

The Mack Walks: Short Walks in Scotland Under 10 km

Lazy Wells-Baderonoch Hill Circuit (Towie, Aberdeenshire)

Route Summary

This is a good moorland walk with gentle ascents and easy route-finding. There are excellent and varied views near and far throughout the walk, especially from the summit of Baderonoch Hill.

Duration: 3 hours.



Route Overview

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Transport/Parking: No public transport nearby. There is a firm grassy area at the walk start-point, suitable for 2 cars.

Length: 6.470 km / 4.04 mi

Height Gain: 196 meter.

Height Loss: 196 meter.

Max Height: 467 meter.

Min Height: 332 meter.

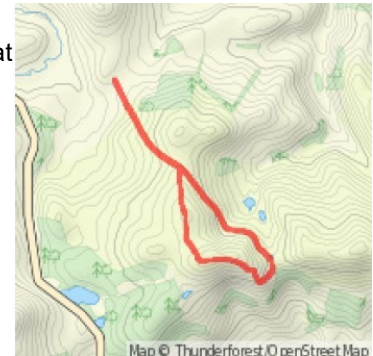
Surface: Moderate. Entirely on good land-rover tracks. May be wet at start.

Difficulty: Medium.

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

Dog Friendly: Yes, but keep dogs on lead after the gate just before Waypoint 2. You are likely to encounter sheep and, possibly, cattle.

Refreshments: Options in Alford.



Description

This route offers some wonderful low hillwalking. The walk starts at the Right of Way sign for "Tarland via Lazy Wells" on the minor Towie-Boultenstone Road. Leaving upland farm fields behind, after a gradual climb up a track on a grass and heather hillside with grazing sheep, views open out on your left side to a green valley, with the abandoned Oldtown croft below you. Further away, the valley stretches out to join the River Don valley between the Mill of Towie and the Mill of Brux. As you progress along the land-rover track, you will also pass the scenic Lazy Well lochans and a small natural pine wood. At the mid-point of the walk, the route briefly enters mature trees before climbing up the shoulder of Ballochbuie Hill, heading eventually towards the summit of Baderonoch Hill. Marvellous views open out below you towards Migvie, Tarland, the Howe of Cromar, and distant hilltops like Clachnaben and Mount Keen. Nestled under the hill, but not immediately identifiable, is the grand mansion of Tillypronie House. At the trig point and cairn at the summit of Baderonoch Hill there are tremendous panoramic views, dominated by the massive bulk of Morven, close by to the south-west. Often characterised as a sleeping giant, Morven Hill ("A' Mhòr Bheinn", in Gaelic) presents an imposing "whale's back" profile, immortalised in verse by Lord Byron: "...when I rov'd a young Highlander o'er the dark heath, And climb'd thy steep summit, oh Morven of snow ...". The route, entirely on the Tillypronie Estate, partly enters the Cairngorms National Park area and, on a good day, you will get glimpses of the peak of Lochnagar and the tors of Ben Avon. Happily, we didn't chance upon the image of a giant playboy bunny cut into the heather landscape by previous estate owner, Philip Astor. Now, the "bunny" has been burned out, and the estate is apparently owned by a hedge fund manager who wants to use the land to create a "hub" for shooting activities.



Waypoints

(1) Start walk at Right of Way sign on Towie-Boultenstone Road

(57.18604; -2.95403) <https://w3w.co/plays.historic.confident>
Start the walk at the Right of Way sign 'Tarland via Lazy Wells' on the minor Towie-Boultenstone Road. The location is on the left, 3 km south and west of Towie. There is a grassy space for off-road parking for 2 cars here. Walk away from the right-of-way sign along the land-rover track* in a roughly southerly direction. In about 300 m, pass through a gate, closing the gate carefully behind you. There is a sign indicating dogs should be on lead as farm livestock may be encountered (sheep on the day we walked).



**Note: a short section of the land-rover track may be very wet with waterlogged deep ruts. You may need to walk on the raised verge here.*

(2) Take right fork at y-junction

(57.18306; -2.95137) <https://w3w.co/threading.hometown.crab>
In about 370 m from the start point, after passing through the livestock gate, you will arrive at a y-junction. Take the right fork and carry on walking gently uphill on the land rover track. (370 m)



(3) Carry straight on - ignoring fork to right

(57.17700; -2.94174) <https://w3w.co/thus.immune.moment>
In another 900 m, at another y-junction, take the left fork this time and carry on walking along the main track*. Soon, views will open out on your left side to farmland, the abandoned Oldtown croft below you, and, much further away, towards the River Don valley at Mill of Brux. As you progress along the land-rover track, you will also pass the scenic Lazy Well lochans and a small pine wood, below you on your left. (1.3 km)



**Note: on the return from the summit of Baderonoch, you will descend on the right fork, as you see it here, before re-tracing your steps back to the start.*

(4) Carry on and through gate at wooden hut junction

(57.16717; -2.92411) <https://w3w.co/thus.steady.applause>
In 1.6 km, after passing the smallest and closest of the Lazy Well lochans you will arrive at a junction with a keeper's hut on the left. Carry straight on here through the gate (closing it behind you) and ignoring the track on your left which ascends to Broom Hill and Pressendye. (2.9 km)



(5) Right and downhill at y-junction

(57.16661; -2.92382) <https://w3w.co/trunk.mixing.fooling>
Soon, in about 70 m, at a y-junction, take the right fork going gently downhill into the trees. Look out for a grassy track on your right very soon. (2.9 km)



(6) Sharp right onto grassy track

(57.16623; -2.92368) <https://w3w.co/riddle.shackles.dreaming>
In less than 50 m, go right to join a land-rover track going SW. The first section is grassy. The track soon becomes more distinct as it leaves the trees and climbs up the shoulder of Ballochbuie Hill, heading eventually towards the summit of Baderonoch Hill. Marvellous views open out below you towards Migvie, Tarland, the Howe of Cromar, and distant hilltops. Below you, but not immediately identifiable, is the grand mansion of Tillypronie House. (3.0 km)



(7) Summit of Baderonoch Hill

(57.16731; -2.93566) <https://w3w.co/iceberg.buying.phantom>
After 900 m, and a relatively gentle ascent, you will arrive at the trig point and cairn at the summit of Baderonoch Hill. There are tremendous panoramic views, dominated by the massive bulk of Morven, close by to the south-west. When you are ready, carry on along the land rover track you were on for a short distance. (3.9 km)



(8) Right and through gate - then left

(57.16717; -2.93680) <https://w3w.co/responses.kiosk.guessing>
In less than 100 m from the cairn at the summit of Baderonoch, go sharp right and through a livestock gate, taking care to close it properly behind you. Now, go left to follow the land rover track as it, at first, goes west, then soon turns right (ignore the more indistinct track carrying straight on here), broadly in a northerly direction. In time, you will pass a number of grouse shooting butts along the way, some being re-built at the time of writing. Eventually, in about 1.2 km you will arrive back at Waypoint 3 on your outward route. Go left here to re-trace your steps back to the walk start-point. (4.5 km)



(9) Finish walk back at Right of Way sign on Towie-Boultensstone Road

(57.18601; -2.95415) <https://w3w.co/plays.historic.confident>

In 2.5 km from the summit area of Baderonoch, you will have arrived back at your walk start-point on the Towie-Boultensstone minor road. (6.5 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](#)