot stronger than lower down, so you might want to choose a more sheltered spot when the weather isn't so nice.

Planning your route

Lots of great routes can be found online ,on our website, on our two free walking apps and in National Park Visitors Centres. Take a look at the area on your map and spot any places you might wish to incorporate into your walk; a pub or a café, for example, a wild swimming spot, a waterfall, stone circle or a viewpoint. Get creative and tailor the day to you! Guidebooks are a great way to plan your day, as they provide information on transport, route descriptions, difficulty levels, and a sense of what to expect. Good ranges to start with are Cicerone, Collins Ramblers or Trailblazer.

Once you know where you want to go in the Dales you can plot your route onto the map. You might like to circle key spots on the map, draw a line along the paths you are taking with a pencil, or use an app like OS Maps which has a plotting tool built in. Apps also allow you to see elevation, and walking distance. Be aware however, that the time estimates for walks made through the app aren't always accurate and it is good to have an idea of how long you and your group take to walk, especially along uphill stretches.

ON YOUR WALK

Map and compass skills

Assisting lost walkers is one of the most common reasons for mountain rescue call-outs. Whilst technology like GPS and phones can help you know where you are, they can't make route choices for you. Being able to use a map and compass is a key skill, but as with all techniques it requires practice to become proficient. Page 30 contains more information on navigation skills, but if you are a complete beginner it is always a good idea to practice navigation in lowland areas first and move on to bigger challenges as you gain confidence. You may also choose to seek help from someone whether it be a friend, club member, group leader or training provider.

Being prepared: Bad weather and Nightfall

Remember that a forecast is only a prediction, so your clothing needs to be versatile, providing protection from the wind and rain. On hot days use sunscreen, long sleeves and a wide brimmed hat to protect from heatstroke. After the sun sets, far away from towns and streetlights, it will be very dark in the mountains. Mountain rescue teams are often called out to assist walkers stranded in the dark who would have been able to walk off themselves if they had remembered to pack a torch, so always bring one along. There are lots of other useful things to pack to help prevent bad conditions in the hills from turning into an emergency situation take a look at page 29 to see what else we recommend.





Be Flexible

If you feel you are getting tired or out of your depth, are encountering worse weather than expected, or simply running out of time, then it's no failure to turn around or to find the quickest and easiest route down the mountain. Being flexible and using your judgement is a key skill and can help to keep you happy and safe in the hills.

Respect, protect and enjoy with the Countryside Code

CLICK OR SCAN

Countryside code

Make your good day better with Adventure Smart and Mosaic Outdoors

#BeAdventureSmart ask yourself three questions before you set off:

- Am I confident I have the right knowledge and skills for the day?
- Do I know what the weather will be like?
- Do I have the right gear?

CLICK OR SCAN

Find out more on the Adventure Smart website

CLICK OR SCAN

Watch Mosaic Outdoors #BeAdventureSmart video

ADVENTURE SMART.UK

CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

There is not much gear that is vital, and on many lowland walks in fair weather the clothing and shoes you already have may be enough to keep you comfortable, warm, dry and safe. But it is important to have the appropriate equipment for the route and activity you have chosen and the weather forecasted. It is better to carry things you might not use, than to not have what you need when it comes down to it.



Kit and equipment can be expensive so building up what you have slowly might be the way to go. To save money and the planet buying second-hand is always a good option. Facebook groups such as Outdoor Gear Exchange have lots on offer, and you can also find things on eBay and in charity shops.

If you do decide to buy new don't be afraid to ask for help in the shop, the people working there will be able to support you with getting the right kit for you.

Remember that each time you wash your waterproof it can strip away its proofing - washing it less and if possible using a cleaner designed for use with outdoor clothing when you do wash it, will help to maintain its effectiveness. Using Nikwax (which you can buy from outdoors stores) in your wash can help to give them a new lease of life by restoring the waterproof layer that helps to keep you dry.

As a minimum you will need:

- Comfortable shoes or boots with a good grip
- Insulating layers to keep you warm
- Waterproofs to keep you dry

CLICK OR SCAN

Get BMC Member Discounts on kit and equipment here





Footwear

Choose shoes that are comfortable and provide good support. No footwear is perfectly suited for all seasons and terrains. A lightweight summer shoe would leave you with cold feet in winter, while winter mountaineering boots on a hot sunny day could give you overheated and blistered feet.

Walking shoes and trainers are great on lowland valley tracks, but when hiking up hills or mountains, on steep or uneven terrain, boots with good support and grip will be a much better option.

Some boots can be used for summer and winter walking. But whatever you choose, make sure the boot is appropriate for the most demanding conditions you plan to walk in.

