

In brief

Total Distance: 156 miles (252km)

Distance by Islands:

1 Watersay and Barra: 15 miles (24km)
Category: Moderate

Sound of Barra Ferry Journey Time: 40 mins

2 Eriskay and South Uist: 35 miles (57km)
Category: Easy / Moderate

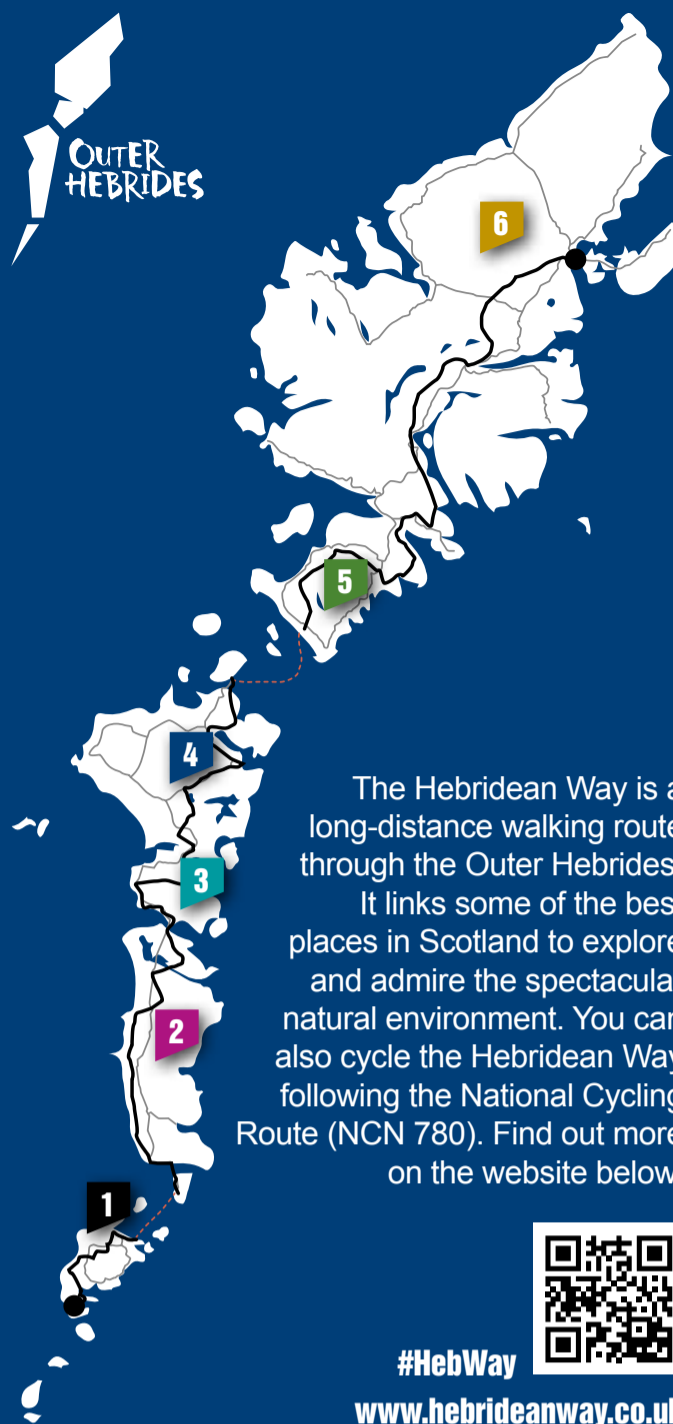
3 Benbecula and Grimsay: 16 miles (26km)
Category: Moderate

4 North Uist and Berneray: 22 miles (36km)
Category: Moderate

Sound of Harris Ferry Journey Time: 1 hour

5 Harris: 38 miles (61km)
Category: Difficult

6 Lewis: 30 miles (48km)
Category: Moderate / Difficult



The Hebridean Way is a long-distance walking route through the Outer Hebrides. It links some of the best places in Scotland to explore and admire the spectacular natural environment. You can also cycle the Hebridean Way following the National Cycling Route (NCN 780). Find out more on the website below.



