Beginners Navigation Skills in the Northern Lake District



Trip style:	Destination:	Walking Grade	Carbon Footprint:
Small group holidays	Lake District	4	48kg CO2

HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

There's an art to navigating the outdoors that goes beyond mastering a GPS tracking device and loading a smartphone app. The National Navigation Award Scheme (NNAS) Bronze Navigator Award is designed for beginners who are seeking to improve their navigation skills and build confidence in the outdoors. Upon successful completion of the course, you'll be able to plan and follow your own countryside walks, with a good understanding of safety, weather, kit and judgement of time and distance. This holiday is suitable for anyone and no previous experience of navigating with a map and compass is required.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Having the chance to complete the NNAS Bronze Navigator Award
- Learning basic navigation skills through practical indoor and outdoor exercises
- The expertise of a knowledgeable and experienced tutor
- Staying at our country house
- A more personalised experience thanks to small group sizes (maximum 8 people to 1 leader)

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Comfortable en-suite accommodation in our country house
- Cream tea on arrival day
- Cooked or continental breakfast every morning
- Daily packed lunches
- Three-course evening meals, plus tea & coffee
- Registration with the NNAS

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Day 1 Arrival Day

Check-in at the hotel is available from 16:00. If you are a member you can arrive at the house from 14:00. Enjoy a complimentary cream tea at 16:30 and meet other guests.

At 17:00 meet your leader and fellow guests in reception where you will have a welcome to the course.

Day 2–3 Navigation Days

Our days will be spent working through a range of practical indoor and outdoor exercises
that will help us cover the Bronze Navigator Award Syllabus:

- Navigate using a variety of maps and scales.
- Use 4 and 6 figure grid references with worded descriptions to define the position of a map feature and to locate a feature on the ground.
- Orientate the map using handrails, obvious point features and major landforms.
- Use linear features (e.g. paths, tracks, clear boundaries) as handrails in simple navigation exercises.
- Relate prominent landforms such as large hills and valleys to corresponding contour information on the map.
- Orientate the map by aligning a compass needle against grid north and be aware that magnetic variation causes an inaccuracy.
- Use an orientated map to confirm the direction of travel.
- Use clearly identifiable features to confirm position along the route and to recognise when the target has been overshot.
- Measure horizontal distance on the map and estimate distance on the ground using timing, pacing and simple visual judgements e.g.100m.
- Plan and implement simple routes and navigation strategies based on the above skills.
- Recognise a navigation error within a few minutes and apply simple relocation techniques using handrails and prominent features.
- Be aware of the use of mobile phone location apps as a back up to map and compass and in emergencies.
- Demonstrate an awareness of local and national access issues, access legislation, personal responsibilities, the Countryside Code and sustainability.
- Demonstrate appropriate knowledge of walking equipment, safety equipment and emergency procedures.

If you would like more information about what you will learn on a Bronze course please read these Participant Notes.

Assessment for the Bronze award is optional.

Pre course reading material:

OS map reading tips

Countryside Code

Mountain Rescue stay safe fact file

You will be outside for parts of the course and there will be some standing around outside so please bring plenty of warm clothing with you.

You can expect to walk between 5 to 7 miles each day.

The course includes map work exercises and walk planning in the evenings. Maps will be provided for use during the course, if you have a compass please bring one with you to help with orientating the map.

Day 4 Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

DAILY WALK OPTIONS



Gentle walking grade 4

The most active Gentle grade, with longer walks, some ascent, and possible steps, stiles, or off-path uneven ground. Typically, 6-7 miles (10-12km) with around 1,000ft (300m) of ascent.

ACCOMMODATION

Derwent Bank, Keswick

Adored by poets, painters, and literary giants for centuries, the Lake District has always had an irresistible pull. It's no surprise, then, that this country house near the market town of Keswick holds such appeal, not least for its setting in lovely grounds that slope down to the shores of Derwentwater. The location couldn't be more perfect; to the west is Cat Bells, to the east is Keswick, Walla Crag, and Latrigg, and to the south is the entrance to the Borrowdale valley. There's a wealth of big-name attractions within easy travelling distance, including Blencathra, Helvellyn, and Ullswater. Also visit-worthy for walkers is Scafell Pike for its well-trodden routes and trails and the 73-mile-long Cumbria Way for its mist-shrouded peaks, glacial valleys, and many excuses for pit-stops and picnics.

What's on

Use our holiday calendar to see what's on when at Derwent Bank and still available to book; click on a holiday option to see more

About

· 40 well-appointed guest rooms · Exclusive occupancy: 54 guests minimum · Check in from 4:00pm · For members check in from 2:00pm · Free Wi-Fi · Full-board (including cream tea on arrival) · Free on-site parking · Boot room and drying room · 2 travel cots & high chair · Discovery Point offering a wide range of local area maps, route guides, and information for self-guided walks · Books and games to borrow · Licensed bar · Lounge · Garden · Electric vehicle charging point - Please note, you will need to bring your own cables to use this EV charging point

Video

Our drone video gives you a bird's-eye view of some of the wonderful scenery you can enjoy during walks in the northern Lake District. Take an aerial tour - it's almost as good as being there in person!