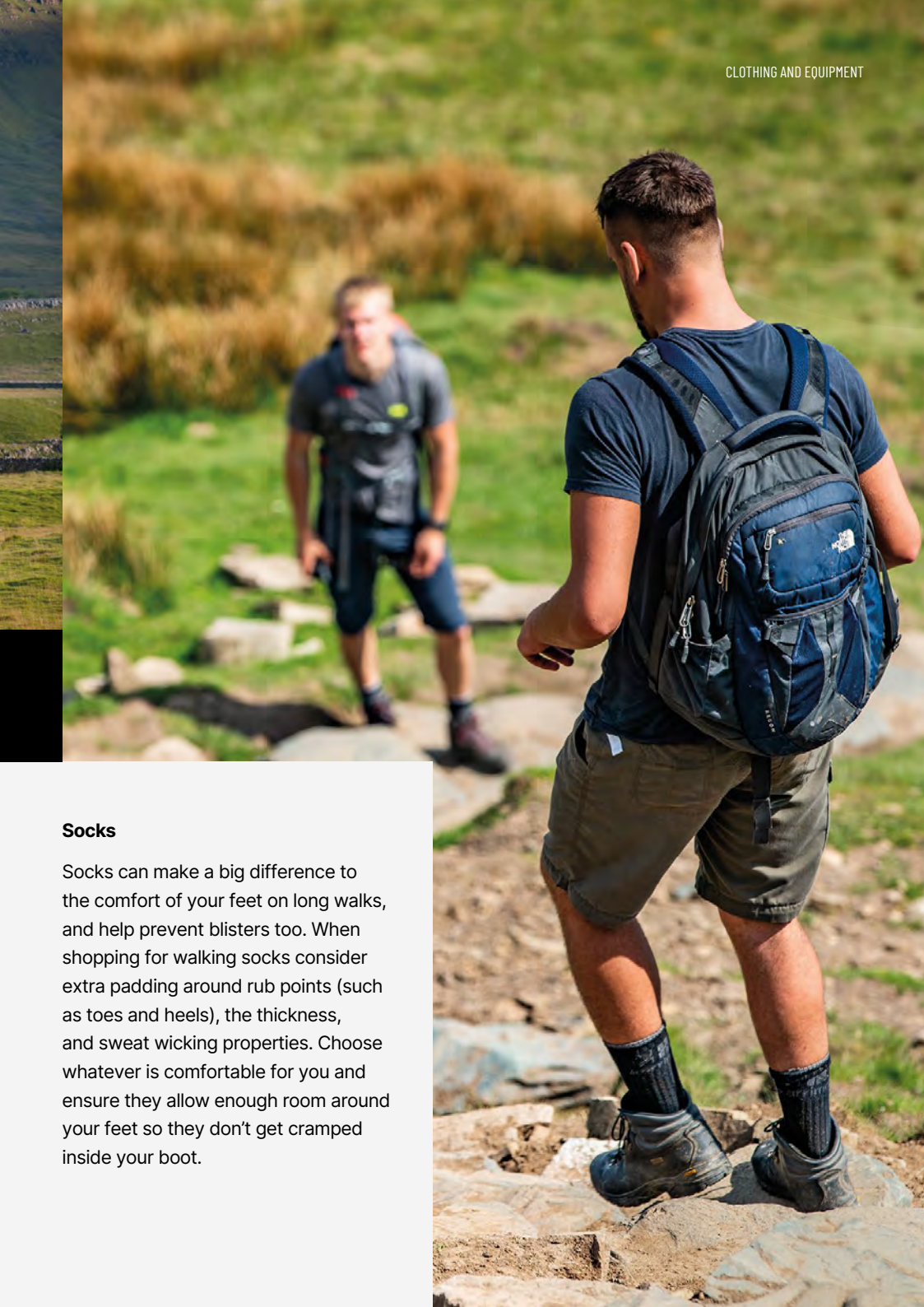


CLICK OR SCAN

Watch here
Know your footwear

Everybody is different and the most important thing is to choose something comfortable which helps you to feel safe and stable when you walk. A good outdoor retailer will be able to help you find the right boot for your activity and foot shape. Try the boots on with your own walking socks to make sure you are getting the right fit. Many shops will let you take the boots home for an indoor trial and return them if they are not quite right. Walking up and down a flight of stairs is a good way to decide if your foot is firmly held.

It's important to break in new boots, wear them for local walks and around the house. Your first long walk will break them in properly. The stiffer and heavier they are, the more breaking in they will need. Be aware of any points where rubbing occurs. If you find your boots are rubbing, stop and apply a plaster and some tape or a blister plaster to help prevent hot spots and blisters from developing. It is not uncommon to get rubbing on the first couple of walks in your new boots, but this should stop once they are worn in.



Socks

Socks can make a big difference to the comfort of your feet on long walks, and help prevent blisters too. When shopping for walking socks consider extra padding around rub points (such as toes and heels), the thickness, and sweat wicking properties. Choose whatever is comfortable for you and ensure they allow enough room around your feet so they don't get cramped inside your boot.



Insulating layers

The range of temperatures experienced in one day will often be greater in the hills than in the cities, so pack some layers that will help you to stay comfortable throughout this variation. It is a good idea to consider the weight of your rucksack when packing for the day, so try to find clothing options with more than one function to save on space and weight. Waterproofs can double up as windproofs for example.

You'll need something light and comfortable while you walk, something warm for when it gets colder and something waterproof in case it rains. It is better to wear several thinner layers than a single thick one, the layers trap air between them which is a good insulator and also allow you to regulate your temperature more easily by putting on or taking off layers.

Materials that do not absorb moisture are better because wet clothes can make you feel cold. Wool has always been recognised as a good material for hiking. Synthetic materials such as fleece are also used for outdoor clothing. Cotton however is not so good, since it dries very slowly, and jeans are particularly cold when wet.

Finally, for very cold days in winter, it can be worthwhile to invest in a warm jacket made with synthetic insulation or down. This will likely be too warm to wear on the move, but is perfect for keeping you warm when you stop or rest. Placed over all your layers it will prevent heat escaping as your body cools.

CLICK OR SCAN

Watch here
How to use a layering system

Waterproofs

A waterproof outer layer of jacket and trousers will help to keep you dry, and in combination with your insulating layers will prevent any dangerous reduction in body temperature.

Most modern waterproofs are made from breathable fabrics allowing body moisture to escape, whilst keeping the rain out. Non-breathable fabrics do not let perspiration escape, so you can get increasingly damp as the day wears on.

The ideal hill walking jacket should be big enough to get warm layers underneath, but not so big that it flaps around. It should have an easily accessible pocket that can accommodate a map, and large pockets for carrying hats, gloves and so on. Waist and hood draw-cords, and adjustable wrist closures help to seal out the weather and retain warmth.

A stiffened hood will provide good visibility and prevent your hood from flapping over your face in the wind.

Waterproof trousers will help to keep your whole body dry. You'll need to be able to pull them on and off while your boots are on, so make sure there are zips down the sides.

Gaiters can be invaluable on boggy ground and rainy days. They also prevent vegetation from entering your boots. In winter, gaiters are indispensable for keeping snow out of your boots and preventing your feet from becoming wet and cold. If worn with waterproof trousers, wear the gaiters underneath, not with the trousers tucked in, or water will be channelled into your boots.

CLICK OR SCAN

Watch here
Know your outdoor jackets





CLICK OR SCAN

Watch here
How to pack a rucksack

Head and hands

On cold days, a hat or balaclava and scarf or neck gaiter will reduce the heat lost through the head and neck.

Fleece is probably the most popular material as it is light and flexible, and can be wrung dry if it gets wet.

On hot sunny days, a sun hat and neckerchief will protect the head and neck from sunburn and overheating. If the body absorbs more heat than it can dissipate then you could get heatstroke (aka hyperthermia or sunstroke), which is a serious medical condition with which you would struggle to get back down the hill.

Rucksack

A rucksack is the most convenient way to carry your equipment. There are many different sizes to choose from but when moorland walking for a single day, a 30-litre rucksack should be fine. If heading to the mountains and taking more equipment a 45-litre rucksack would be better.

When full, the rucksack should distribute the load evenly and be comfortable to wear. Some rucksacks are designed with all bodies in mind but you can also buy some specifically designed for the male or female anatomy for whom the shoulder-waist-hip ratios are often different. Some rucksacks come with adjustable back panels to fit different sizes. Taking time to find the right pack for you with the features you want is always a good idea and will help to keep things comfortable and practical when out and about.

Finally consider how to pack your rucksack. Regularly used items should be easily accessible in the lid pocket, side pockets, or top of the rucksack. Heavy items, such as water bottles or thermos flasks can be packed close to the back in the middle portion of the rucksack. Light items, such as fleece clothing, can be packed further away from the back of the rucksack. Distributing weight in this way will result in better stability when walking. Packing kit in a selection of drybags is the best



way to prevent it getting wet, and can help you easily identify and access specific items. On rainy days especially, not having to expose all your kit to the elements at the same time makes life much easier. Carrier bags can be used as a cheaper alternative to drybags.

Food and drink

Having plenty of food and drink to power you through your day is super important and making good choices on what to bring will help you feel good throughout your hike. Low blood sugar is one of the most common causes of accidents in the outdoors. A drop in energy can cause you to become tired and unsteady. Make sure that you carry enough food for your day, snack regularly and bring along some emergency food like high energy bars tucked away 'just in case'.

The amount of food and drink required will vary depending on weather conditions, distance and terrain walked. You do not need to take any 'specialist' food; sandwiches, snacks and some fruit will work fine.

A good breakfast will set you up for a day's walk, and whilst out, consuming little and often is the best way to keep hydrated and maintain your energy, When it comes to drinks bring lots of water to stay hydrated.

In cold weather, a hot drink in a thermos is a nice addition to your pack and will help you to stay warm in the hills.



Skin and eye protection

A cooling mountain breeze on a hot sunny day can easily lead to the assumption that there is little chance of getting sunburn, but this is far from true. If the sun is out, apply sunscreen and lip-salve in advance and then regularly throughout the day. Be aware that you can still get burnt on an overcast day. When spending time outdoors, it's always a good idea to apply sunscreen.

