



Pennine Way South (Self-Guided)

Please email us at info@ukexploratory.com or call us on +44 (0)1942 826 270 to chat about this holiday. You'll find all the latest information at www.alpineexploratory.com/holidays/pennine-way-south.html.



Lothersdale on the Pennine Way

About these Holiday Notes

These Holiday Notes help you decide whether this holiday is right for you. Before your trip we send you final detailed information.

Details

Start Edale
Finish Malham
Region Peak District and South Pennines
Country England
Length 6 walking days and 7 nights
Total distance 140km or 87.5 miles
Typical day 23.5km (14 miles), 630m ascent
Highest altitude 893m on Kinder Low and Bleaklow Head
Grade Intermediate

Introduction

The Pennine Way stretches for 429km (268 miles) from Edale in the Peak District to Kirk Yetholm just over the Scottish-English border.

This self-guided walking holiday takes in the southern section of the Pennine Way from Edale to Malham, a stretch of 6 days. It takes you through the intriguing landscapes of the Peak District and the South Pennines, ending at the foot of the Yorkshire Dales.

The idea for a long distance path along the central mountains of England came from Tom Stephenson in 1935. Creating public access to such a long string of paths took many years. The Pennine Way was officially opened on 24 April 1965 at a gathering on Malham Moor. It became the first official long distance path in Britain.

The Pennine Way in its entirety is regarded as among the toughest walking challenges in Britain. The terrain it passes through is inhospitable in many places and requires a degree of resistance and tenacity!

The rewards for this are great, however. The scenery is bold and varied and the sense of

achievement at the completion of each stage is considerable.

One image of the Pennine Way is of a series of bleak wet moors where getting wet feet is unavoidable. There are still some wet places but nowadays that image is outdated. The path has been improved substantially in recent years with many areas of stone flags underfoot. Much of the rest of the route lies on good tracks and field paths.

As for the scenery, the Pennine Way is full of interest and each local place you pass has its own way of life. The route does not stick to the Pennine watershed, because to do so would make the walk extremely arduous and give it many fewer staging posts. Instead the path descends East or West throughout its length, spending much time alongside rivers and visiting villages.

Our approach to the Pennine Way

Your route
Your route follows the official Pennine Way. Set off from Edale, the pleasant start point in the Peak District. Cross Kinder Scout, more accurately skirting the edge of the plateau. Bleaklow Head is the next obstacle before the long walk up to Black Hill. A succession of moorland crossings takes you to Blackstone Edge and the reservoirs above the Calder Valley and Hebden Bridge. Take to the moors again to Haworth, and keep on North through Lothersdale and Thornton-in-Craven to East Marton and Gargrave. The walking is now pastoral, through fields and along rivers. Arrive in Malham with the Dales proper just above you.

The whole Pennine Way
By completing this South section, the Central and North sections can be picked off on later trips of about 7 and 6 days respectively to complete the whole Pennine Way from Edale to Kirk Yetholm.

Routecards and maps
Each day's route is explained in detail on your routecards, to bring you to your night's accommodation. We give you the real maps for you to follow, not printouts or photocopies.

Getting there and back
Your holiday starts in Edale and ends in Malham. Travel to Edale and from Malham is not included in the holiday price - we leave it to you to make the arrangements that suit you best. Edale is on the train line between Manchester and Sheffield, and Malham has good bus connections to main line trains and the Settle to Carlisle line. Your info pack contains full information on travel options. It is possible to leave a car at either your first or

last night's accommodation. If you would like to do this, please let us know.

Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival in Edale
Settle into the village of Edale, perhaps after exploring the surrounding countryside.

Guesthouse, Edale

Day 2: Edale to Torside
(24km or 15 miles)

Cross Kinder Scout's large flat top on the edge, by the peak of Kinder Low. Later, cross Bleaklow Head. Both are 633m high and are together the highest points on your trip. This is grand moorland walking before a final descent into the valley at Torside Reservoir, near the hamlet of Crowden.

B&B, Torside

Day 3: Torside to Standedge
(20km or 12.5 miles)

Black Hill at 582m is the main challenge of this second stage. The ascent is long and gentle across the moor. The bogs at the summit are not a concern thanks to some good path building in recent years. In the afternoon cross further, lower moorland to reach Standedge.

Guesthouse, Standedge area

Day 4: Standedge to Hebden Bridge
(26.5km or 16.5 miles)

Your third stage begins with some wild moorland paths, over Millstone Edge and White Hill. Cross the M62 motorway on the famous footbridge built for the Pennine Way. Blackstone Edge is next (and again the notorious bogs of Redmires are a thing of the past). Roll along easy reservoir tracks to Stoodley Pike and then drop into the Calder Valley.

Inn, Hebden Bridge

Day 5: Hebden Bridge to Haworth
(23.5km or 14.5 miles)

The Calder Valley is hard to leave, being so friendly and convenient. Today's route starts with a steep climb to the moors, crossing an old stone packhorse bridge on the way. Pass remote reservoirs; and once over the moors, drop through old fields past Top Withins to Haworth. Haworth is a superb place to spend the night.

