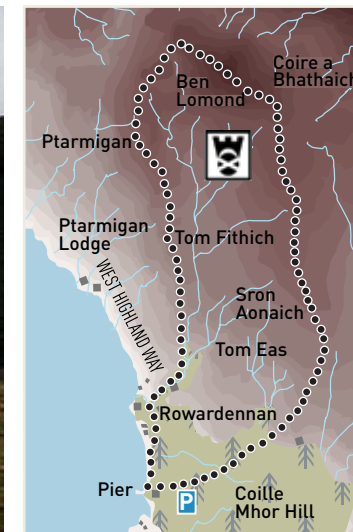


BEN LOMOND (Moderately strenuous /strenuous)



The essentials

MAP OS 1:50,000 SHEET 56
 DISTANCE 9 MILES (14.5 KM)
 GRADE MODERATE/STRENUOUS
 APPROXIMATE TIME 4-5 HRS
 START/FINISH ROWARDENNAN

What you'll see: Spectacular views across Loch Lomond and west to the hills of Arrochar

STANDING head and shoulders above Loch Lomond and majestic from all directions, Ben Lomond is probably Scotland's best known mountain.

Not the highest of course, but a name endowed on unnamed peaks throughout the 'New World' by generations of emigrants.



Despite the popularity and the well-tramped path, Ben Lomond continues to inspire even the most jaded

of hillwalkers. The lower slopes are comparatively gentle, but they offer fine views down Loch Lomond and these increase as the going gets steeper, culminating in an airy summit ridge skirting the craggy northern corries and a final ascent to the highest point.

Ben Lomond's isolation on the very edge of the Highlands makes it an excellent viewpoint, especially west to the high hills of Arrochar and Ardgoil. As befits such an icon, much of the mountain is owned and managed by the National Trust for Scotland.

The most popular route of ascent is from the west, starting from the Rowardennan car park on Loch Lomond. An ascent is possible from the east but it involves long stretches of track through conifer forest and lacks the unfolding view of Loch Lomond.

Gain the signposted path opposite the

visitor centre and follow it up through felled woodland to cross a forest track and after a short rocky section you pass through a gate marking the start of the Trust's Ben Lomond estate.

Cross the open hillside to gain the broad shoulder of the south ridge and follow this to the prominent summit cone which is ascended on a steeper and rockier path to gain the summit crest above the craggy cliffs of the north-east corrie. Traverse the grassy ridge over rocky tops to gain the grassy summit and trig point.

Many people return by the line of ascent, but continuing over Ptarmigan, the hill forming Ben Lomond's northern shoulder, offers a fine round of the mountain and leads back to Rowardennan. Save for the initial scramble descent the path is clear and straightforward,

if a little steeper in places than the ascent route.

From the summit scramble north down well worn rocks to gain a col.

There are some loose stones and care is needed in the wet, but this section is not particularly exposed and is soon over.

The descent continues to stepping stones at the col below Ptarmigan's most northerly top, before skirting these high points to the east and leading round to the top of Ptarmigan itself. From here a clear path descends the south-east ridge to meet and follow the Ardess Burn down to the track followed by the West Highland Way. Turn left and follow the track south past Ardess Lodge, back to the car park.