Sunglasses are always a great choice on a sunny day, they'll help you to see more clearly and you will also feel more comfortable as you look out across the view. In winter it can also be important to bring eye protection. In certain weather conditions it can become hard to move around and even lead to snow blindness. This is a reversible condition caused by unprotected eyes being exposed to UV light reflected from the snow, and is akin to part of the eyes being sunburnt.

Walking poles

After a day out on the hills, aching knees (especially on the decent) is very common. Poles can transfer some of the impact of walking from the lower legs and knees to the arms and shoulders. Poles also help with stability, which can be particularly useful when carrying a heavy rucksack, walking on uneven ground, or in winter when patches of ice can occur unexpectedly.

Getting the technique right is important, so take a moment to practice before getting out on the hills to take full advantage of their support. Check out the 'How to use walking poles' video on the team BMC YouTube channel to nail your technique.

Remember that wrist, shoulder and elbow joints are not designed to prop up your body and we can end up aggravating other joints in an attempt to protect our knees.

Poles can be a worthwhile investment for anyone who walks regardless of age or mobility as they will help to protect your joints. You can find lots of second-hand poles online, so have a think whether this might be something you could benefit from.

CLICK OR SCAN

Watch here
How to use walking poles

EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT





Whilst emergencies are a rare occurrence in the hills, there are a few pieces of equipment that can make a massive difference if they do happen.

First Aid Kit

If injury or illness happens in the hills, help may not always be close at hand. Having a first aid kit and understanding how to use is an important skill to have and seeking out some basic first aid training can make a real difference.

Torch

It is not uncommon for mountain rescue teams to assist able-bodied walkers off the hills who have simply got caught out after dark. Whether underestimating how long a walk will take, or getting lost and staying out for longer than planned, heading back home in the dark does not need to be a reason to panic if everyone has a torch. A headtorch is best, and many inexpensive models are widely available. Always take a torch and make sure you also have spare batteries.

Bivi bag and group shelter

Made from tough polythene, a bivi bag provides individual shelter in case of an emergency. They are effective and inexpensive but can help to keep you warm and protect you from the elements should anything happen.



Mobile phone

Mobile phones can make a real difference when needing to contact the emergency services, but should not be thought of as a 'safety net'. Phones often lose signal in the hills and can easily become lost or damaged. It is a good idea to take one regardless but be aware of other places along your route where you might be able to get signal or access a landline.

The Emergency SMS service can help you to call for help when signal is intermittent. Though signing up is simple, you should do so before leaving for your walk – **emergencysms.net/**

Whistle

A whistle is a great way to attract attention – the international distress signal is six blasts in quick succession, repeated after a one-minute interval. Flashing your torch in a similar manner will also be recognised as a distress signal.

Watch

Time flies when you're having fun, so keep track of it. You'll also need it if you time navigation legs.

CLICK OR SCAN

Watch here
Emergency packing for hill walking

KIT LISTS

Kit Lists

Here we have listed the ideal range of items, but remember, if you are just starting out, using what you have and making sure it will help keep you safe, healthy and comfortable is the most important thing.

- Map and compass
- Torch
- Rucksack
- Food and drink
- Emergency food
- Mobile phone
- First aid kit
- Walking boots and socks (or suitable shoes for the level of walk)
- Comfortable shorts/trousers
- Sweat wicking baselayer
- Insulating midlayer
- Fleece jacket
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof overtrousers
- Toilet pack (toilet roll, spade, zip-lock bags)
- Your choice of period products

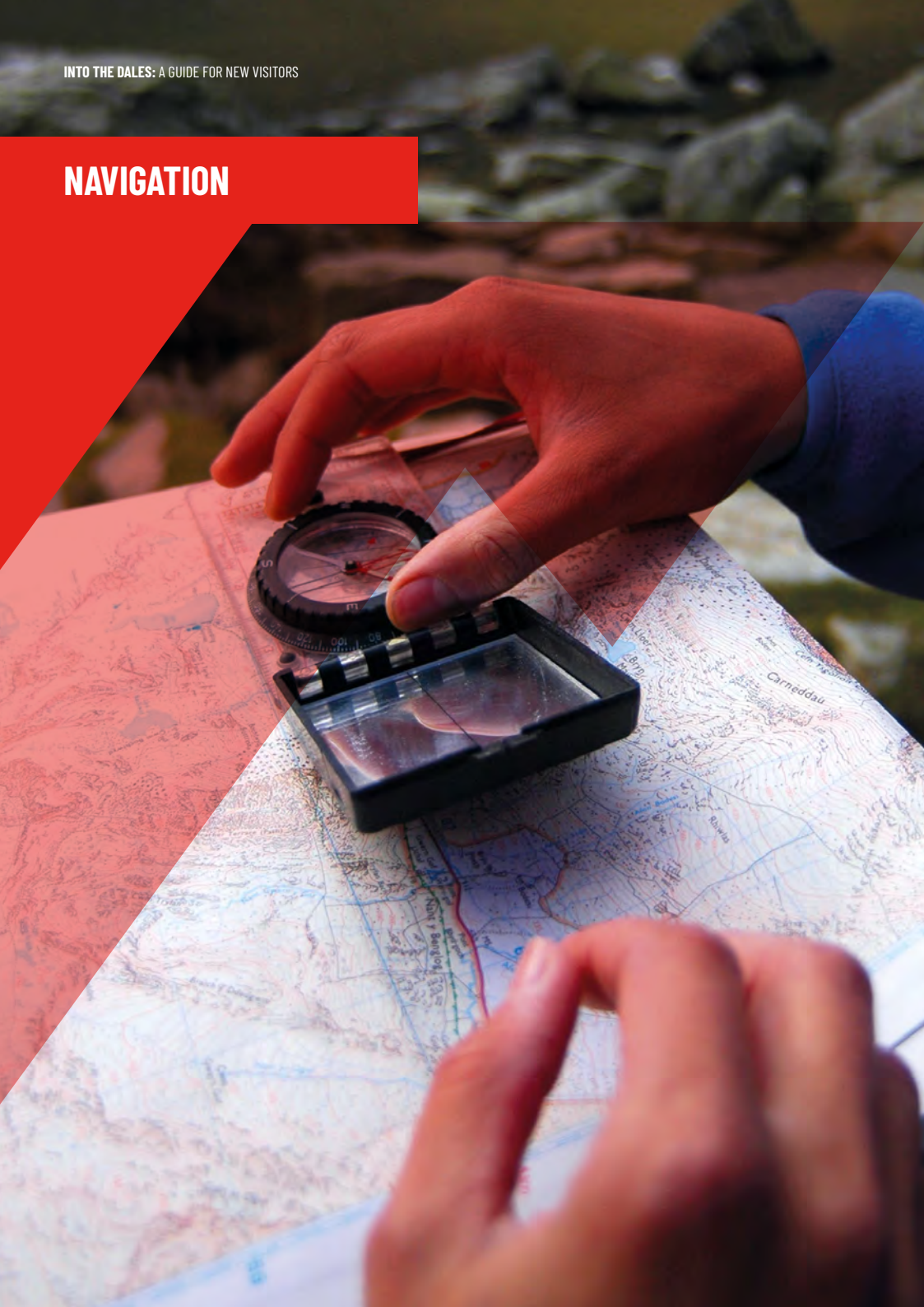
Depending on the weather:

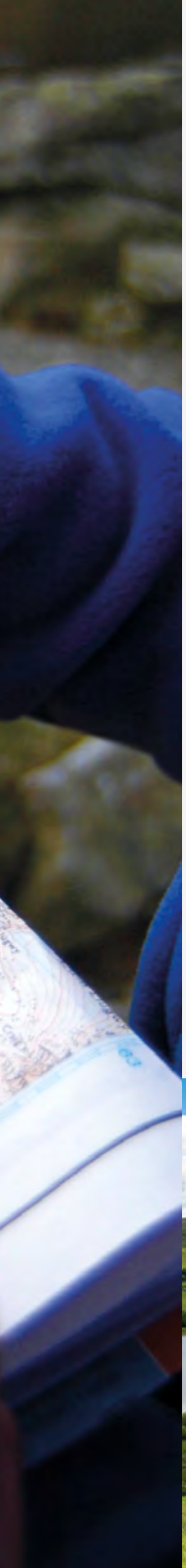
- Sunhat/sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- Hat and scarf
- Gloves/mittens
- Warm insulated jacket

Consider these items depending on the weather and level of walk. If you are able to get your hands on some of these things easily, it might be a good idea to pack them anyway. But if you're building up your kit slowly, prioritise the list above and work towards gaining access to the items below either by sharing with friends or family or owning your own.

