

The Mack Walks: Short Walks in Scotland Under 10 km

Huntly-Clashmach Hill (Aberdeenshire)

Route Summary

Ascending Clashmach Hill makes for an enjoyable and vigorous hike to an exhilarating viewpoint. Due to its northerly position, the hill offers views to the Caithness hills as well as the more familiar peaks in Aberdeenshire and Moray. The return leg re-traces the route back to Huntly.

Duration: 2.75 hours.



Route Overview

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Transport/Parking: Frequent rail service from/to Aberdeen. A number of Stagecoach bus options. Check timetables. Free Market Muir car-park at the start/finish of walk.

Length: 7.320 km / 4.58 mi

Height Gain: 246 meter. **Height Loss:** 246 meter.

Max Height: 368 meter. **Min Height:** 126 meter.

Surface: Moderate. A mix of tarred surfaces and grassy track. May be muddy in places after heavy rain.

Difficulty: Medium.

Child Friendly: Yes, if children are used to walks of this distance and overall ascent.

Dog Friendly: Yes, on lead on public roads and near farm animals.

Refreshments: Options in Huntly.



Description

This is a straightforward but energetic there and back walk to the summit of Clashmach Hill overlooking the town of Huntly, nestled in a howe on the banks of the Deveron and the Bogie. With good visibility, the views from the top are far-ranging although walkers should be aware that for a good a part of the way up, with occasional clear viewpoints, the path has a high bank of gorse on either side. In spring and early summer the heady scent of coconut from the gorse flowers will infuse the air as you climb up the hillside. After a fairly relentless ascent, you will arrive at the grassy summit area of Clashmach Hill where there is a cairn and a trig point. On a clear day you will be rewarded by views of many prominent hilltops. For example, The Knock, Tillymorgan, Foudland, Bennachie, Tap o'Noth, Morven (Deeside), Ben A'an, The Buck of Cabrach, Ben Rinnes, Ben Wyvis (beyond Inverness), Morven (Caithness - 100 kms away!), and the Bin of Cullen. The current stone cairn is of fairly modern origin, likely built by walkers, but many of the stones may belong to a nearby ancient ring cairn, the foundation stones of which are now covered by turf. It is just distinguishable that the ancient cairn still has at least 4 kerbs in place in a footprint at least 6m wide and 0.4m at the highest point. After the walk we suggest that you consider taking a stroll through the attractive town centre of Huntly which probably dates back to a castle, the Peel of Strathbogie, built in the late 12th C, and later replaced by Huntly Castle. A modern planned town was established in 1769 to support industrial and agricultural changes, with the original name of Milton of Strathbogie finally dropping from use during the 19th C. A circuit of The Square takes in the main points of interest: the Memorial Fountain; the Duke of Richmond statue, the Gordon Arms building, the Huntly Hotel building, the Brander Library and the old Post Office.



Waypoints

(1) Start walk at Market Muir car-park

(57.44412; -2.79157) <https://w3w.co/assurance.tastings.comply>
Start the walk from the Market Muir car-park (free) off George V Avenue, close to the centre in Huntly. Turn right out of the car-park and walk along the pavement in a southerly direction towards the Asda supermarket and A96 by-pass roundabout.



(2) Cross A96 road - then right along pavement

(57.44158; -2.79599) <https://w3w.co/topical.tugging.bystander>
In about 400 m, after passing the ASDA supermarket on your right side, cross the busy A96 road (take care!) at the paved crossing point. Once across the road, turn right and follow the pavement as it heads west. Soon the pavement bends left into a minor road, then ends. Walk up this minor road, passing the United Auction Mart on your right side and an agricultural machinery centre on your left. Continue walking into the countryside as the minor road ascends up the hillside. Ignore the entrance to The Ward farm and continue more steeply uphill on the tarred road. (408 m)



(3) Keep going uphill past house - then onto grassy track

(57.43898; -2.81099) <https://w3w.co/avoiding.evening.movements>
In 1.1 km, keep going uphill past a house on your left then join the grassy track just after the house. Keep going uphill on this track towards the top of Clashmach Hill. For a good part of the way up, with some clear viewpoints, the path has thick gorse on the right side, and often the left side too. On the upper part of the ascent you will pass through two pedestrian gates before arriving at the start of the more open summit area. After the last gate, follow the path uphill for a short distance then swing left to the obvious cairn and trig point. (1.5 km)



(4) Summit of Clashmach Hill

(57.43406; -2.83788) <https://w3w.co/standards.carbonate.worry>
After 2.2 km of fairly relentless ascent you will arrive at the grassy summit area of Clashmach Hill where there is a cairn and a trig point. On a clear day you will be rewarded by views of many prominent hilltops. For example, The Knock, Tillymorgan, Foudland, Bennachie, Tap o'Noth, Morven (Deeside), Ben A'an, The Buck of Cabrach, Ben Rinnes, Ben Wyvis, Morven (Caithness - 100 kms away!). The current stone cairn is of fairly modern origin but many of the stones may belong to a nearby ancient ring cairn*, the foundation stones of which are now covered by turf. When you are ready, re-trace your steps back to the car-park start-point in Huntly. (3.7 km)



*Note: see

<https://www.themodernantiquarian.com/site/12892/clashmach.html>

(5) Finish walk back at Market Muir car-park

(57.44411; -2.79149)

<https://w3w.co/assurance.tastings.comply>

In 3.6 km you will have returned to your start-point at Market Muir car-park in Huntly. (7.3 km)



Route Map



Links:

[Photos from walk](#)

[Download Route Guide](#) (PDF with illustrated Waypoints)

[Download GPX file](#) (GPS Exchange Format)

[Access Walk on Viewranger](#)

[Access Walk on Wikiloc](#)