

Craigendarroch Circular Walk

2.3 miles/3.7km (Allow 2 hours). Waymarking colour: **RED**



1. Starting in Station Square, head west along the main road (Braemar Road, A93) for 370m, then turn right at the fingerpost onto Craigendarroch Walk.
2. In 90m, at another fingerpost, turn left onto a path leading into woods. Proceed through a small wooden gate and follow the path for a further 10m to the main fingerpost for all the walks on Craigendarroch hill.
3. Turn left at this fingerpost, following the Craigendarroch Circular path sign. After 25m, the path ascends steeply with zig-zags right and left. Continue to ascend on a more gentle gradient passing a bench on the right and following waymarking posts (RED arrows marking the direction of the circular path throughout). The path continues to contour gently around the hill. After 400m, you will reach a fingerpost. Continue straight ahead following the Craigendarroch Circular path, ignoring the Craigendarroch Summit path heading to the right.
4. The path continues to contour gently round the hill, passing several bench seats. There are views west over the river Dee, and Lochnagar is visible in the distance on a clear day. After 350m the path narrows and starts to run alongside a stone wall.
5. After 300m the path leaves the wall and begins to contour NE. This section has impressive views overlooking the pass of Ballater with climbing crags visible on the opposite side of the pass. **Take care as this section is narrow and rocky with very steep ground to the left.**
6. At a fork in the path after about 500m a waymarking post invites you to veer right, uphill. Soon, a further waymarking post indicates a sharp right turn, again uphill. Before long, a third waymarking post indicates a left turn up a flight of stone steps.
7. Continue to follow the path as it levels off round the east end of the hill, meandering through trees with spectacular views east along the river Dee.
8. After a further 150m you will reach a fingerpost marking the point where your Craigendarroch Circular route is joined by the Craigendarroch Summit path.
9. Continue straight on (signposted 'Ballater via Craigendarroch Circular'), down a somewhat rocky path with slippery tree roots for 200m, where the path turns sharp left, down uneven granite steps.
10. A further 40m down the still rocky path, a waymarking post indicates a sharp right turn, after which you descend on a gentler gradient, passing a bench seat a further 50 m on beside a large boulder.
11. As you continue down the widening track, keep a sharp look-out for a waymarking post after 200m. This indicates a right turn up a narrow path which, after just 50m, joins a wider track which leads down, in about 200m, to the fingerpost which you first encountered at stage 2 in this walk. From there, retrace your outward route to your starting point in Station Square.