

## The Three Peaks Challenge Walk

This narrative should be used as pre-ambler through the walk and should not be considered as an alternative to a recognised leisure map of this area of the Yorkshire Dales

The numbering of each paragraph is not significant in any way. It is merely to assist you when referring to this document if you are walking.

### --- Start ---

1. Arriving in Horton-In-Ribblesdale from Settle there is a decent sized car park on the left 100 metres after the Pen-y-Ghent Café. All day parking costs around four pounds which should be considered reasonable when toilet facilities are included.
2. Once you have double checked that you have everything you need to take on the first stage of the walk leave the car park and turn right. After the Pen-y-Ghent café cross the road and immediately before the churchyard take the signposted path on the left through the wooden gate and cross the field.
3. At the opposite end of the field go through the gate onto the narrow road, turn left and cross the footbridge, then left onto the minor road to the hamlet of Brackenbottom. When you reach Brackenbottom look for the signpost on the left and cross the stile into the fields.
4. Follow a very distinct path uphill and over a series of crossing points and gates and then, if the visibility is good, a very distinct target can be seen, the southern end of Pen-y-Ghent. As you cross what is obviously the final double stile the path meets the Pennine Way coming up from the right and the steep assault of the first summit looms to your left.
5. Fifteen minutes hard work should see you up the stone steps, through the steep boulder field and following the wall on your left up the gentle last three hundred metres to the trig point and shelter at 695 metres.
6. Once you reach the summit don't forget to slap the top of the trig point. Why people wish to do this is unknown, but for some strange reason most walkers seem happy to join in.
7. Climbing over the wall the path now starts a gentle descent before turning along the western edge and descending further along another very

distinct but rough track. On a clear day this section of the walk affords excellent views of the challenge ahead.

8. Straight forward in the distance is Ribbleshead Viaduct with Whernside beyond and to the right is the table top plateau of Ingleborough. If you are of a nervous disposition don't look; it might just spoil your day.
9. At the obvious hairpin bend, with a rock face thirty metres to your right, bear left and continue down the distinct path falling away down the hillside to your left. As you descend you can see in the bottom of the valley the large natural hollow in the ground that is Hull Pot. Continue down the Pennine Way to the bottom of this valley and the gate on the left and the sign indicating left to Horton but right to Foxup.
10. Turn right for about two hundred and fifty metres and Hull Pot appears on your left. Following wet weather the usually dry riverbed of Hull Pot Beck creates a spectacular waterfall crashing into the pot bottom.
11. With the pot to your right, continue up the gentle slope and follow the in-distinct Miners Path north-west and cross the Pennine Way at the in-appropriately named Dismal Hill. This route, although not perfect footing, avoids the necessity of crossing the quagmire of Black Dub Moss.
12. Continue along the distinct path and cross God's Bridge before going through the farm yard at Nether Lodge. From Nether Lodge take the farm track to and through Lodge Hall and up to the main road. Turn right and follow the road up to the T junction.
13. If you require refreshments before the ascent of Whernside try the 'Fourth Peak' tea and burger van that is invariably parked here. Take a moment to take in the impressive Ribbleshead Viaduct that carries the Settle Carlisle railway
14. From the T junction head for the viaduct but don't go under it. Keep to the east side and climb up the side of the embankment at the northern end joining a track from the right. This will take you past Bleamoor Sidings and signal box and on to Blue Clay Ridge. The path, which is running adjacent to an aqueduct, now crosses the railway and starts the ascent of Whernside.
15. After crossing the stile with the waterfall of Force Gill to your left the path goes north west

up Slack Hill for four hundred metres but watch for the signpost indicating Wherside and the stile taking you left over the wire fence towards the summit. Continue forward, with the summit now in front, until you reach the solid stone path through the marshy area called Greenset Moss then the left bearing steep climb.

**16.** After the climb there is a gradual slope up to the trig point on Wherside at 730m, the highest point in North Yorkshire. The trig point is through a gap in the wall so make sure you don't miss it.

**17.** From here you can look west across Kingsdale and see Gragareth. At 627m it is the highest point in Lancashire. Looking further west on a clear day you can easily pick out Morecambe Bay.

**18.** Continue down the spine of Wherside for just over 1km before turning left to steep descend into the valley below, again along a well defined path that turns into a farm track. At the cattle sheds at Bruntscar the path becomes a tarmac road leading all the way up to the B6255 Low Sleights Road.

**19.** 200 metres before the main road there is a farm shop, with toilets, selling hot and cold drinks & sandwiches. Alternatively if you continue to the road there is a decent pub at Chapel-le-Dale called the Old Hill Inn.

**20.** Turn left and just beyond the pub turn right taking the path onto and through the limestone pavements of Highwood Pasture. This is a gentle introduction to Ingleborough and behind you, back across the Wherside side of the valley, you will see some of the finest limestone landscapes England can offer.

**21.** The once heavy slog over Humphrey Bottom has been improved by the laying of wooden duckboards and a good solid stone path. At the end of Humphrey Bottom is the short but very steep zigzagging section known as 'The Wall'.

**22.** Push on up until you come to a delightful spring at the top then turn right up a more gradual climb onto the Ingleborough plateau. Head for the western end and the last trig of all; Ingleborough at 723m.

**23.** From the trig point return back to the point you entered the plateau, back twenty metres down the rock then take the distinct path to your right heading due east and traversing the south-

western flank of Simon Fell back towards Horton.

**24.** At this point the path is rough underfoot but improves by the time you pass the ruined Shooting Hut and enters more exposed limestone crags around Sulber Nick.

**25.** Here, where the footpath crosses the path from Selside and Alum Pot, there is a signpost indicating 1.5 miles back to Horton. This should be treated with caution! The popular census of opinion amongst the regular walkers is that the distance is still in the region of 2.25 miles. This might not sound like a real issue until you already have twenty four miles behind you.

**26.** Notwithstanding this, press on through Sulber Nick and passing Sulber Nick towards the gap on the horizon before descending into open grassland and a final hillock to the picturesque railway station in Horton.

**27.** Continue down to the main road and to the bend where it crosses the bridge over the river and the Crown Hotel is on your left. Home at last!

**28.** Hopefully if the weather is good enough you can sit in the beer garden to the rear. If not there is a larger room to the left as you enter the pub through the front door. Each year July sees the annual running of the Three Peaks fell race.

--- End ---

Make sure you take time to read the plaque on the wall displaying each year's winners and winning times. Be assured... you will be staggered by the fastest time to date.

Good luck !!