Then & now

Originally known as Finkle Street House, the property was built in 1785 for Joseph Pockington Senhouse, the former High Sheriff of Newark. While it is unknown whether he lived here, he was insistent on drawing up his own architectural plans and arranging buildings in rather unsuitable positions (this led his neighbour, the romantic poet Robert Southey, to mock 'that ugly house opposite'). Later renamed Derwent Bank, it was sold in 1824 to Lady William Gordon and again in 1847 to physician Dr David Ross Leitch, a close friend of American writer Ellis Yarnall who remarked on how the mountains 'seemed to put one in the mood for the poetry'. Derwent Bank had several owners prior to 1925 when it was purchased by Mrs Edmunsen who employed contractors to build the stables, the coach house, and two cottages (now accommodation for our team). It has been part of our HF Holidays line-up since 1937 and much extended over the years.

Nowadays, you'll find 40 well-appointed and stylish guest rooms in three categories (Classic, Premium, and Superior), with some either overlooking the lake or facing Cat Bells and Grizedale Pike. You'll also find a comfortable lounge, a licensed bar, an attractive orangery, and a dining room for a wide range of dishes made with fresh and seasonal ingredients. Elsewhere, the house has a boot and drying room and a Discovery Point offering a wide range of local area maps, route guides, and easy-to-follow information for self-guided walks. There's also books and games to borrow during your stay, an outdoor terrace for summer drinks and snacks, and beautiful formal gardens with a putting green, croquet lawn, and mature trees.

Check-In & Check-Out

You are welcome to check in from 4pm at the earliest. HF Members can check in earlier, from 2pm. On arrival, you'll enjoy a complimentary cream tea and get to meet your fellow guests, our HF Holidays Leaders, and the rest of the friendly team. Check out 10am.

FOOD & DRINK

Dining

Seasonal dining, tailored for you

Our team of skilled chefs design our dinner menus to showcase the best of each season, from warming winter comfort food to vibrant summer dishes, including vegetarian, vegan and high-protein options. We also source fruit and vegetables within a 40-mile radius of each house, open every break with a Chef's Special menu inspired by dishes and flavours of the local area, and are able to adapt dishes to suit special dietary requirements.

Welcome Cream Tea

What better way to start your stay than with a cream tea, served fresh on arrival to make you feel instantly at home. A quintessentially English tradition, our scones are baked in-house and served with preserves and clotted cream, providing the perfect opportunity to meet fellow walkers.

A hearty breakfast to start the day

Start the day with a freshly-prepared cooked breakfast and a wide choice from our continental buffet, including hot drinks, juices and fresh fruit. Our team offer a quick and friendly service, leaving you fuelled and ready for your day's adventures.

Our famous picnic lunch

Our personalised picnic lunches are perfect for a day out walking, ready to enjoy when hunger strikes. Choose from a large selection of fresh sandwiches and salads, freshly baked cakes and snacks, including the ever-popular Freddos chocolate bar! Everything is designed to fit neatly into your rucksack, and all of the packaging we provide is recyclable or compostable.

3-course evening meals

Our à la carte evening menus feature a wide choice of starters, mains, and desserts, made with seasonal ingredients and, wherever possible, herbs and vegetables from our own gardens. Shared around sociable tables, dinners are relaxed occasions, with drinks available to order at the table or from the bar, and a traditional Sunday roast to round off the week.

ROOMS

Your room at Derwent Bank

Designed with your comfort in mind, Derwent Bank has 40 well-appointed guest rooms available in three categories: Classic, Premium, and Superior.

Classic Rooms are comfortable en-suite guest rooms, ideal for a peaceful night's sleep. Amenities include free Wi-Fi, tea and coffee-making facilities, toiletries (hand wash, shampoo, and shower gel), and a TV.

Premium Rooms are more spacious en-suite guest rooms*. Amenities include free Wi-Fi, tea and coffee-making facilities, toiletries (hand wash, shampoo, body lotion, shower gel), and a 32-inch TV. Extras include bathrobes, slippers.

Superior Rooms are even more spacious en-suite guest rooms offering upgraded views of the surroundings*. Amenities include free Wi-Fi, tea and coffee-making facilities, toiletries (hand wash, shampoo, body lotion, shower gel), and a 32-inch TV. Extras include bathrobes, slippers.

We love: Room 12 for its extra space and lovely views across the gardens and Derwentwater. Rooms 46, 47, 48, and 49 are first-floor garden rooms, each with their own balcony.

