



25 HIGHLAND BEN NEVIS

▶ Distance: 9½ miles/15.4km ▶ Time: 7 hours ▶ Grade: Challenging



Passing the 'Halfway Lochan' (although the true halfway point is further up!)

PHOTO: TOM BAILEY



CHOSEN BY...
NICK HALLISSEY
Ben Nevis is the highest mountain in Britain and it makes you work for every one of those 4411ft.

It's a long, relentless climb from Achintee to Red Burn, and then up the zig-zags to the summit (and you have to come down the same way). But wait until at least May to climb it; in winter conditions it's for mountaineers only.

1 Start

From information board at Ben Nevis Inn, go through gate onto footpath. Where path forks, take L path running higher up hillside, with views opening up over Glen Nevis. Path continues ahead clearly,

meeting path which climbs from youth hostel and continuing uphill over two metal bridges. Path then veers north into ravine separating Meall an t-Suidhe from Ben Nevis, then takes a big loop L then R to enter corrie containing Lochan Meall an t-Suidhe. Follow path north-east to reach junction of paths at 600m, just above the lochan.

2 2 miles/3.5km

Turn R (facing Glen Nevis once more) and head for Red Burn, a stream dropping sharply from Ben Nevis' summit ridge. Cross burn (halfway point!). This marks the start of zig-zags - from here the path carries you up to

PLAN YOUR WALK



ROUTE

Start/parking Small parking area at Achintee next to Ben Nevis Inn, grid ref NN125729

Is it for me? Almost unremitting ascent and descent, with extreme temperature variations higher up

Stiles None

PLANNING

Nearest town Fort William

Refreshments Ben Nevis Inn

Public toilets None

Public transport

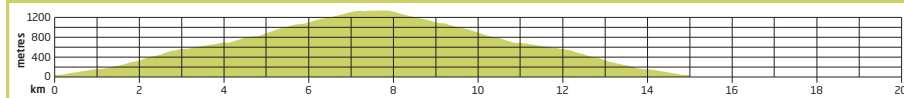
Local bus 41 goes to Glen Nevis Visitor Centre; short walk to start

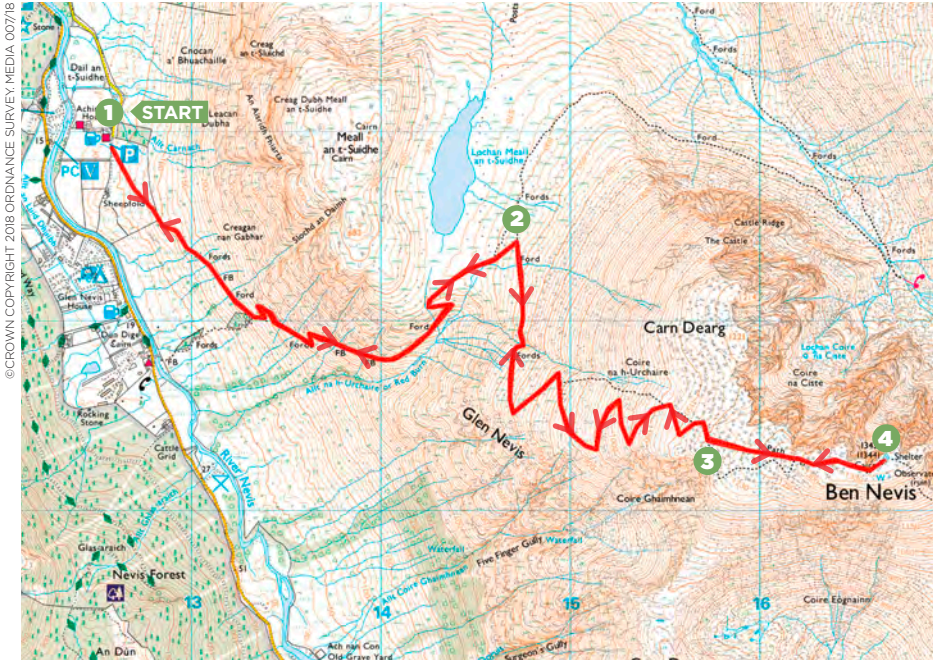
Maps OS Explorer 392; Landranger 41

the summit ridge, breaking the gradient with lengthy zig-zags. Several 'short cuts' have been forged to avoid zig-zags but it's wise to stay on the beaten track. At 1200m, path



GRADIENT PROFILE



25 HIGHLAND
BEN NEVIS▶ OS Explorer map 392 ▶ Buy maps at: ordnancesurvey.co.uk/shop

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DATE WALKED
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DON'T MISS...



If you are a confident navigator, a short detour of 150m directly south from the summit leads to a large wooden trough. It was used in the Boer War and later taken to the summit to serve as a water tank for the former Ben Nevis Observatory. Retrace your steps back to the summit.

straightens and makes for the summit.

3 4¹/₂ miles/7.3km Path climbs sharply to summit ridge. Here extreme care must be taken in poor weather, as the north face drops away sharply and Five Finger Gully R. Path remains clear but can be obscured by snowfields even in summer. Cairns lead to summit but check your course in poor visibility. Summit (1,344m or 4,409ft) includes trig point on high platform and a shelter built into former observatory tower. Well done!

4 4³/₄ miles/7.7km The only safe descent is via your ascent route. Retrace steps west to find cairned path, again taking great care in poor conditions. Reverse previous directions to descend to lochan via zig-zags. Turn L at junction above lochan to gain path back down to Achintee. **CW**

VIEW THE WALK ON OS MAPS ONLINE:

lfto.com/cwroutes

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