- Gaiters
- Insect repellent
- Spare gloves
- Spare socks
- Whistle
- Bivi bag
- Group shelter
- Trekking poles
- GPS device
- Personal locator beacon

NAVIGATION





Setting the map

This involves positioning the map so that all the features are lined up, with your location as the central point. What is in front of you on the ground will be in front of you on the map, what is to your left on the ground will be to your left on the map, and so on.

It does not matter if the map is upside down, as you do not need to read the text. Instead, you need to read the map symbols, lining them up with the features you can see. Rotate the map to keep it set when you change direction.

In good visibility you should be able to set the map by eye, using obvious features such as a hill top or major track junction.

In poor visibility, you can set the map by lining up the compass needle with any of the north/south grid lines. Make sure that the north end of the needle, which is often painted red, points towards the top of the map, otherwise you will set your map 180° in the wrong direction!



The compass

The compass is used for finding direction, measuring bearings and distances on the map and for following magnetic bearings when walking.

A hill walking compass will have a large baseplate to make it easier to handle and take bearings, as well as a number of other useful features.

Walking on a bearing

With the magnetic bearing set, hold the compass close to your chest with the direction of travel arrow on the compass pointing forwards. Whilst looking down onto the compass, rotate your body until the north end of the magnetic needle is aligned with the north end of the orienting arrow.

Next, identify a feature which lies on the bearing between you and your final destination. It might be a rock or some vegetation. Once identified, there is no need to use the compass again until you have reached it. You can take any route around obstacles to get to the feature. It is essential to maintain your fix on the

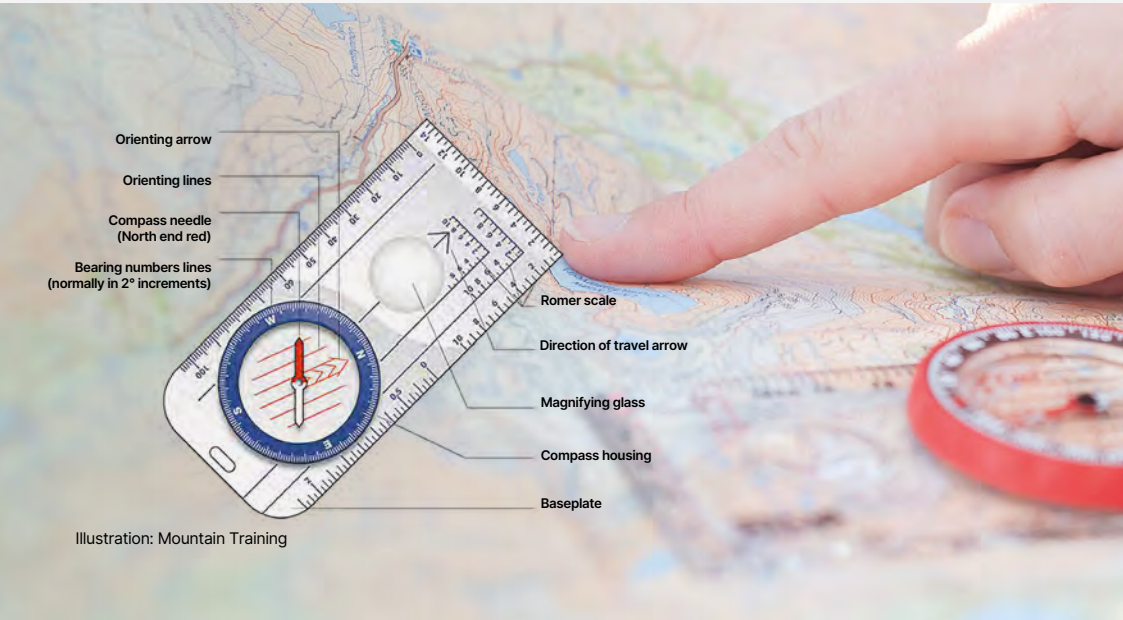


Illustration: Mountain Training

feature as it may change in appearance as you get closer to it. Once you reach the first feature, repeat the exercise until the whole leg is completed.

If walking on a bearing is new to you, why not practise in your local park?

CLICK OR SCAN

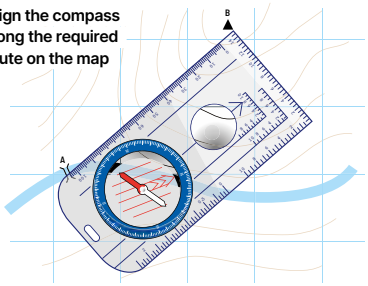
Watch here
Taking a compass bearing

Taking a bearing

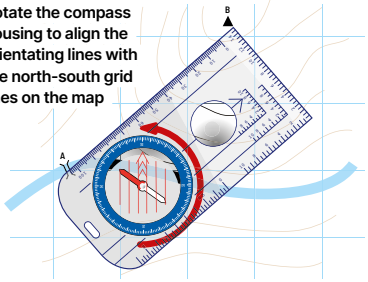
Before taking a bearing, always estimate visually what the bearing will be. You can then check this against the bearing taken with the compass to make sure you have not made a basic error. In the four diagrams opposite, the bearing is roughly north east.



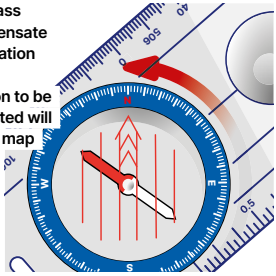
Align the compass along the required route on the map



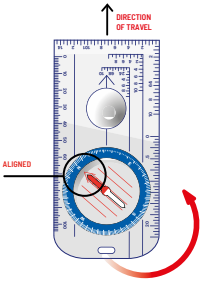
Rotate the compass housing to align the orientating lines with the north-south grid lines on the map



Rotate the compass housing to compensate for magnetic variation Details about the magnetic variation to be added or subtracted will be noted on your map



Remove the compass from the map, rotate the compass so that the north end of the needle and the orientating arrow are aligned and then proceed following the direction of travel arrow



UNDERSTANDING A MAP

What is a contour

A contour is a line that links land of equal height. Contours are measured in metres above sea level and shown on the map as lines printed with a set interval between them.

Ordnance Survey maps commonly use a 10m contour interval and British Mountain Maps use a 15m contour interval. The actual height of a contour, such as 150m, will be marked periodically.

Contours are used to represent the three-dimensional world on a two-dimensional map, and it can be hard to 'read the contours' at first.

