

THREE PEAKS CHALLENGE ROUTE

24 miles (38.6 km)

Cumulative distances and guidance times are shown at each stage. Timings and distances based on the Whitber Hill route

4. RIBBLEHEAD. 10.4 miles; 5:15 hrs

Take road NW from Station Inn to pass alongside Viaduct on path for **Whernside**. Cross railway line by aqueduct and follow path steeply NW for **Dent Dale**. Cross fence stile on left and follow path to **Whernside** summit

3. HIGH BIRKWITH. 7.0 miles; 3:45 hrs

Cross road & over small hill to drop to a gate. Continue NW to cross God's Bridge and on to Nether Lodge. Follow farm access road out to B6479 and turn right on road to Ribblehead

5. WHERNSIDE. 14.2 miles; 7:35 hrs

Continue S descending gently along ridge with wall on right, until path bears left steeply downhill to Bruntscar. Follow access road south for **The Hill Inn** to Philpin Lane, onto Low Sleights Rd. Left to Hill Inn

6. HILL INN. 16.9 miles; 8:40 hrs

Cross stile just up from Hill Inn to join clear path heading S, climbing limestone terraces at Southerscales for **Ingleborough**. Pass Braithwaite Wife Hole, through gate climbing across wet area to Humphrey Bottom. A very steep ascent up zigzagged stone steps leads to summit

ESSENTIALS

Carry a detailed OS map (OL2 - Yorkshire Dales Southern & Western areas) and a compass.
Carry warm clothing and waterproofs - it is exposed on the fell tops and can get very cold, even in summer.
Carry plenty of water to drink.
Inform someone of your plans and let them know when you're back safely.
Carry a mobile phone, even though you may lose signals entirely in some places. In an emergency call 999 and ask for the POLICE, then tell them you need MOUNTAIN RESCUE.

7. INGLEBOROUGH. 19.4 miles; 10:20 hrs

Retrace steps from summit, veering right at fork in cobbled descent path (easily missed). Join clear path ESE all the way past Sulber and down to **Horton-in-Ribblesdale**. Cross railway at station and return to start

8. FINISH - HORTON. 24.0 miles; 12:00 hrs

BLACK DUBB MOSS ROUTE

[Until 2013] Go straight on at sharp left bend, turning NW to cross Hull Pot Beck at stepping stones. Track becomes very boggy at Black Dubb Moss. Go on NW to cross PW at a stile. Continue NW to join the road to High Birkwith

WHITBER HILL ROUTE

[From 2013] Continue following PW down to the gate at Horton Scar Lane. Pass this & climb up over Whitber Hill, bearing left at wall corner and continue NW on clear track, dropping to join PW by Jackdaw Hill. Go right along PW for 3/4 mile to a wall stile on left. Continue NW to join the road to High Birkwith

2. PEN-Y-GHENT. 3.0 miles; 2:00 hrs

Head away from wall for **Horton-in-Ribblesdale** NW. Bear right at edge to descend from summit

1. START - HORTON. 0.0 miles; 0:00 hrs

From station follow main road E to cross bridge by crown Inn. Continue S along main road, eventually pass church on left and cross bridge. Turn left along lane with beck on left. At Brackenbottom take path on left for **Pen-y-ghent** to climb steeply up to summit

Pennine Way, turning right to follow it north. Pass through a gate by Red Moss Pot and on to a wallstile on the left.

Continuing from where the 2 alternatives meet:

Cross the stile and follow the wall on the left up the hill and down to another stile, over which join a broad green path continuing NW. The broad green path leads on to a farm track, above a wooded gill to a stile by a gate at a wall corner. Cross this and follow the wall on the right to the road, (which leads down left to High Birkwith).

3) High Birkwith to Ribblesdale (3.4 miles; 1:30 hrs)

Go over the road and drop to cross a beck at a footbridge, then head straight over a small hill and down to a stile by a gate at a wall corner. Now follow the wall on the left down to cross God's Bridge, and on to a footbridge over a beck by Nether Lodge. Through the gate, turn left to follow the access road west for **Ribblehead**. The road leads over the River Ribble, up past by the 17th century Ingman Lodge and out onto the B6479. Turn right and follow the road for a mile, turning left at the a T-junction at Ribblesdale, up towards the Station Inn (you can just cross the road here and follow the path uphill, cutting the corner).

4) Ribblesdale to Whernside (4.1 miles; 2:20 hrs)

Turn right just below the Station Inn to follow the road towards the viaduct. Just before the road passes under the viaduct, take the track – **FP Whernside** – that continues ahead on the side of the viaduct and climbs up besides the railway.

Pass the lonely outpost of Blea Moor signalbox and the accompanying house and continue north between beck and rail. The track crosses the beck at a couple of spots, finally making use of a wooden footbridge to cross a tributary before swinging in to cross the railway line by an aqueduct that carries the waters of Force Gill Beck across the line.

Continue up the path signed **Dent Dale** as it pulls away from the railway to climb steeply alongside a fence, passing the waterfalls of Force Gill.

A stile in the fence on the left marks the departure point from this path. Cross and continue the long climb to Whernside. The path closes in to a fence, which then becomes a wall, as it climbs above a steep drop to the left, with Greensett Tarn below.

The summit is reached at a gap in the wall, with shelters. The trig point is on the other side.