Guesthouse, Haworth

Day 6: Haworth to Earby
(25km or 15.5 miles)

This stage is one of the least remarkable, but it has its own charm. The crossing of the Wolfstones ridge is a wild stretch. Field paths and lanes take you on to Ickornshaw and then Lothersdale, a pretty village hidden away in the fold of hills until the last minute. Climb to

Pinhaw Beacon for a last experience of higher moorland on the trek. Drop into the village of Earby, slightly off the Pennine Way, for a night in its Youth Hostel.

Hostel, Earby

Day 7: Earby to Malham

(22.5km or 14 miles)

Rejoin the moorland route and walk down to Thornton-in-Craven. We also give a shorter direct route over fields. Here the fields start in earnest. It's a long distance to Gargrave and Malham but the walking is simple. In Malham, with the limestone Dales ahead, there's chance to visit local sights such as Gordale Scar before your last night.

Guesthouse, Malham

Day 8: Departure from Malham

Morning departure from Malham.

Our usual schedule of accommodation might not be available, especially if there is not much time between booking and your trip starting. We will book accommodation as closely as possible to this itinerary and present you a schedule for you to check before we proceed.

Accommodation

This holiday stays in pleasant guesthouses, bed & breakfasts or inns along the route, with one night in a youth hostel. We place most value on a friendly welcome, comfortable standards and a good location within the village or town.

We book ensuite accommodation except where it is not available, for example in older buildings or more remote locations, and of course in the hostel.

Your info pack contains full details of your accommodation including contact details and directions.

Food

The food of the Peak District and South Pennines is hearty and often locally produced. Classic dishes include lamb shank with mashed potato; steak and kidney pie; and of course fish and chips. Fish or game of many types are often seen.

You will have enough chances to buy lunch ingredients, or to stop for lunch, along the way. However, on some stages you will have to be self-sufficient throughout the walk. Your routecards show places to eat and stock up on the route.

We include one evening meal, at the hostel, and breakfast on all mornings.

The walking

Terrain

The terrain is a mix of the following and more:

- Paths in woodland
- Walled tracks
- Paths through fields (some indistinct)
- Country lanes

Paths over the open hillside (some indistinct)
Steep rocky paths or steps

The landscape should be treated as wild terrain in which you will need to be self-reliant. We strongly recommend that you know how to navigate with a map and compass; the skills are easy to learn and your notes include details of some good books.

Signposts and waymarks

Directions on the ground are reasonably common in the form of small yellow waymarks, wooden finger posts and the National Trail acorn symbol denoting a long distance path. However, signs have a habit of disappearing or confusing at crucial points, so please be prepared to navigate!

Your own routes

While your routecards make up the walking for the trip, you are of course free to walk wherever you choose, taking side trips or going by a different route of your own choice. Please note that if you follow your own route you will have left the holiday for the duration.

Local transport

No local transport is needed for this holiday due to its nature as a continuous walk. Your only focus is on the walking – a real break! Excursions to local towns, for example Manchester, Halifax, Bradford and Skipton might be possible by bus or train. As well as these options your notes and routecards tell you about the options for shortening or missing out entirely each day's walk by using buses and trains, where possible.

Language

English is the local language.

Weather

The weather in the Pennines between April and October is generally very suitable for walking. While snowfall is in theory possible on higher ground all year round, it is very rare in the summer months. April and May can often be excellent months for warmth and relative dryness. Any time in June, July and August is likely to be warm enough for comfort but with a good chance of rain on at least some days. Towards the Autumn, September and October can be quieter and very pleasant, though colder.

This all means that it is sensible to come equipped for and expecting all the types of weather that might be experienced in a typical summer in the UK: from heavy rain storms with a chill in the air, to hot sunshine.

Equipment

You will need the usual equipment for mountain walking in the UK. Especially important are good walking boots, waterproofs and sun protection. Your info pack contains a suggested equipment list. Please also see the Equipment page of our website for more information.

Insurance

We recommend, but it is not compulsory, that you have insurance cover for personal liability, cancellation and your baggage and money. Your info pack contains details of suitable insurance policies.

Money in the UK

The currency is the Pound Sterling (GBP).

Local expenses

Local expenses include food and drink other than breakfasts and one evening meal, plus any local transport, attractions and extras.

Guided days

Hire a professional mountain leader to join you on this self-guided holiday, for one or more days. A leader helps plan and carry out each day's walking and adds interest to your holiday by pointing out local features. Please contact us for prices and more information.

Groups

Walk by yourself or in your own group, or see if we can match you up with other like-minded walkers on the same holiday. Any group will be a maximum of 8 people.

Hazards

Health

The UK does not require tourists to take any vaccinations. However, it is recommended to keep tetanus vaccines up to date.

Safety

This is adventure travel! This holiday takes you to some wild and remote areas, in particular some areas of upland moor and mountain where navigation can be difficult in poor weather. The weather can also be a hazard in itself. During any walking, whether following a routecard or making your own route, you are responsible for your own actions and safety and you should join the trip with suitable skills, experience and equipment.

Further information

Please email us with any questions at info@ukexploratory.com.

Disclaimer

This information is given in good faith and is believed to be correct at the time of issue. UK Exploratory cannot be liable for any loss or injury incurred.