To help, imagine a three-tiered cake, viewed side on you would see the tiers one above the other, each narrower than the one below. Viewed from above you would see them one inside the other, with the sense of height between the tiers being lost. Using this analogy, the map is like the bird's eye view, in which we see contour 'tiers' around the hills on a flat map.

Reading the contours

When walking in the hills, the terrain and views constantly change in shape, aspect and gradient, all of which are described by the contours.

The skill to develop is converting the information given by the contours into a three-dimensional image in your mind. The best way to develop contour interpretation skills is in good weather. With practice you'll be able to identify features such as hill tops, convex and concave slopes, ridges, valleys and flat areas simply by using the information provided by the contours.

Add to your mental 'image library' how the contours on the map match up with the features you see each time you head out. This will help you navigate when the chips are down!



GPS Technology

Basic GPS devices can provide you with your current grid reference. With more sophisticated devices and apps, whole walks can be planned and tracked digitally – you can plot routes on Ordnance Survey or equivalent mapping, either on purpose-built GPS devices or mobile phone apps, and follow it around as you progress in the hills.

Many people have taken up this kind of technology and have found it an extremely useful navigational aid. However, this technology should be treated with a certain amount of caution. Mobile phones in particular can be unreliable. They are rarely designed for use in remote, high altitude or wild areas, so can easily become damaged or run out of battery quickly, particularly if you are using the GPS function.

Generally, mobile phones should be reserved for use for calling for help in an emergency. Purpose-built outdoor GPS devices are much better for navigational use – they are designed with long battery lives and have more sophisticated internal technology.

However, there is always a risk of malfunction or batteries expiring, and so interpreting a map, understanding hazards and being able to navigate safely, remain essential skills.



Grids, scales and distances

British maps have a grid line system superimposed upon them. These grids represent one-kilometre squares regardless of the map scale, and can be used as a useful rough measure when planning a route.

Grid north is the northerly direction of the north/south grid lines, and is technically different to magnetic north, the direction that a compass needle points to - but in practice, for most hill walking navigation, the difference is negligible.

The grid lines are numbered and most maps include instructions on how to work out a grid reference which describes a unique 100m by 100m square on the map. It is wise to spend some time making sure you know how to do this before heading for the hills, as a grid reference is required should you need to give your location, such as to a mountain rescue team.

CLICK OR SCAN

Watch here
How to take a grid reference

You can use a ruler to measure the distance between two points on your map and then convert this to a distance on the ground. On 1:25,000 maps, 1mm is equivalent to 25m on the ground; on 1:40,000 maps, 1mm is equivalent to 40m on the ground; on 1:50,000 maps, 1mm is equivalent to 50m on the ground.

Estimating Distance

Pacing and timing can help you estimate distance. The first stage is measuring the distance on the map, which is done using the millimetre or romer scales on the compass baseplate. If you know the speed you walk, you can estimate the time it'll take to walk a distance. Reasonably fit people walk at 4 or 5kmh (slower going uphill, faster going down).

Pacing and timing

Estimating distance by pacing requires knowing how many double paces you take to walk 100m. It's important to realise that pacing is only estimation. With just a 5% error you could be 25m out in a 500m block. When using pacing don't expect to arrive exactly at your destination, but if accurate, you should be very close.

HAZARDS



With all the right skills and knowledge most hazards can be avoided or navigated safely, but as a new walker it is good to get to know what might be out there and what to do in risky situations.

Identifying hazards

Imagine stepping into the road only to see a car speeding towards you. Instantly you would identify the hazard, assess the risk, and then act appropriately by getting out of the way. When it comes to hazards in the hills, follow the same process of identify, assess and act.

Listen to your instincts, and stop if something doesn't feel 'quite right'. Changing your plans due to unforeseen circumstances is a sign of good judgement. If you carry on with the hope that 'things will work themselves out' you might find yourself getting into some tricky situations!

It is important to realise that you cannot avoid hazards. Before setting out ask yourself what hazards are presented by group composition, animals, terrain and weather, and don't forget to reassess hazards throughout the day.

Group composition

Managing group dynamics is not always easy. Every individual will have different strengths, challenges, abilities and fitness. Consideration should to be given to how everyone's needs and aspirations can be met. Remember to keep a lookout for everyone in your group, stick together and make responsible choices if people are becoming tired or looking unwell.



Movement skills

Slipping is one of the most common causes of injury to hill walkers; the more uneven or steep the ground, the more likely you are to slip. Those new to hill walking may find the uneven and variable terrain challenging at first. Wearing a pair of good boots is important, but using them effectively is what will get you around the hills.

Small steps will help you position your centre of balance over your feet as you walk. Making a stable platform with each step, using as much of the sole as possible is also important. It is easier to make such a platform on grassy and muddy slopes with stiffer boots than with trail shoes and soft boots.

Steep ground is always easier to ascend (go up) in control than it is to traverse (across) or descend (go down). The ground ahead is close at hand when ascending, and with short steps, foot placements are easy to spot. On descents, in contrast, you have to extend downwards with each step, making placements more difficult to settle on. Trekking poles can help greatly in these situations. Practice in secure places on short slopes. The tendency when traversing is to creep down the slope. In some situations, this may not be a problem, but traversing a steep slope for a long time can be very tiring.

Terrain

Look at the map before leaving and see where your route will take you. If you know what to expect you will be in better position to deal with it.

Cows and livestock

Take care around all livestock. Give them plenty of room and leave gates and property as you find them.

Cows are usually peaceful and calm animals but they can sometimes behave unpredictably or aggressively if they feel threatened, so it is good to give them lots of space as you pass through a field. Be especially careful around cows with newly-born calves and

remember that the calves can be dangerous too. If you approach a field of cows and there are calves, try to choose a different route to avoid them.

If walking with a dog take extra care as cows and other livestock may get spooked by the dog and try to drive it away. While the countryside is a great place to exercise dogs, it is every owner's duty to make sure their dog is not a danger or nuisance to farm animals, wildlife or other people. By law, farmers are entitled to kill a dog that injures or worries their animals, therefore dogs should be kept on a lead at any time of the year when near farm animals, particularly during the lambing season. There will be circumstances when you should release your dog from its lead. If you find yourself in a field of wary animals, move away carefully and quietly. If you feel threatened by livestock release your dog from its lead; let it run free rather than try to protect it and endangering yourself. The dog will outrun the animals and you. Remove the lead to avoid the risk of strangulation.

Those without canine companions should also move away carefully and quietly. The animals will probably leave you alone once they establish that you pose no threat.



Specific to the Dales

Many routes cover areas of exposed limestone which becomes very slippery when wet and will need extra care.

The area has hundreds of cave and mine entrances. These should only be explored by properly equipped and experienced people.

Don't think that the sun can't be intense in the Dales. It's important that, for warmer days, you have access to sunscreen and a water bottle.



Ticks

Ticks are small arachnids, which live off the blood of birds and mammals – including you. Ticks climb tall grass, shrubs, bushes and low-level tree branches. When you or an animal brush past they can attach themselves almost anywhere but prefer dark creases like the armpit, groin and back of the knee. Lyme disease is caused by bacteria carried by ticks in many popular walking areas. Being bitten by a tick does not mean you will contract Lyme disease, but taking steps to prevent tick bites is the best plan to follow. Avoid unnecessary bushwacking, keep your arms and legs covered, and check your clothes and skin frequently. Where possible, use an effective tool and technique to remove ticks.

Symptoms of Lyme disease typically show a few days to several weeks after being bitten. Early signs might include a red ring-shaped rash which gradually spreads from the site of the tick bite, usually with a fading centre. If left untreated a whole range of symptoms can develop, including a flu-like illness, swollen glands, mild headaches, tiredness and itching muscles and joints.