#HebWay

www.hebrideanway.co.uk

www.visitouterhebrides.co.uk/apps



Walking the Hebridean Way



156 Miles

10 Islands

6 Causeways

2 Ferries

The Route

The Hebridean Way offers one of the finest walking experiences in Europe. Nowhere else offers such a rich combination of attractions: stunning beaches, abundant wildlife, turquoise seascapes, flower rich machair, imposing mountains, outstanding archaeology and of course, the islands' unique Gaelic culture.

The Hebridean Way offers keen hikers a unique opportunity to walk the length of this spectacular archipelago. Over the course of 156 miles (252km) the route crosses 10 islands and includes two stunning ferry journeys. It is a route of astonishing variety – one day you may be walking on an exquisite deserted beach, with silver shell sand stretching far into the distance. The next, you may find yourself amongst wild mountains, wandering past remote freshwater lochs as golden eagles soar overhead.

Starting on Watersay and ending in Stornoway, this is at times a challenging route. Some terrain is as rugged as anywhere else in Scotland and the weather here in the Outer Hebrides is famously changeable – very often, you will experience all four seasons in one day.

The reward for the intrepid however, will be a lifetime of memories from one of Scotland's finest long distance paths.

Suggested schedules

To enable you to easily plan your walk, we've split the path into 12 sections as listed A - L below. Each of these sections cover a typical day's walk. (Note: Distances are approximate and do not include additional distances to the accommodation).

Section	Distance Miles (km)	Ferry Crossing Time
A Watersay to Northbay (Barra)	11 (18)	
B Northbay to Daliburgh (South Uist)	14 (22.5)	40mins
C Daliburgh to Howmore (South Uist)	11.5 (18.5)	
D Howmore to Lionacleit (Benbecula)	16 (26)	
E Lionacleit to Grimsay (South Uist)	13.5 (22)	
F Grimsay to Lochmaddy (North Uist)	13 (21)	
G Lochmaddy to Berneray or Leverburgh (North Uist)	10 (16.5)	1hr
H Berneray or Leverburgh to Seilebost (North Uist)	13 (21)	
I Seilebost to Tarbert (Harris)	14.5 (23)	
J Tarbert to Scaladale (Lewis)	9 (14.5)	
K Scaladale to Balallan (Lewis)	13 (21)	
L Balallan to Stornoway (Lewis)	17.5 (28)	

Outdoor Safety

Staying safe whilst walking is mostly a matter of common sense:

- Check the weather forecast before you set out.
- Take appropriate clothing – this walk covers some rough, wet ground, so wear your boots. Walking shoes are not suitable for this walk. A good quality waterproof jacket and overtrousers are essential!
- Good quality waterproof jackets and trousers are essential! On very wet or windy days consider walking along the road or using public transport rather than heading out onto the wild moorland parts of the route.
- Carry water and food with you – shops and cafés can be few and far between in certain areas. Keep to the waymarked route at all times as some stretches are boggy.
- Always tell your accommodation owners what time you expect to arrive.
- Always bring a map and compass with you – and know how to use them. A guidebook and GPS are a recommended essential too.
- Take bus timetables and phone numbers for local taxis in case you have problems on the walk or return.
www.visitouterhebrides.co.uk/visitor-info
- Ticks are often found in the heather. Dress appropriately to avoid them hitching a lift! Cover your arms and make sure your trousers are tucked into your socks and check yourself after each day. Further advice can be found at:
www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Lyme-disease
- Similarly, midges are prevalent at certain times of year. Wear repellent and they will be less likely to bother you!

Scottish Outdoor Access Code

Scotland has some of the best access laws in the world - you have the right to walk on most land, provided you behave responsibly and respect the rights of others. Full information on access rights and responsibilities can be found at:

www.outdooraccess-scotland.com

If you keep to the following guidelines you won't go far wrong:

- Do not disturb livestock or wildlife.
- Keep dogs under control, especially at lambing time.
- Leave gates as you found them.
- Take all your litter home.