The **Choose Your Room** service is available at our UK country houses, allowing you the option of choosing and confirming a specific room for an extra charge of £30 per room. This is subject to availability. Upgrade supplements apply.

Room supplements

Superior	Premium single	Premium double/twin	Choose your room
£25 pppn	£20 pppn	£20 pppn	£30 per room

*Views and layout reflect each properties unique character and location

ACCESSIBILITY

For accessibility and assistance information, please contact our expert team on 020 3974 8865 or view the accessibility information online for Derwent Bank

ABOUT YOUR STAY

A warm welcome
We want you to feel comfortable from the moment you arrive. You'll find a welcome pack in your room with guest registration forms, menus, order forms for dinners and picnic lunches, the Wi-Fi password, and the front door code. Our houses are locked at night, so we recommend noting the Duty Manager's number on arrival in case of an emergency (or getting locked out).

Evening entertainment

While evening entertainment varies from house to house, HF Holidays Inter-House Quiz night held after dinner on Wednesdays is a weekly staple. Your HF Holidays leader may be around for tips on guided and self-guided waking routes as well as visit-worthy local attractions.

Helping you enjoy the Great Outdoors - A natural focus on walks

Walks talks and Discovery Points
Our founder, country pastor turned social innovator, Thomas Arthur Leonard, was passionate about encouraging people to explore the countryside. His legacy continues in HF's continued focus on walking. Many guests choose to travel with us on guided or self-guided walking holidays, and as such, evenings at our houses are often busy with walk leaders hosting various briefings and talks. On guided walking holiday arrival days, there are walking information briefings before dinner, and for the duration of any guided walking holiday there will be a Walks Talk before (or on occasion after dinner), to go through the following day's walk options. Self-guided walking guests, and those on special interest holidays (where there is free time to explore independently), are of course welcome to also join in these Walks Talks - please talk to the team locally if you have any queries. Our Discovery Points are filled with handy maps and route notes, designed to ensure everyone, not just those booked on a guided walking holiday, can enjoy the beautiful countryside settings that our HF houses enjoy.

The walking day
Prior to setting off on guided walks, our HF Holidays Leaders run through a short safety briefing. There's also an up-to-date weather forecast on display at the house to ensure walkers have appropriate clothing and footwear. If you choose to do your own walks or are on a self-guided walking holiday, we ask that you please complete an Independent Walker Card each day. These can be found near the Discovery Point in the house.

TRAVEL DETAILS

Address

Derwent Bank
Portinscale
Nr Keswick
Cumbria CA12 5TY

Tel: +44 (0)1768 773667

By train

The nearest station is Penrith, on the main line between London and Glasgow.

Check National Rail for train times and routes.

By shared transfer

If you're travelling to or from Derwent Bank on Mondays or Fridays or over the festive period, you can join our group transfer from Penrith Railway Station.

2026
Prices are £64 per person for a return transfer or £32 per person for a single transfer.

Outward journey: Depart Penrith Railway Station at 16:50; arrive at Derwent Bank at 17:30.

Return journey: Depart Derwent Bank at 09:15; arrive at Penrith Railway Station at 10:00.

2027
Prices are £70 per person for a return transfer or £35 per person for a single transfer.

Outward journey: Depart Penrith Railway Station at 16:00; arrive at Derwent Bank at 16:30.

Return journey: Depart Derwent Bank at 09:00; arrive at Penrith Railway Station at 09:30.

Places are limited so booking is essential. We recommend booking at least 14 days in advance by contacting:

HF Holidays Sales and Support Team
Tel: +44 (0)203 974 8865
Email: reservations@hfholidays.co.uk

By taxi

The 20-mile journey from Penrith railway station to Derwent Bank takes about 40 minutes by taxi in normal traffic conditions.

For pricing, please contact A Cab Taxis directly.

A Cabs Penrith
You can pre-book a taxi from our recommended company, A Cabs Penrith*. We recommend booking your taxi at least seven days in advance by contacting:

Tel: +44 (0)7482 289021
Email: acabspenrith@gmail.com

A return journey can be arranged on your behalf by the HF Holidays House Manager at Derwent Bank.

By bus

The X5 bus runs approximately every hour from Penrith station and the journey takes around 50 minutes. The nearest bus stop is on the A66, about a three-quarter mile walk from the house.

As you alight the bus at the Portinscale bus stop, turn to your right and go down the road signposted to Portinscale, Grange, and the Newlands Valley. Follow this road through Portinscale village - Derwent Bank is on your left-hand side after the Derwentwater Marina.

Alternatively, catch the X4 or X5 bus to Keswick bus station and take a 10-minute taxi ride to Derwent Bank. We recommend booking a taxi in advance.

By car

There is a large car park at Derwent Bank if you decide to drive.