For more information go to the BMC website – **thebmc.co.uk/ticks.**



Hidden hazards

A convex slope is shaped like a dome, shallow at the top and steeply sided. This means that the view of what lies ahead is often obscured. In descent, a convex slope may hide real dangers such as a line of cliffs, a steep grass slope or a snow patch. The contours describing a convex slope will be further apart near the top and closer together as the slope steepens. Noticing such patterns on a map will help with route planning, and map symbols will show any hazards along your route.

Water hazards

The water levels of streams, rivers, bogs and lakes can vary greatly throughout the year. Prolonged heavy rainfall can lead to flash flooding, with paths being transformed into streams. Be aware that you may need to find an alternative route if heavy rainfall has occurred.

Wild swimming can be an enjoyable and refreshing element to add to your walks. But be mindful of safety considerations, your confidence in swimming and strong currents.

If you are thinking of wild swimming, please read the advice on water safety and swimming from the Yorkshire Dales National Park website:

CLICK OR SCAN

Read advice about Water safety and swimming





Weather

The weather in the mountains can change quickly and be much more extreme than down in the valleys. Here's how to survive and enjoy our Atlantic climate in the uplands.

Always use a mountain-specific weather forecast as there are major differences between urban and upland weather. These are available online for some areas at **mwis.org.uk** and **metoffice.gov.uk**.

Use the information from the forecast as part of your planning. Planning lunches and resting time during sunny spells or in covered areas if rain is forecasted, for example. Be aware that the weather can be more extreme in the hills than in the cities. General forecasts are for sea level, and you can pretty much guarantee that it will be colder, wetter and windier the higher you climb.

Hill walkers should develop their understanding of the typical British weather systems, and learn how to interpret a sea level forecast for the mountain environment, including the crucial connection between a forecast and how the weather will feel. As forecasts are just a prediction, the weather you experience could be more or less severe than predicted.

Pack the right kit and equipment for the predicted weather, the more prepared you are the more likely you are to enjoy and embrace the weather whatever it might throw at you!

Wind

What feels like a stiff breeze in the valley can become a gale high in the hills, making the going harder than expected. Expecting two to three times the wind speed on the summits to that at sea level is a useful rule of thumb. If a general forecast says it will be quite breezy, you may want to think twice before heading out on an exposed ridge. Wind tends to come from a specific direction, so picking routes on a hill's sheltered side should result in the wind's full strength being avoided until near the summit.

TERRAIN

Grass slopes

Steep grass slopes can be extremely hazardous, not only in wet conditions, but also when the grass is long and dry. It's not the ground underfoot that defines the seriousness of a situation, but the consequences of a fall. An unbroken steep grassy slope may be more serious than a steeper, but short rocky slope. If you can't avoid a steep grassy slope, take care with foot placement and be prepared for unexpected slips and falls or uneven ground hidden by the grass.

Rocks

Many walking routes may have one or more short rocky steps where care and attention are required. Though not echnically demanding, the consequences of a fall in the wrong place could be serious. Confidence in your movement skills is vital; be aware that rock steps can be more challenging in descent than ascent and can become slippery when wet. Loose rock tumbling down the hillside is also a hazard. If walking where you think there might be loose rock above, consider if any people or animals could dislodge rocks onto you, or you onto others.

Scree

Scree, composed of loose surface rocks, is commonly encountered in the mountains, and is often tiring to ascend. In wet conditions, scree can be difficult to cross, being both unstable and slippery, and great care should be taken. Scree running, which is sliding down with the flow of the scree instead of taking small footsteps, should be avoided, as it accelerates erosion and is environmentally damaging.

Winter Hazards

In winter the wind can be strong enough to blow you over, potentially a very serious situation if walking on a steep slope or ridge. A forecast will help you plan your day appropriately. Don't forget to consider that winter days are short. Navigating in winter is more difficult as snow cover can hide features, and the ground can appear different from indications given by the map's contours.

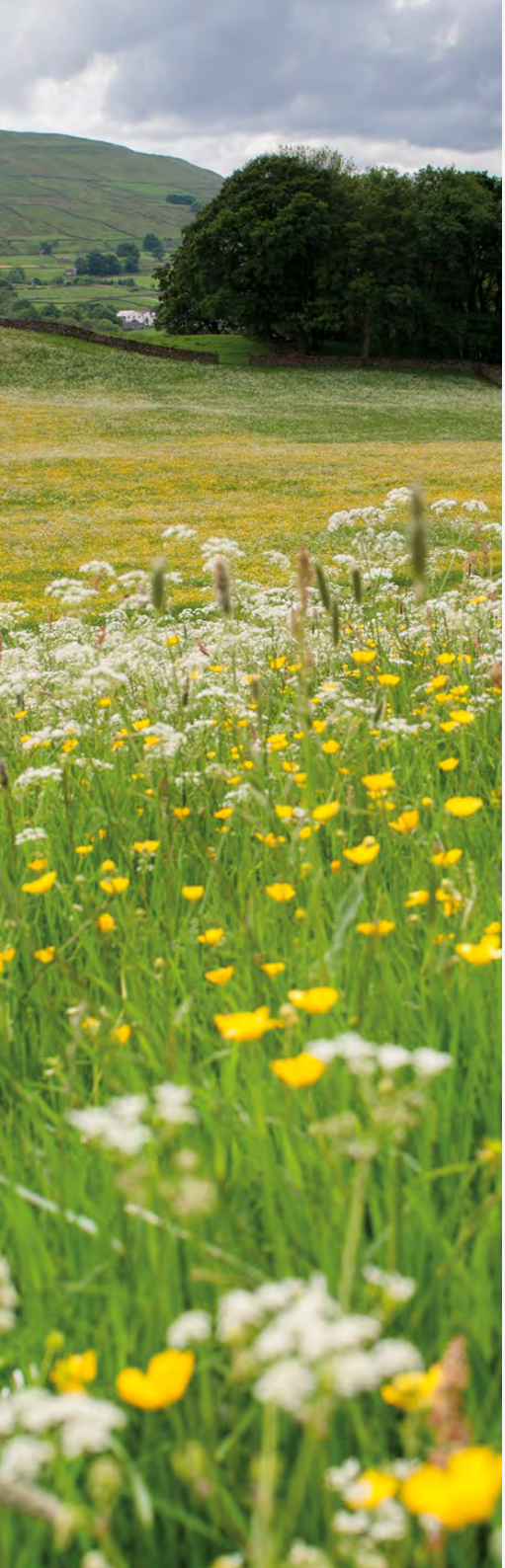
Winter skills courses

Before heading out in winter we would recommend you attend a winter skills course. This will help you to feel confident in your hiking skills and prepared for the increased challenges from more extreme weather.



ACCESS AND THE ENVIRONMENT





Yorkshire Dales specific

The National Park is home to nationally and internationally important landscapes and wildlife.

Our 17 priority habitats include the species-rich hay meadows of the valley bottoms, the calcareous grasslands on the thin limestone soils, the upland ash and oak woodlands on the valley sides and fell top blanket bog and heathland.

We have more than 120 species which are national priorities for conservation action. These include red squirrels, peregrine falcons and lady's-slipper orchids.

Wildlife and habitats

The many pressures on land which lead to habitat decline and loss have resulted in much of the British Isles becoming highly fragmented which makes wildlife even more vulnerable. National Park status helps to protect wildlife and habitats from some of these pressures.