Useful Numbers

Emergency: 999

Non-emergency: 101

Caledonian MacBrayne: 0800 066 5000



HEBRIDEAN WAY



Scarista, Harris

6 Lewis

The final stretch of the Hebridean Way crosses the Lewis Peatlands, a rarely visited and internationally important wildlife habitat that covers much of the island. The walking on Lewis is challenging at times – in places the ground is soft and wet and waterproof boots will pay dividends. However, the wide skies and sweeping landscapes have an austere and unusual beauty. Your only company on these paths is likely to be red deer, eagles and a few hardy sheep.

Balallan, one of the longest villages in Scotland, provides a useful stopping off point before a final long day's hike takes you through more spectacular moorland. A little used single track road leads to the outskirts of Stornoway where a pleasant woodland walk will take you to Lewis Castle – a fittingly dramatic end to a memorable journey.

View over Laxay, Lewis



Locheport, North Uist



4 North Uist and Berneray

A quick look at a map of North Uist shows enough freshwater lochs for a lifetime of trout fishing. The Hebridean Way traverses this watery world, passing through some impressively wild moorland scenery along the way.

At Langass Community Woods make sure to call in at the little cabin where you can find out about Hercules, a grizzly bear who spent over three weeks living wild on the island in 1980 after escaping from his owners.

Taigh Chearsabhagh in Lochmaddy is also well worth a visit. An art centre and museum at the heart of cultural life in North Uist, it also has a good café and bookshop.

More spectacular coastal and moorland walking takes you to Berneray, one of the jewels of the Hebrides, and the ferry to Harris.

5 Harris

After a spectacular crossing over the Sound of Harris the Hebridean Way heads north from Leverburgh, climbing over a low hill pass. A long stretch of strenuous hiking follows, contouring along the hillside above the crofting villages of Scarista, Borve and Horgabost. The walking is tough, following waymarkers over wet and pathless terrain, but the views over sandy beaches and turquoise seas to the island of Taransay and the distant Harris mountains are world class.

The route then picks up a succession of delightful grassy tracks which wind their way over to the intricate rocky landscape of the Bays of Harris. After passing through Tarbert, the island's fine little capital, another excellent track leads you through the dramatic North Harris mountains to the border with Lewis.



Waymarker, South Uist

2 Eriskay and South Uist

After arriving on Eriskay, head straight down onto Coileag a' Phrionnsa, the Prince's Strand - where Bonnie Prince Charlie landed in 1745 to launch his ill-fated Jacobite rebellion. Walk through the island's attractive village, perhaps calling in at the Am Politician pub, where a bottle of whisky from the famous Whisky Galore ship wreck is stored behind the counter, before crossing the causeway over to South Uist.

The walk through South Uist is spectacular. Mile after mile of flower filled machair borders the vast deserted beaches of the west coast. Countless wading birds, including lapwing, dunlin and redshank will keep you company along the way, until a final section breaks out into the dramatic loch-studded wilderness on the east side of the island.



Ruabhal, Benbecula



3 Benbecula and Grimsay

The island of Benbecula is connected to North and South Uist by road causeways. Its main village, Balivanich, used to have a sizeable military presence until the end of the 1990s and it has some excellent shops and cafés.

Benbecula offers some fine and varied walking. Starting off along the sandy beaches of the west coast, the Hebridean Way then heads inland through fertile croft fields before climbing the small hill Ruabhal. From its summit the views to the east are astonishing – a semi-submerged landscape with more water than land. Another causeway leads north to Grimsay, a tiny island with a thriving fishing community.

Airport Beach, Barra



1 Watersay and Barra

The Hebridean Way starts at Watersay, a tiny island linked to Barra by a short causeway. On a sunny day it will be hard to drag yourself away from its beautiful beaches. However, it is worth the effort as the route starts with a memorable cross-country hike over small hills and wild moorland to Tràigh Mhòr, a vast cockle beach at the north end of Barra.

Time your visit well and you may see the plane from Glasgow land here – the only scheduled air service anywhere in the world that uses a beach as a runway.

There are some beautiful seascapes along this route; on a clear day the views north to the Inner Hebridean islands of Skye and Rum are particularly stunning.

Leaflet produced by



The Hebridean Way Walking Route was funded by

