

## Beautiful Dovedale and Ilam via Hall Dale

Let's Go Peak District II



### Route Summary

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This beautiful circular Dovedale Walk takes in the most breathtaking views of this part of the Peak District. It crosses the famous stepping stones, walks on shady paths alongside the River Dove, tracks through Hall Dale, strewn with wildflowers, and passes through the pretty village of Ilam.

### Route Overview

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Category: Walking  
Length: 9.330 km / 5.83 mi  
Last Modified: 27th May 2020  
Difficulty: Medium  
Rating: Unrated  
Surface: Undefined  
Date Published: 27th May 2020

### Description

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## Dovedale Walk : Details

**Distance** 6 miles

**Time** 3-4 hours

**Terrain** Country lanes, field paths, woodland paths and trails

**Accessibility** Inclines and uneven terrain, gates, stiles, stepping stones

**Start and End Point** Grif Ref SK 14640; postcode DE6 2AY; /// girder.youngest.preparing

**Map** OL24

## Dovedale Walk : Introduction

This beautiful Dovedale Walk takes in the most breathtaking views of this stunning part of the Peak District. It crosses the famous stepping stones in Dovedale, walks on shady paths alongside the River Dove as it cuts between towering

limestone crags, tracks through the grassy slopes of Hall Dale, strewn with wildflowers, and passes through the picture-perfect village of Ilam, before returning to the start point in Dovedale. Although there are magnificent views along the way, this route does not feel like a tough one and is a great one for the whole family to enjoy, maybe with a picnic en route.

For the most part this Dovedale Walk uses clearly-marked trails and paths, with some country lanes. Be aware that you do need to cross the Dovedale Stepping Stones at the start of the walk. There are a few inclines, some with steps. The route requires you to walk on country lanes (with no footpaths) for a short distance. The walk starts and ends at a car park (parking fees apply), at which there are public toilets. There is a tea room and a pub in Ilam. Allow 3-4 hours to complete this walk at a moderate pace, allowing for rest stops to take in the views.

#### Dovedale Walk : Directions

1. The walk starts from the car park at Dovedale (SK 14640, DE6 2AY). Fees apply, and this car park does get very busy so try to get here early!
2. To begin the walk, turn right out of the car park and follow the wide, well-marked path with the River Dove on your right.
3. After approx 500 metres, cross over the river by way of the much-photographed and very scenic stepping stones. Turn left immediately after crossing the river and go through the squeeze stile to follow the path signposted to Mill Dale.
4. This path takes you through the wooded slopes alongside the babbling River Dove, now on your left. The terrain is uneven and stepped in places – look out for the fantastic fossils in the limestone on the steps. Continue on the main

path, ignoring all other paths off.

5. In parts the path is boarded with wooden planks, and tracks under beautiful shady trees. Note the magnificent limestone crags of Tissington Spires towering above you, the faces of which are often dotted with rock climbers.

6. Continue on the path through Dove Dale until you reach an obvious footbridge that crosses the river at Ilam Rock. Cross the river, signposted to Stanshope. Immediately after crossing the bridge turn right and follow the path through the woodland, signposted to Ilam, with the river now on your right again. Stay straight on the main path alongside and ignore the footpath off to the left marked 'Ilam (Steep Ascent)'.

7. Continue on the path under the trees until you pass through a squeeze stile in a wall to find a beautifully-positioned bench for a rest stop. Turn left at the bench, heading away from the river, following the sign to Stanshope.

8. This path climbs through beautiful woodland, with bright mosses covering the stone wall and tree trunks, before emerging into the deep grassy gorge of Hall Dale. Follow the main path straight on through the gorge, ignoring all paths off.

9. As the gorge becomes more shallow and the village of Stanshope comes into view ahead, look out for a footpath through a gate in a stone wall on your left. Cross the field diagonally left, walking in the direction of a derelict barn on the horizon.

10. Continue through another gate, keeping a stone wall on your right. Stay straight on when the wall turns right, to reach a further gate in a wall. Now keep right and follow the wall to the next gate.

11. Go through the gate and cross the field diagonally left to reach a further gate in a wall. Go through the gate and veer left across a further field, with stunning views behind you, to reach Ilam Moor Lane.

12. Turn left on this quiet country lane and continue walking along its length. Be aware that there is no footpath but there is usually minimal traffic. Where the lane forks, take the left hand fork and follow signs to Ilam.
  
13. The beautiful village of Ilam is well worth exploring. There are National Trust tea rooms at Ilam Park, with beautiful views and riverside walks along the River Manifold. Ilam Hall itself is now run as a youth hostel.
  
14. In the centre of the village at the prominent monument of Ilam Cross, turn left to follow the road signposted to Dovedale and Thorpe. After approx. 250 metres turn left off the road on to a public footpath marked Bunster Hill.
  
15. Stay on this obvious path across the fields through a series of gates, following signs to Dovedale, with the distinctive flat-topped mound of Thorpe Cloud ahead. The car park from where you started the Dovedale Walk eventually comes into view ahead of you.

## Waypoints

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