As a result, the Yorkshire Dales National Park is one of the least fragmented areas in England. This is an invaluable natural asset in terms of biodiversity and ecosystem services as well as having a social and economic benefit. However, the National Park is a constantly changing environment and it is important that wildlife protection is a key consideration during change.

Almost 30% (50,000 hectares) of the Yorkshire Dales National Park is made up of nationally and internationally important habitats – the largest area of any National Park. Geology, natural processes and human influences have created the particular conditions that support rich and diverse wildlife and habitats:

Flower-rich hay meadows and pastures, produced by traditional, low intensity management of grazing land over many decades. These are very scarce nationally – this is one of the few areas where they survive in any number.

A range of rare limestone habitats linked directly to the geology of the southern Dales. The area's limestone country is internationally recognised for its biodiversity, which includes rare wet meadows and upland pastures, limestone pavement and limestone woodland and scrub.

Extensive areas of moorland – much of it (42% of the area of the National Park) managed as grouse moor – that contain upland heath and blanket and raised bog, which are internationally important for wildlife and the carbon they store in peat. These habitats cover vast areas and contain a variety of plant species and important bird populations.

Small areas of broadleaf woodland (2.5% of the area of the National Park), representing remnants of former more extensive broadleaved woodland or later plantings. Surviving areas of ancient woodland are of particularly high biodiversity value.

Nationally important populations of breeding waders, black grouse, and ring ouzel; rare lime-loving plants such as bird's-eye primrose, rigid buckler fern, globeflower and baneberry; rare and scarce invertebrates such as the northern brown argus butterfly and the white-clawed crayfish; and important mammals, notably the red squirrel.



Guide to the seasons

CLICK OR SCAN

Download PDF Guide Spring

CLICK OR SCAN

Download PDF Guide Summer

CLICK OR SCAN

Download PDF Guide Autumn

CLICK OR SCAN

Download PDF Guide Winter

Paths

Paths have been constructed in many areas to protect and repair mountains from the erosion caused by large numbers of visitors. Use paths wherever possible rather than taking shortcuts. If paths are narrow, walk single file to avoid further erosion.



Boundaries

Climbing over walls and fences will damage them; use stiles and gates wherever possible. leave gates and property as you find them. Farmers close gates to keep animals in or leave them open to give them access to food and water.

Transport

Traffic congestion and parking problems are often an issue in many popular upland areas. You can make a difference to the local area, the cost of travel and make a sustainable choice by using public transport, car sharing and if driving, using designated parking places.

CLICK OR SCAN

Check out the BMC's Liftshare site to share a ride with another hiker

Cars and other vehicles blocking gates and country lanes are a major source of conflict in rural areas. While many lanes leading to the start of hill-walks are narrow and twisty, large vehicles such as delivery vans, farm vehicles and emergency vehicles still need to get past, so it's important to choose your parking place carefully so it does not block or impede access for others.



Periods in the outdoors

When hiking on your period you can use any of the normal products you would use anywhere else. Remember to consider how you will carry any waste off the hill side and keep products in a zip lock bag to keep them clean and dry for use. Don't forget any medication or comforts if you experience pain. Reusable heat packs are a great if you usually like to use a hot-water bottle.

CLICK OR SCAN

Outdoor Her
BMC's resource for women

Litter

Take your litter home with you. If you have carried it out then carry it back in again. Where possible pick up other people's litter. And remember that organic litter takes longer than you think to biodegrade and many tropical fruit skins and peels never break down in our colder climate. Reduce the litter you need to carry out with you by repackaging your food into reusable containers before you set out.

CLICK OR SCAN

Find a Hills 2 Oceans hub
at participating YHA hostels

Respect the wild: poo like a pro

When out for the day it is likely you will need to go to the loo at some point. Where possible use public toilets. If none are available, there are a few easy considerations to make to ensure you don't endanger human health or poison the upland environment. Ensure you are at least 30 metres away from running water and 50 metres away from paths. Carry a lightweight trowel to carefully cut a 15cm deep hole. Bury your poo and replace the top turf. Better still, you can pack your poo into a bag and carry it out to be disposed of safely and responsibly. Toilet paper is slow to decompose and may be dug up by animals, so you should always carry this off. You can put it in a zip lock bag to make sure it doesn't escape. Don't go to the toilet in enclosed spaces such as caves and ruined buildings.

CLICK OR SCAN

Watch guide
How to Poo like a Pro

Shop locally

Help support local people by shopping at local businesses such as grocers, cafés, pubs, restaurants and outdoor retailers. The local spending of countryside visitors is vital to many rural communities.



Walking with dogs

It is a criminal offence to allow your dog to worry stock. On open access land in England and Wales dogs must be kept on a short lead from 1 March to 31 July and at all times when in the vicinity of livestock. They may be excluded at all times on some grouse moors. In fields of animals, they must be kept under close control on a short lead. Dogs can cause other problems – disturbing wildlife, eating the chicks of ground nesting birds, barking, disrupting other users and defecating near paths.

Wildfires

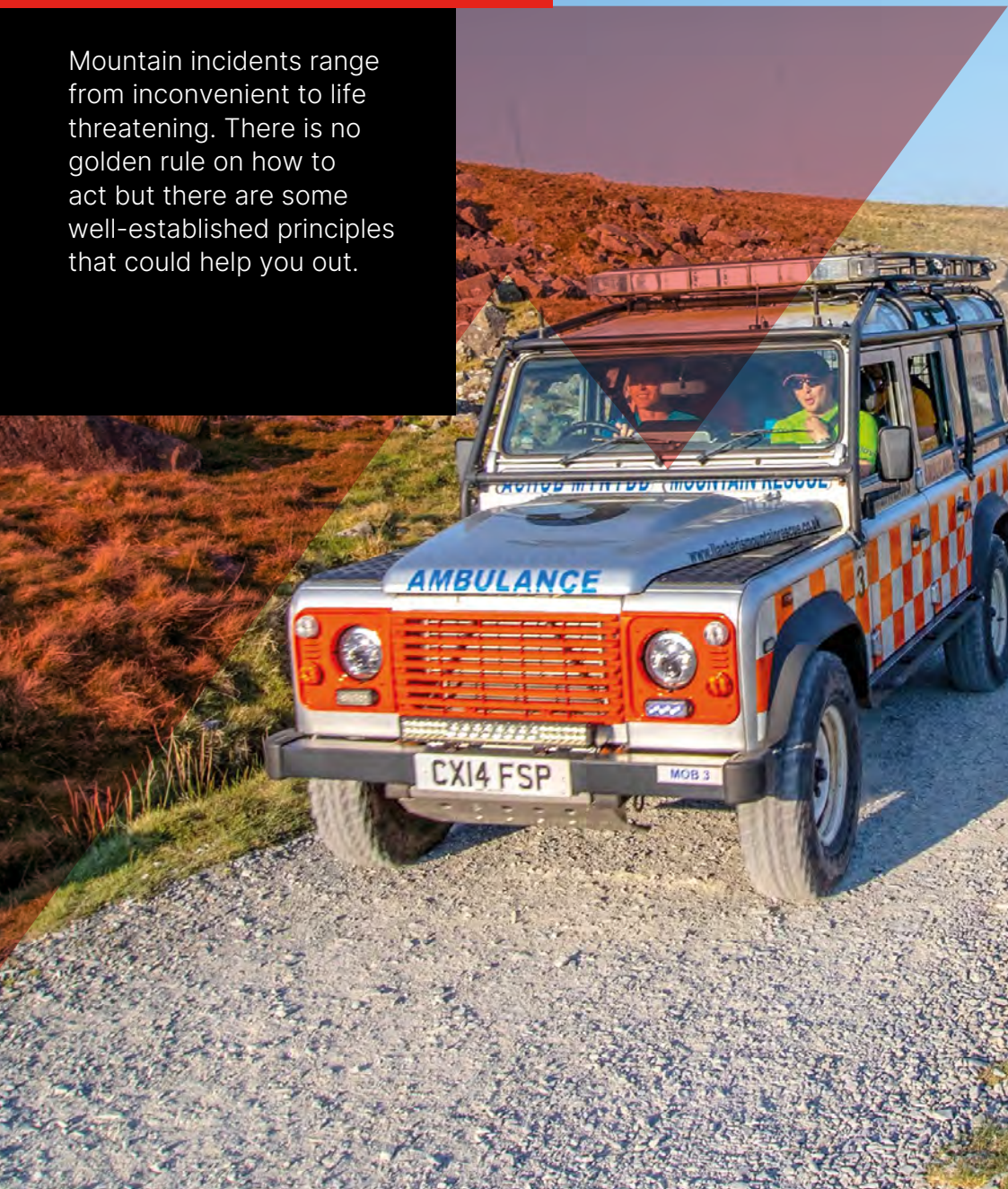
Peat and vegetation which grow in upland areas can be very flammable. Accidental fires from barbecues, cigarettes and other flammables destroy habitats and kill wildlife. More fires happen in the UK than you might imagine and when carbon rich peat burns it can release masses of CO_2 into the atmosphere. Respect all warning signs and if you see a fire, don't assume that someone else has called the emergency services. Note your location and dial 999.

