



mountain innovations

Guided Walking Holidays and Courses in Scotland from the leading experts

Grading

It's always a bit of a tricky one but with a combination of modern map technology and our 7 years experience we feel we have come up with the most accurate method of determining the grading. With the information provided, everyone interested in coming on a Mountain Innovations holiday is able to make the best possible choice for their ability. This is how it's determined:

The grading of each holiday is based on the average length of the day for that holiday. The time takes an accurate account of the distance, amount of ascent & descent, and whether we will be carrying expedition packs or walking in winter conditions. Additional time is also included for breaks. These calculations have then been tempered by walking the routes with any necessary adjustments having then been made to the grading. For the easier grade holidays (grades 1 & 2) the day length has been adjusted to give a slower pace more suited to the tempo of the holiday. **Each holiday therefore has a grade and an average day length.**

The shortest day of a holiday is no more than 1hr less than the average and the longest day is no more 1hr more. The exception to this are weekends & expeditions marked with an *. Here the holiday is graded on the hardest day.

Grade 1 are low level walks involving a minimum amount of ascent and generally only very gentle gradients. The routes generally follow good paths and tracks and involve a minimal amount of crossing rough ground. They involve 5 – 6 hrs walking at a relaxed pace. Anyone who leads a reasonably active life would enjoy this type of holiday.

Grade 2: suitable for anyone with good walking fitness who takes regular exercise. The hill walking in these holidays is similar to walking the Lake District Fells. At times we may encounter steep ascents & descents over rough terrain with around 6 – 7 hrs walking at a fairly relaxed pace. The steeper gradients may total up to 600m of ascent in a day.

Grade 3: this is challenging walking. These holidays involve 6 – 7 hrs walking with the need to maintain a steady pace. They're suitable for fit hill walkers or anyone who takes regular (weekly) exercise. The routes may include steep ascents/descents over rough mountain terrain. The steeper gradients usually total up to around 800m of ascent.

Grade 4: These holidays involve some of the most challenging routes with 7-8 hrs days. They may include long steep ascents/descents over rough terrain. The ability to maintain a good pace through the day is essential as is a good level of aerobic fitness. The steeper gradients usually total over 1000m of ascent. Previous hill walking experience is desirable but if you take regularly aerobic exercise at a competitive level then you shouldn't have a problem.

It's important for your own and the rest of the group's enjoyment, that you choose the right holiday for your ability. If you are in any doubt to the suitability of a particular holiday please don't hesitate to give Andrew a ring on 01479 831 331 so we can better advise you.

Since time is often given over to photography and due to the vagaries of the mountain environment the average day length should only be regarded as an estimate. You should be in good general health.

Registered in Scotland
Fraoch Lodge, Deshar Road, Boat of Garten Inverness-shire PH24 3BN Scotland
Tel: 0845 095 6174
© 2005