5) Whernside to the Old Hill Inn (2.7 miles; 1:05 hrs)

Continue south with the wall on your right, to begin the long descent. Eventually the path takes a left

turn away from the wall and drops straight down steeply to a stile, then continues down, over another stile, to a gate at Bruntscar.

Turn right then left to follow the access road for **The Hill Inn** down to Philpin Lane and out onto Low Sleights Road, turning left up to the Old Hill Inn.

6) The Old Hill Inn to Ingleborough (2.5 miles; 1:40 hrs)

Just past the Hill Inn go through a stile on the right and follow the wall on the right up to a gate on the right. Through this follow the clear track for **Ingleborough** across a couple of fields and up through limestone terraces, passing a large shakehole on the left, up to a gate.

The path now climbs steeply in parts, along board walks and flagging, to Humphrey Bottom. The climb is now very steep up zigzagged stone steps. At the top, pass through a gate and bear right for the final ascent to the summit.

7) Ingleborough Horton-in-Ribblesdale (4.3 miles; 1:40 hrs)

From the summit, retrace your steps down, descending to a cobbled section, watching for a fork right (easily missed), which drops to join a clear rocky path heading eastwards. Cross a double wall stile and follow the path as it drops steeply, closing in to a wall on the left, eventually reaching a ruined shooting hut.

From the shooting hut, cross a stile by a stream and follow the clear path alongside a wall on the left, passing through a very narrow way between limestone outcrops and through a gate. The path continues ESE to a crossroad of paths at Sulber.

Continue straight on following the obvious track for **Horton-in-Ribblesdale**. The way from here is obvious, though long. Finally drop to join the station platform at Ribblesdale.

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The Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge Route

The Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge - climbing Pen-y-ghent, Whernside and Ingleborough and returning to the starting point in a continuous circuit – is a tough undertaking. Covering 24 miles, with a total ascent of over 1600 metres, completing the enterprise in under 12 hours is considered a good achievement.

There is no official route or starting point, so you won't find it marked on OS maps, though the most popular route begins and ends at Horton-in-Ribblesdale. Pen-y-ghent is climbed first, then follows a seven-mile hike over Horton Moor to Ribblesdale before climbing Whernside and Ingleborough and returning to Horton.

The traditional route over Horton Moor crosses a notorious quagmire at Black Dubb Moss, but a better alternative now follows an improved track across Whitber Hill. It adds about half a mile to the route but the going underfoot is considerable easier. Following improvement works due to be finished in Spring 2013, this is set to become the preferred route.

The route is described here starting from the railway station at Horton-in-Ribblesdale. The timings assume a flat walking rate of about 2½ miles per hour, with an hour added for every 600 metres of ascent. There are no breaks included.

1) Horton-in-Ribblesdale to Pen-y-ghent (3.0 miles; 2:00 hrs)

From the station head east along the main road, crossing the bridge at the corner by the Crown Inn to continue south along the road, passing the Pen-y-ghent cafe. At the far end pass the Church of St Oswald on the left, cross Horton Bridge and take a left turn onto the lane besides the beck.

Follow the beck on the left as the lane climbs and bends right, finally leaving the stream as it approaches the tiny hamlet of Brackenbottom. Just before the first barn, take a gate on the left for **Pen-y-ghent**. It's a steep but straightforward climb, following the wall on the left, all the way up to the southern ridge beneath the peak.

Cross a stile and turn left to begin the climb to the summit along the Pennine Way. The path veers right along the edge and there's a bit of a rocky scramble to get above the limestone lip. The path turns back and the gradient eases a little before the second steep mini-scramble to climb above the gritstone edge. Finally the path rises gently to the summit.

2) Pen-y-ghent to High Birkwith (4.0 miles; 1:45 hrs)

Cross the stile beside the trig point and head straight away from the wall, NW, signed **Pennine Way, Horton-in-Ribblesdale**. The path drops gently and veers right above the escarpment edge, then descends along the western edge to the foot of the white limestone scars of Pen-y-ghent Side.

At a sharp left turn in the track a choice must be made – the more direct route over the boggy

quagmire of Black Dubb Moss or the much easier but slightly longer route via Whitber Hill?

(A) Black Dubb Moss route:

Here ignore the left turn but continue straight ahead, veering left to descend westwards, closing to the wall on your right to cross a stile onto Horton Moor. At a wall corner continue NW to reach a wallstile and cross Hull Pot Beck at the stepping stones. The way now becomes increasingly wet and muddy. Continue NW to reach a broken wall at Black Dubb Moss – a very boggy area, widely eroded, where the exact path becomes unclear. Straight on NW, climbing to a gate at Red Moss, before dropping to another gate at Long Mires, then on to join the Pennine Way by a wall stile.

(B) Whitber Hill route:

Bear left to follow the main Pennine Way route downhill to a gate leading onto the enclosed Horton Scar Lane. Ignore this and continue straight on past the gate heading west, climbing alongside the wall on the left on a clear track that veers right, away from the wall to the brow of the hill. At the top it joins a crumbled wall on the left and continues with this for a short way, as you begin to descend. At the corner turn left, heading west, to follow the improved track diagonally across level rough pasture, dropping to a gate at a wall junction.

Go through the gate and turn right to cross the sike, then continue diagonally along an obvious improved path heading NW to cross a wet patch before climbing towards the ridge wall, passing one gate and dropping to another. Go through the gate, turn left and follow the wall down to join the