CLICK OR SCAN

Watch BMC's short film No Moor BBQs

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Mountain incidents range from inconvenient to life threatening. There is no golden rule on how to act but there are some well-established principles that could help you out.





Stay calm and assess the situation. Consider what should be done immediately to safeguard everyone. If possible determine your exact position on the map and consider the options for walking down, sending for help, or finding shelter.

Whilst mobile phones can be very useful, you should only use them to call mountain rescue if you are in an emergency situation. If you are not sure whether it is an emergency, investigate a little yourself before sending for outside help.

If someone is injured, only minor injuries should come within the scope of treatment and evacuation by other group members. For all other cases make sure the casualty is safe from any further injury, start first aid, and call the appropriate emergency service.

Sending for help

When phoning dial **999** and ask for: **POLICE** and then **MOUNTAIN RESCUE**

When connected, provide:

1 location of the incident

2 number and names of people in the party and their condition

3 any injuries and names of casualties

Be ready to provide the following additional information:

- Number of the phone you are using and any other phones in the group
- The nature of the incident – what happened?
- Time of the incident
- Equipment which is at the accident site (warm clothing, group shelter etc.)
- Any distinguishing feature / marker / colour at the accident site

If there is no coverage at your location, consider walking uphill to find a better signal. If no signal can be found, one or more reliable members of the party, with full information about the accident, should be sent to find the nearest telephone. At least one person should stay with the casualty.

A text message can be sent to summon help when poor reception does not allow voice calls. You must text 'register' to 999 in order to use this service. Complete this one-off registration before you set off.

The Cave Rescue Organisation is based in Clapham and the Upper Wharfedale Fell Rescue Association is based in Grassington.





Providing your location

If you have phone signal many mountain rescue teams will now send you a text with a link that will send them your exact location. If this is not an option or you have sent someone down the hill for help, you should try to provide a six-figure grid reference. If you know where you are, you can find this on your map. If you are able to, using the OS locate app on your phone will also provide a grid reference. It is wise to have this ready downloaded in case of an emergency.

What to do if there is no signal

You have a difficult decision when a casualty is injured and you are alone and unable to make a phone call. Try to summon help by shouting, giving the distress call of six whistle blasts or six flashes with a torch, repeated regularly. If there is no response, assess the relative dangers of leaving the casualty or failing to get help. Act decisively in the interest of the casualty, but always remember to consider your own safety first.

Many people do not consider the importance of first aid training until standing next to an injured companion on a remote mountainside. First aid can make a big difference to the comfort and safety of an injured person. A large range of first aid publications and courses are available, many of which are tailored to hill walkers. Search online to find a local course.

The British Mountain Medicine Society and the BMC also run the Mountain Medicine Weekend each year to help provide people with the skills and knowledge to support one another when faced with medical emergencies in the hills.

Find out more on the BMC website – **thebmc.co.uk/mountain-medicine-weekend**

Finding shelter

An unintentional night out can result from a navigational error or unexpected conditions. It is one of those things a hill walker should be prepared for, although it can often be avoided with good planning, taking a torch and making an early start.

Group shelters and bivi bags provide protection from the elements. If you are caught out, consider the following:

- Seek shelter from the elements.
- Put all your spare clothing on, including hats and gloves.
- Sit on anything that will provide insulation from the ground, such as your rucksack.
- Seek warmth from other party members by huddling together.
- Keep an eye on other people for signs of hypothermia.

Come first light, if everyone is fine, continue with your journey. Get word out as soon as possible to put a stop to any search that might have begun.

Emergency kit checklist

As well as being aware of the advice on this page, being prepared for an emergency means having certain items to hand.

- Fully charged mobile phone
- Head torch and spare batteries (for visual distress sign if out of signal range)
- Whistle (for audible distress sign if out of signal range)
- GPS device (optional – this can be a useful navigational tool, but in emergencies provides a quick fix on your location in order to convey your coordinates to Mountain Rescue)

CLICK OR SCAN

Watch here – Emergency procedures for hill walking



NEXT STEPS

Learn more with the BMC and Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

BMC clubs and groups

Joining a club or walking group is a great way to meet new people and learn new things. Walking with more experienced members will support your own journey and help you to take on bigger and more challenging hikes.

CLICK OR SCAN

Find your next adventure with a BMC affiliated club

Join a BMC hill walking event

From skills workshops to social walks and volunteering opportunities. The BMC has a whole range of events taking place throughout the year. Find out more about what's happening near you on the events page of the BMC's hill walking site.

CLICK OR SCAN

Find your next hillwalking event

BMC Hill Walking Essentials Playlist

Tune in to watch the BMC's 42 short how-to Hill Walking skills films. The YouTube playlist covers topics such as "What is the right rucksack for me" all the way through to "How to take a compass bearing". The series is presented by long-distance walking and backpacking expert Chris Townsend, Mountain Leader Emma Warren and Winter and Summer Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor Louise Tully.

CLICK OR SCAN

Watch: Hill Walking Essentials

BMC TV

If you are looking for some quick advice to help you nail that skill, or are searching for your next hiking location, head over to our YouTube channel, BMC TV. Packed with hill walking content, our short films range from essential skills to epic inspirations. New films are added regularly so be sure to subscribe to keep up to date with the latest additions.

CLICK OR SCAN

Watch here BMC TV

Mountain Training

The awarding organisation offers Hill & Mountain Skills courses to help people build confidence and become more independent, walk leadership qualifications for those responsible for others, and a series of books to support your development as a hill walker including Hill Walking and Navigation in the Mountains.

CLICK OR SCAN

Skills

CLICK OR SCAN

Leadership qualifications

CLICK OR SCAN

Books

The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

Visit our website where you can find resources on the National Park and more information around learning and engagement **– yorkshiredales.org.uk**

CLICK OR SCAN

Yorkshire Dales National Park Resources



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