
Route Directions

This can be a challenging walk with over 20 stiles, some of which are in poor condition, indistinct paths and some fairly steep ups & downs. Nevertheless this is a delightful walk across the Downs.

1. The route description begins in Wormshill but as a circular walk it can begin anywhere on route. There is a short extension to The Ringlestone Inn where there is parking but permission should be sought beforehand. Again there is parking at the Blacksmiths Arms in Wormshill, also with prior permission although there is some on street parking. The route can be shortened to either 31/2 (5.6k) or 4miles (6.5k) as described and shown below.
 2. Start by facing the Blacksmiths Arms and go RIGHT along the road, passing Yewtree Farm and a row of farm cottages to a footpath on the LEFT. Over the stile into a field following the path to the valley bottom & then going slightly RIGHT uphill to the treeline and a stile. The path meets a lane a little further on. Going straight across to a kissing gate, follow the path alongside a hedge to a 2nd kissing gate and into a meadow. Continue straight on toward a 5 bar gate and a kissing gate. *(At this point go through the gate and follow the path down to the Ringlestone Inn & then retrace the route back to this point.)*
 3. To continue on the route, take the path going diagonally back across the meadow to the far corner where there is another 5 bar gate and kissing gate into a wood. Emerge from the wood where, after a few steps the path divides; go to the LEFT. Continue on but ignore the footpath sign on the left and go straight on, keeping the hedge on the LEFT. The path skirts a grass airfield. Go to the end where the path indicated on the map goes through the hedge line but this is no longer possible. Go RIGHT following the hedge to a stile into a meadow.
 4. In the meadow, turn LEFT toward a 5 bar gate and a stile, partially hidden in the tree line. Ignore the 5 bar gate to the right beside a lonesome pine. Climb the stile into the wood, going downhill to a stile and into a meadow.
 5. An indistinct path leads to the bottom of the valley, going toward a double stile which is in poor condition. Cross into a field and take the steep earth track, through the treeline ahead. Climb uphill keeping the hedge on the RIGHT to a gap at the top and into a long meadow. Continue past the marker post toward a gap in the hedge with Wormshill church visible ahead. Do not go through the gap but turn RIGHT here to a stile which emerges onto a junction of lanes. ***The route can be shortened at this point to 31/2 miles (5.6K) by taking the road to the LEFT, back toward the church and the start of the walk***
 6. Take the road ahead, signposted to Bredgar & Sittingbourne. Follow the road to a row of farm cottages on the LEFT. Again the map shows the footpath before the cottages but it is barred by a locked gate. Continue past the cottages to the footpath just beyond on the LEFT. Go into the meadow where an indistinct path skirts round the back of the cottages and continues along the fence line to a locked 5 bar gate which has to be climbed. Continue ahead to the trees where the path goes downhill to meet a wide and steep sided valley.
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7. Keeping parallel with the fence line on the left, go down to the bottom of the valley and up toward a stand of trees in front of the treeline beyond. The stile, on the treeline is hidden behind these. Go into the woods and continue uphill to another unstable stile and into a meadow. Turn 1/2 RIGHT, across the meadow to a stand of trees, behind which is a double stile. Cross into a field and keeping to the fence line on the RIGHT, continue to meet a stile onto a lane. ***The route can be shortened at this point to 4miles(6.5K) by turning LEFT on the lane and following it to Bedmorton Manor Farm where it meets the route again at point 11.***
 8. Go straight across to the track opposite where after a few steps, climb over another stile into the top of a wide valley. Continue toward the valley floor, aiming slightly RIGHT toward the obvious dip in the treeline and a marker post. Continue uphill into the woods to a stile and into a field. Cut across the corner of the field to a stile. Continue on the narrow path to where it meets a driveway. Ignore the footpath sign on the RIGHT and continue down the drive to the road.
 9. Turn LEFT onto the road and continue for 1/2mile (800m) to a footpath on the LEFT & opposite the gated drive of Swanton Court. Go through the hedgerow onto a mown path and continue up toward the level crossing gates. Cross the rail track and into the Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway complex. Go straight ahead, crossing the main drive and toward the car park. Cut across the car park and go through a gap in the hedge beside a small shed. Continue across the grass field, aiming toward the bottom RIGHT HAND corner to cross over the rail track once again.
 10. Go down to a gate into the woods and follow the path to the valley bottom and through another gate. Cross the valley aiming 1/2 RIGHT and up toward the top RIGHTHAND corner to a 5 bar gate and stile.
 11. Cross the stile onto a junction of lanes. Take the 2nd LEFT lane, toward Bedmorton Manor Farm, ignoring the lane immediately LEFT which is the point where the 2nd shortcut meets the route. Follow the lane, round the bend to the LEFT & then RIGHT, ignoring the no through road on the RIGHT. After the bend continue for approximately 200yds (180m) to a footpath on the RIGHT. Climb the stile onto a narrow fenced path beside a meadow.
 12. Where the path meets a lane and a house turn LEFT and continue along the edge of an orchard to a stile. After a few steps, climb another stile to go through the treeline into a meadow. Turn 1/2 RIGHT across the meadow and into the woods. Go down a set of steep & crumbling steps into the wood. Keep RIGHT on the path through the woods to continue steeply down hill. Emerge into a valley and cross 2 stiles to the valley floor. At the bottom go 1/2 RIGHT, aiming toward a 5 bar gate & stile, going into the woods and a steep climb to a stile without a step.
 13. Continue climbing ahead, crossing a field to a stile into a private garden. Keeping to the footpath, go ahead to meet the road emerging opposite the Blacksmiths Arms and to wherever the car is parked.
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Meadows & stiles across the Downs

A delightful but fairly challenging
5 1/2 mile (9K) walk between Wormshill,
Ringlestone & Swanton St.



