



17 CUMBRIA SPRINKLING TARN

▶ Distance: 6 miles/9.65km ▶ Time: 4½ hours ▶ Grade: Moderate



Walking the shore of Styhead Tarn.

PHOTO: TOM BAILEY



CHOSEN BY... NICK HALLISSEY

We did this walk to find the source of the River Derwent, in tribute to the Lakes Distillery at Bassenthwaite which uses this mountain-fresh water in its whisky and gin. But it's also just a great mid-level mountain walk among the highest peaks of England, being a curtailed version of the classic route to Scafell Pike, short-cutting via tucked-away Sprinkling Tarn (the source of the Derwent) which is not on that route and often missed by walkers. So you'll be surrounded by awesome peaks like Scafell Pike, Great Gable and Great End, without having to climb

them. It still goes quite high (Sprinkling Tarn stands at 2073ft/632m) but the paths aren't too bouldery or exposed, and the views are stunning with every step.

1 Start

Follow lane south to enter Seathwaite Farm. Continue ahead through farm compound (do not take either of the footpaths on R or L). Go through gate and follow clear track heading directly south towards headwall of valley, passing through two gates along the way. After ¾ mile, path veers R to cross Stockley Bridge.

2 1 mile/1.6km

Go through gate on far

PLAN YOUR WALK



ROUTE

Start/parking Roadside parking on the lane to Seathwaite Farm, grid ref NY235122, postcode CA12 5XJ

Is it for me? Mountain footpaths reaching altitude of 2070ft/631m; careful navigation needed in mist. Limited facilities at Seathwaite Farm. None on the route itself

Stiles None

PLANNING

Nearest town Keswick

Refreshments Seathwaite Farm (Limited facilities)

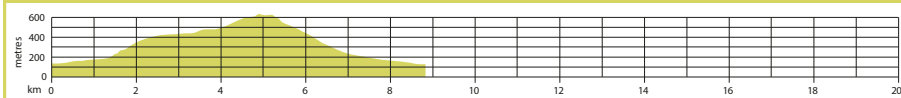
Public toilets: As above, depending on restrictions

Public transport

Stagecoach Cumbria Bus 78 goes as far as Seatoller, 1.3 miles/2km from start. stagecoachbus.com

Maps OS Explorer OL4 and OL6, Landranger 89; Harvey Superwalker Lake District West

GRADIENT PROFILE



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► OS Explorer map OL4 and OL6 ► Buy maps at: ordnancesurvey.co.uk/shop

side. Take path climbing ahead (do not take L path beside Grains Gill), heading westwards and ascending Greenhow Knott. Go through a series of gates and pass small copse R above Taylorgill Force. Continue ahead as valley levels out. Cross footbridge over Styhead Gill at grid ref NY223102, turn L and continue on far bank of stream, eventually reaching Styhead Tarn, in its splendid mountain setting.

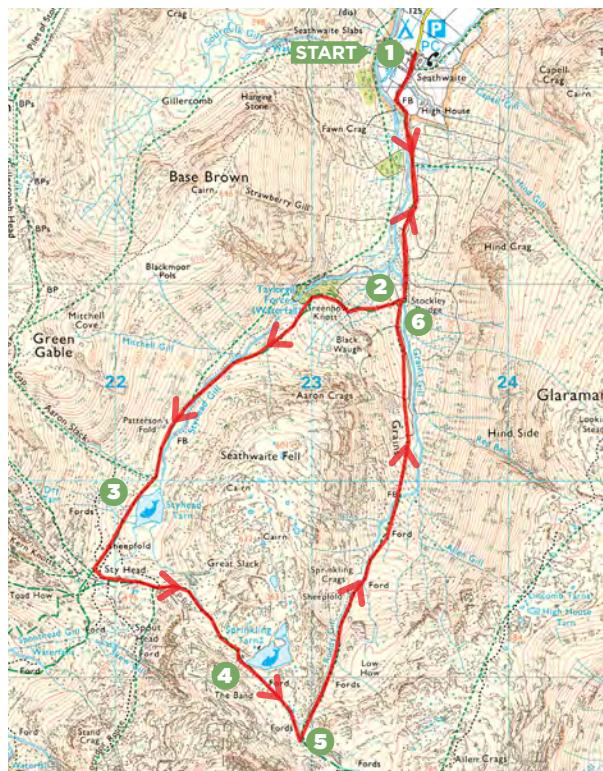
3 2¼ miles/3.6km

Pass to the R of the tarn and continue ahead, climbing slightly to reach a major crossroads of paths (Sty Head) marked by a small cairn and a Mountain Rescue stretcher box. Turn L (east), initially crossing boggy ground, but then ascending a pronounced ridgeline on firmer path. Ignore branching paths and continue ahead as path continues to ascend a hanging valley. Cross stream and continue ahead, with crags of Great End ahead to R. Path eventually crosses outflow of Sprinkling Tarn (this is the source of the River Derwent) to arrive on shore of tarn.

4 3¼ miles/5.25km

Continue ahead, climbing away from tarn and passing beneath crags of Great End, R. After reaching brow of hill, descend on far side to a stream crossing (L) at

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grid ref NY229086. Cross stream, turn L on far side and follow clear path descending into Ruddy Gill.

5 3½ miles/5.7km

Continue downhill on path as Ruddy Gill becomes Grains Gill. Continue for 0.8 miles/1.3km to reach footbridge at grid ref NY234099. Cross and continue ahead, descending gradually, to eventually reach gate beside Stockley Bridge.

6 5 miles/8km

Turn R through gate and cross bridge, then retrace outbound steps along track back to Seathwaite Farm and the lane. **CW**

**VIEW THE WALK ON
OS MAPS ONLINE:**
lfto.com/cwroutes

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



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DATE WALKED

TIME TAKEN

YOUR RATING

