

WALKING BEN NEVIS - SAFETY ADVICE

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The common route to the summit follows the **Tourist Path** on the western side of the mountain and although thousands of visitors reach the summit, it still proves a difficult mountain to navigate in bad visibility. It should not be attempted without good planning as bad weather can blow in very quickly and the temperature on the summit 9 degrees colder than it is at sea level.

Check the **mountain weather** report the day before. www.mwis.org.uk/wh.php. If it sounds really bad – don't go! Your safety is paramount.

Even in the summer it can snow on the summit and visibility can be poor. If you are lucky to have clear skies on the summit, you can see as far out to the islands of Skye, Rum and Small Isles.

How long it will take depends on many factors – your fitness, the weather, your experience and how many people are in your group. The average walk time is between 6 and 8 hours. Eat your lunch on your stop before the summit as this is the most arduous section and if it is clear on top, you will want to savour the view not your sandwich. Also, as soon as you stop, you start to get very cold and you need your gloves on.

SAFETY ADVICE

Most walkers will return within daylight and without incident. Unfortunately accidents happen so to minimize the risk, plan your route, have the correct equipment & supplies, know how to use a map & compass and start out early enough as you don't want to walk down in the dark. Pop into the Glen Nevis Visitor Centre to seek professional advice from the rangers there. You should let someone know your route, the estimated finish time, your mobile number and what to do if you don't return. This could be your accommodation provider or a card in the car.

Equipment To Bring depends on the time of year and what the weather conditions predict. Basic items would be: good walking boots, waterproof Jacket & Trousers, hat & gloves, torch, compass, map, food & water, poo bag (make sure you take it down with you), first aid bag, suntan lotion. Other items, like poles are helpful too with crampons, ice axe and sunglasses when you know there is a lot of snow. For winter climbing a more comprehensive approach is available from www.mountaineering-scotland.org.uk

In an emergency, dial 999 and ask for MOUNTAIN RESCUE. Do not expect a rescue to be immediate and do not expect a helicopter. Lochaber Mountain Rescue attend incidents on Ben Nevis and are made up of unpaid volunteers so please make sure you are fully equipped and take the weather conditions into account, and if an incident happens, try and get down the mountain yourself or ask someone else for assistance before dialing 999.