

Ingleborough Walks

Walk 3 Crummackdale Austwick to Horton in Ribblesdale



Crummackdale is one of the lesser known dales within the Ingleborough massif. The six mile walk to the head of the dale takes in some of the most dramatic limestone scenery of the Western Dales, climbing through a short but spectacular mountain pass, before descending into Ribblesdale along historic Sulber Nick

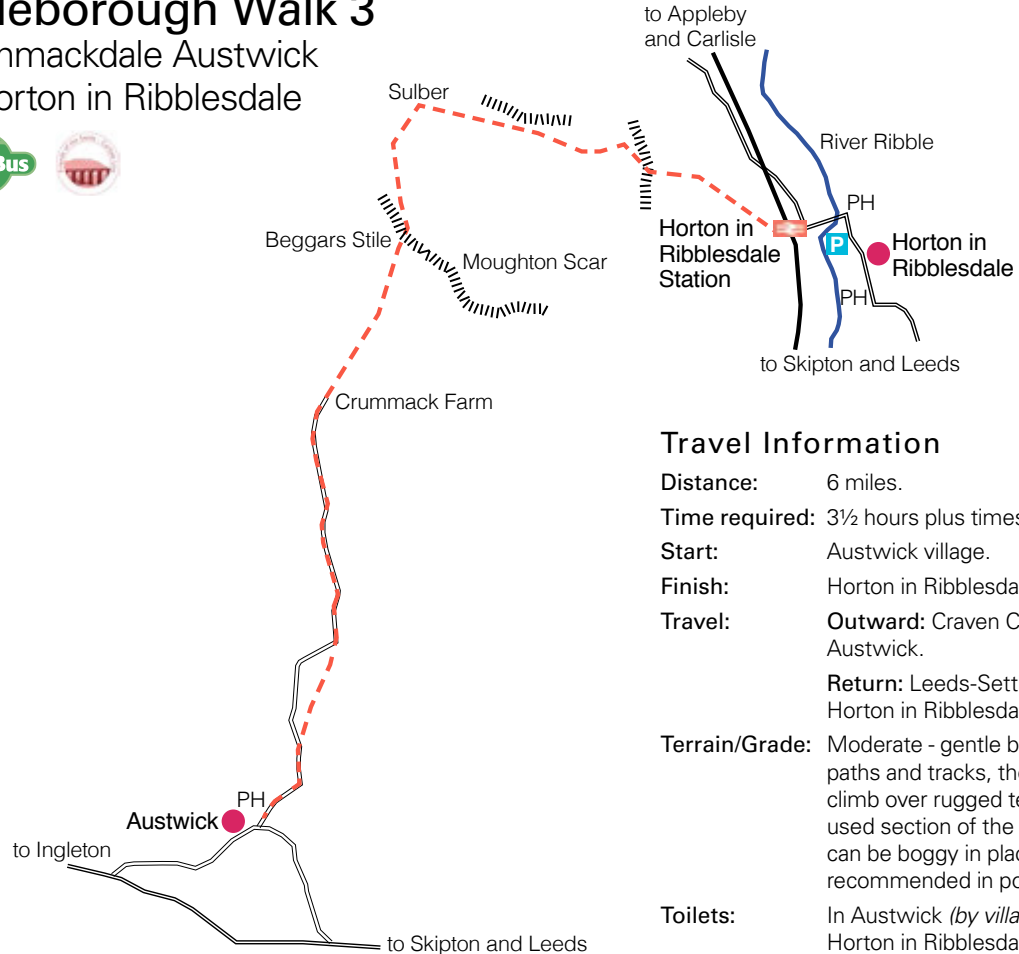


The Walk

From Austwick’s old market cross, walk north eastwards towards Helwith Bridge along Wharfe Road, past the village hall (toilets and information board), the Game Cock Inn and village primary school, before turning left into Townhead Lane. Continue for 200 metre until about 20 metres past a wide drive on the left and the gate of Victoria Lodge on the right. Where the lane bends to the left, look for a narrow-paved path over a lawn and wooden footpath sign straight ahead but positioned slightly to your right leading to a narrow paved way across a lawn between gardens and bungalows. This soon reaches a stone stile by pines, leading into a wall side path through a shallow hollow in the field. Keep the

same direction, to twin stiles across a farm access road. The path now dips into a hollow with a stream, crossed by a narrow plank bridge. Head up a steep slope to the wall corner ahead and a ladder stile. This takes you into Crummack Lane. Turn right, climbing steadily upwards. Soon the lane becomes unsurfaced and you follow the path about a mile passing the track from Wharfe, to reach Crummack Farm. Leave the farm road to keep directly ahead through two gates (signposted bridleway) taking care to close the first gate. Where the bridleway turns left uphill, keep straight ahead on the path through the field gate (waymarked). This leads to a narrow but distinct grassy path, heading north-north-eastwards away from the wall. Soon you look down on the spring in the field below, which is

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Travel Information

Distance: 6 miles.
Time required: 3½ hours plus times for stops.
Start: Austwick village.
Finish: Horton in Ribblesdale.
Travel: **Outward:** Craven Connection bus 581 to Austwick.
Return: Leeds-Settle-Carlisle Line train from Horton in Ribblesdale.
Terrain/Grade: Moderate - gentle but extended climb along paths and tracks, then a short and steep climb over rugged terrain. Descent along well used section of the Three Peaks Walk which can be boggy in places. This route is not recommended in poor weather conditions.
Toilets: In Austwick (*by village hall*).
Horton in Ribblesdale by car park.

the source of Austwick Beck. As you ascend you enter a beautiful bleak bowl of the hills, a natural hollow or corrie probably due to glaciation, in a landscape which looks increasingly wild. Keep the same direction following yellow waymarks as the path, now relatively level, heads between outcrops of limestone pavement. Look ahead but slightly right, at what seems a craggy wall of rock with a ladder stile in a shallow ravine between the rock This is Beggars Stile, the origin of its name unknown. Once across the stile you enter a magnificent, almost lunar landscape, of craggy weather worn limestone pavement. The path bears left to and twisting through limestone pavement - look for the occasional cairn, soon heading above the valley you crossed previously, with a high wall of crags surrounding you ahead. Spectacular views down Crummackdale from here. You are now crossing Thieves Moss, an area of strange, raised acid peat over the alkaline limestone. After another 200 metres the path again rises very sharply towards a narrow gate - Sulber Gate - on the skyline. Head for this. Turn sharp right at the top through another bridle gate. You now enter Ingleborough National Nature Reserve and join the Pennine Bridleway, ascending from Clapham. Follow this track, level until you reach the tall signpost indicating a meeting of ways on Sulber. Turn right here, downhill, signposted for Horton 2 miles. You now follow Sulber Nick, an ancient way reputed to date back to Iron Age times when the summit of Ingleborough was a sacred fort or shrine. This is also now the busy and well used Three Peaks Walk, so for the first half mile or so not easy walking over usually muddy sections through a shallow valley, that forms Sulber Nick - “nick” is a word often used in northern England for moorland passes. As the path descends, magnificent views open out into Ribblesdale and across to Pen y Ghent. Beyond a stile, the path meets the footpath from Moughton Scar, before curving sharply downhill, offering a steep but better drained surface, the massive outline of Horton Quarry with its strangely turquoise waste pool a dominant feature to your right. Easy walking now with a couple more stiles and a gentle hill before the pedestrian gate and the level crossing at Horton Station. For toilets or refreshment before your train, the village is another 500 metres along the lane straight ahead.