

The Mack Walks: Short Walks in Scotland Under 10 km

White Bridge-Glen Brown-Glen Avon Circuit (Moray)

Route Summary

An enjoyable circuit on the slopes of Tom Beag, in remote hill country on the edge of the Cairngorms. The route passes through sheep pasture, conifer woodland, and heather and juniper, giving great views of Glen Brown and Strath Avon.

Duration: 3 hours.



Route Overview

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Transport/Parking: No public transport. There is space for a small number of cars at the walk start/end point.

Length: 7.200 km / 4.50 mi

Height Gain: 234 meter. **Height Loss:** 234 meter.

Max Height: 424 meter. **Min Height:** 320 meter.

Surface: Moderate. Grassy paths and estate roads. Can be very muddy in places. An initial 900 m section on the verge of the A939 road. Note that a couple of stiles referred to in our guidance have now been replaced with gates. Not suitable for off-road mobility scooters due to stiles, some very narrow paths, and fallen trees.

Difficulty: Medium. **Child Friendly:** Yes, if children are used to walks of this distance and overall ascent.

Dog Friendly: Yes, but farm livestock may be encountered on many sections of the route. Dogs on lead.

Refreshments: Bridge of Brown Tea Room (close to start/end point), Goodbrand & Ross Tea Room, Strathdon. Options in Tomintoul and Granttown.



Description

This is a varied walk in the mixed upland environment west of Tomintoul, off the remote but busy main road to Granttown which follows the track of the 18thC military road from Deeside to the Moray Firth coast. The route, taking a series of ups and downs, goes around the shoulders of Tom Beag hill, passing through sheep pasture, heather and conifer woodland, and providing some fine views of Glen Brown and Glen Avon along the way. As a long last leg, steeply uphill on the A939 main road, didn't appeal, we have reversed the direction of the route from that described by the Glenlivet Estate walks guide. The only small disadvantage of our anti-clockwise route is that the arrows on the way-marking posts are on the "wrong" side, but this is readily allowed for. After an easy start, downhill on the verge of the main road, with good views down to Bridge of Brown and the hills beyond, the surroundings quickly change as the route follows the Burn of Brown into the now de-populated Glen Brown, with ruined crofts on both sides of the water. This green area with grazing sheep is on the edge of a moorland wilderness that stretches far into the Cairngorm Mountains. Look out for herds of red deer, which are commonly seen on these trackless heather slopes. After passing through an area of mature forest, the final sections of the walk gently ascend through birch wood, juniper and heather with tremendous views down Strath Avon in the direction of Glenlivet, and up Glen Avon, towards Tomintoul. Finally, the route takes in a small, grassy section of the Old Military Road between Braemar and Fort George which was not adopted by the modern A939 road, taking you back to your start point at the old stone bridge known as White Bridge. The route is maintained by the Glenlivet Estate who encourage the development of appropriate outdoor recreation in a huge area between the Ladder Hills and the Cromdale Hills in the Cairngorms National Park. For more information, see: <https://bit.ly/3fRq7ax> .



Waypoints

(1) Start walk at White Bridge car-park

(57.27072; -3.43911) <https://w3w.co/free.rotations.forks>

The walk starts and ends at the small White Bridge car-parking area, approximately 5.75 km from Tomintoul, on the left, off the A939 road to Grantown, just before it descends to Bridge of Brown. After checking out the Glenlivet Estate information board, with your back to the board, turn left and cross the busy road with care. Walk downhill on the road verge*.



Note: Do not follow the waymark sign for the Glen Brown Circuit which takes you uphill on a grassy track, with trees on your left side. We have reversed the direction of the route from that described by the Glenlivet Estate walks guide. Please be aware that the only small disadvantage of our anti-clockwise route is that the arrows on the way-marking posts are on the “wrong” side of the post, but this is readily allowed for.