From Penrith, you'll need to leave the M6 motorway at junction 40, taking the A66 towards Keswick. After 17 miles you'll reach a roundabout - continue ahead following signs to Cockermouth and Workington. Turn left off the A66 towards Portinscale, Grange, and the Newlands Valley. Derwent Bank is about three quarters of a mile further on the left.

By air

The nearest airport is Manchester International Airport.

There are direct trains every hour from Manchester Airport to Penrith and the journey time is about two hours.

Flying to London Heathrow airport is another option but you'll have a longer onward train journey – it could take at least 4.5 hours to reach Penrith. From Heathrow, take the train to London Paddington, then the London Underground to London Euston connecting to the main line train to Penrith, which takes three hours.

LOCAL AREA

Places to visit in the Northern Lake District

Whether you're enjoying a guided or self-guided walking holiday, there's always the opportunity to linger for longer. Here's our pick of the very best things to see and do within easy travelling distance of Derwent Bank.

Keswick

Approximately two miles away, this market town is the most northerly of the Lake District's towns. Don't miss the community-run Keswick Museum & Art Gallery for a huge amount of objects and exhibits that that reflect life in the local area.

Derwentwater Launch Company

Departing every 30-minutes during the summer and regularly throughout the rest of the year, this 50-minute boat trip round Derwentwater is a must. There are various landing stages to disembark. The nearest stop to Derwent Bank is Hawse End.

Theatre by the Lake

Home to Cumbria's leading professional theatre company, this lottery-funded performance space is located between Hope Park and Derwentwater. The Main House seats 400 while the Studio Theatre is set up for an audience of up to 100. Bookings are recommended.

Honister Slate Mine

A 30-minute drive away, England's last working slate mine is located at the top of the Honister Pass in Borrowdale. You can watch slate being riven (meaning split or torn apart) using 300-year-old processes and learn about the history of underground mining.

Whinlatter Forest

England's only true mountain forest offers nine walking trails, three cycling trails, and unrivalled views across Bassenthwaite Lake, Derwentwater, and Keswick. It's also home to a Go Ape centre with a high ropes course and an all-terrain segway trail.

Derwent Water Marina

Just a five-minute walk away, this is a great spot for hiring canoes, kayaks, stand up paddle boards, rowing boats, and windsurfing equipment. Tuition is also available for individuals and groups.

Grasmere

Best known for its William Wordsworth connections, this impossibly pretty village is a 30-minute drive away. Highlights include Grasmere Lake, Allan Bank, and the 17th century Dove Cottage - home to the Wordsworth Museum.

Ullswater

A 30-mintute drive away, this watery wonder is the second-largest in the Lake District. Highlights include exploring the lake on foot or by steamer, marvelling at the Aira Force waterfall, and visiting Dalemain Mansion and its beautiful gardens.

Lake District Wildlife Park

Just a 10-minute drive from Keswick, this 24-acre park is home to over 100 species of animal including anaconda, zebra, mandrills, meerkats, otters, gibbons, monkeys, and more. There's also bird of prey flying displays, reptile encounters, and keeper talks.

Carlisle

Of all the historic attractions in Cumbria's county city, the 900-year-old castle where Mary Queen of Scots was held prisoner is the most famous. Further must-see spots include Carlisle Cathedral, Tullie House Museum, and Cumbria's Museum of Military Life.

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Packing list

"There's no such thing as bad weather, just the wrong type of clothing!" goes the adage. Come prepared for all eventualities and you'll walk in comfort as well as safety. Britain's famous for its changeable weather, so here's our advice on what to wear and bring.

Essentials

- Waterproof walking boots providing ankle support and good grip.
- A waterproof jacket and over-trousers
- Gloves and a warm hat (it can be chilly at any time of the year)
- Rucksack
- Water bottle (at least 1 litre capacity)
- A small torch (everywhere in winter, year round in mountains)
- Compass - any compass is fine but if you plan on completing your Silver award in the future we recommend a compass which has a baseplate, 360 degree protractor,
  map measuring features, plus scales of 1:25k and 1:50k. An example compass is the Silva Expedition 4.
- Sun hat and sunscreen
- Several layers of clothing, which can be added or removed Denim jeans and waterproof capes are not suitable on any walks.

Recommended

- Specialist walking socks to avoid blisters.
- A first aid kit inc plasters– your leader's first aid kit doesn't contain any medication
- Sit mat (insulated pad to sit on when you stop for a break)

You might also want

- Walking poles, particularly useful for descents.
- Insect repellent
- Flask for hot drinks
- Rigid lunch box
- Gaiters
- Blister kit (eg Compeed) just in case
- Waterproof rucksack liner
- Notebook & pen for taking down learning notes

TRIPNOTE VALIDITY

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred. In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary. The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

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