(2) Cross road and right - down grassy path

(57.26620; -3.45022) <https://w3w.co/calculating.spenders.luring>

In about 900 m, at the bottom of the hill, just before the road bends sharply to the right, cross the road with care, and pass a waypoint post as you leave the road to walk downhill on a narrow grassy path. Soon, you arrive at a t-junction where you turn left, with the Burn of Brown on your right side. Keep following the path. In about 350 m, cross a stile to enter a conifer plantation. In another 200 m, cross another stile to emerge out of the plantation onto open hillside, with the Burn of Brown a little further away below you now. Be aware that you may encounter farm livestock. Keep walking gently uphill on the rough path. You will see the abandoned crofts of Midtown and then Curr on the other side of the Burn before arriving at a gate into a grassy field where there are likely to be sheep. Go through the gate, closing it carefully behind you. Walk towards the ruins of Tombreck croft ahead of you. (891 m)



(3) Left and uphill at Tombreck ruins

(57.25641; -3.44320) <https://w3w.co/snowballs.sympathy.season>

In 1.2 km, arriving at the fenced-in (unsafe) ruins of the croft, turn left to walk uphill for about 100 m towards a waymarking post standing out clear, in the middle area of the field. At the post, veer right and continue in a SE direction, very gently uphill, towards another waymarking post in the field, close to a broken down fence. (2.1 km)



(4) Continue in a SE direction and uphill at way-post

(57.25523; -3.43949) <https://w3w.co/genius.jubilant.half>

In 300 m, at the second waymarking post in the field, continue gently uphill in a SE direction. The grassy track you are on becomes a little more distinct as, in about 70 m, it leaves the field to continue onwards on a clear track with heather, now, on either side. (2.4 km)



(5) Through gate and follow field perimeter down to rough road

(57.25380; -3.43465) <https://w3w.co/path.pints.serenade>

In 400 m, just after catching a glimpse of Tomintoul in the distance, the track bends towards a field gate by a forestry plantation. Go through the gate, closing it carefully behind you. Check out the Glenlivet Estate information board then continue onwards, following the indistinct path as it soon heads downhill through the grassy pasture, with the forestry plantation fairly close on your left side. (2.8 km)



(6) Left on rough road - signed for Tomintoul

(57.25070; -3.43300) <https://w3w.co/nitrogen.wiggling.strongman>

In 300 m, you will arrive at a signed t-junction on a rough estate road. The ruins of Stronachavie Croft are just visible, close by on your right side. Turn left here to follow the estate road through mature conifers in the direction marked for Tomintoul. (3.1 km)



(7) Right at t-junction on forest roads

(57.25830; -3.41719) <https://w3w.co/publish.occupations.loaders>

In 1.3 km, arriving at a t-junction, with the houses at Torrans close by on your right side, go right and continue following the estate road. (4.4 km)



(8) Left off forest road and over small wooden bridge onto woodland path

(57.26132; -3.41548) <https://w3w.co/warnings.sensitive.hands>

In 400 m, go left off the forest road and over a small wooden bridge onto a path through the trees (may be signed for Pine Yurt). You will keep following the narrow path gently uphill and through trees and open areas, then heather and juniper bushes, for 1.7 km, passing over stiles at various points. There are a couple of small benches on the later part of this section which afford good views down to Glen Avon. Ignore the signed diversion to the cairn on the top of Tom Beag (unless you are feeling particularly energetic!). (4.8 km)



(9) Left and uphill on grassy section of Old Military Road

(57.27091; -3.42815) <https://w3w.co/sedated.constrain.soccer>

In 1.7 km, at a waymarked post, drop down a low bank and off the path you are on, to join a grassy section of the Old Military Road*, with a white cottage and the modern A939 road below you. Go left and uphill, soon passing a forestry plantation on your right side. Follow the old road uphill as it bends uphill, passing over a stile along the way. There are some great views up Glen Avon behind you to enjoy when you stop for a 'breather'. Not long after crossing the stile, the road goes over the shoulder of the hill and starts to go gently downhill towards your starting point, with open hillside on your left and trees on your right. (6.5 km)



**Note: the Coupar Angus-Braemar-Corgarff-Fort George Military Road built in the mid to late 18th Century.*

(10) Finish walk back at White Bridge car-park

(57.27075; -3.43899) <https://w3w.co/free.rotations.forks>

In 700 m, you will have arrived back at your start point in the little White Bridge car-park, by the main A939 road. (7.2 km)



Route Map



Links:

[Photos from walk](#)

[Download Route Guide](#) (PDF with illustrated Waypoints)

[Download GPX file](#) (GPS Exchange Format)

[Access Walk on OutdoorActive](#)

[Access Walk on OSM](#)

[Access Walk on AllTrails](#)

[Access Walk on Wikiloc](#)