



# Sunset to Sunrise Trek - South Downs Way

## FAQs

### **I have never walked at night before, do I need to consider anything specific?**

Walking through the night is, for many, a unique and mesmerising experience, especially if you are lucky with the weather. Your walking leaders will have experience of this type of walking and will be able to offer tips and advice during the walk briefing and along the way. There is no need to be nervous though, the main thing you need to ensure is that you have a decent head-torch and spare batteries. Test the one you have before you leave home, to check it has enough light output to be able to walk with. We would recommend against walking with a handheld torch though, as it can be tiring and distracting to carry. The other key thing to consider is the impact of fatigue and lack of sleep on the mind and body, which can affect people in different ways.

### **Will the route be guided?**

During the trek participants will be split into groups of between 10-30 people and each group will be allocated a qualified Walking Leader.

### **How will I be allocated a group?**

When you arrive at the event venue in Eastbourne you will have the opportunity to register and select a group to join based on your desired walking speed. If you wish to be in a group with friends then this is no problem. Just let the team know during registration and we will help facilitate this as best as we can.

### **Can I change groups during the trek?**

Yes. If you are finding the pace too fast or too slow then just speak to your Walking Leader and they will help you join a different group.

### **What kit do I need?**

A torch is a vital piece of kit for this challenge. We would highly recommend using a head torch so as to keep your hands free. Further details on what kit you need are provided in the separate kit list and you should pay particular attention to items marked as 'essential'. Bear in mind that you will be carrying your day pack with you throughout the challenge, so keep it to the bare essentials and leave any other kit behind though please be prepared for all weather conditions including the cold and wet weather.

### **What time should I arrive?**

Registration will open from 8pm onwards. Buses will depart for the start point from 10pm onwards, depending on the weather. More details regarding the meeting point will be provided nearer the time.

### **Is accommodation provided after the challenge?**

No sleeping accommodation is provided during this challenge. An event venue will be used for both dinner and breakfast but will not have sleeping arrangements.

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**Will parking be available?**

Yes. Limited parking will be available at the event registration venue.

**What if I am arriving by train?**

Transfers from the train station in Eastbourne to the start point will be available. More details about arranging this will be available prior to the challenge date.

**Will my valuables be safe?**

While we will do everything to provide adequate safety for the group and security for your possessions, the general rule is that if you don't need it, don't bring it. This includes jewellery, necklaces, rings and even watches. Any valuables such as driver's license and money should be kept on you at all times. You are responsible for your own valuables and we cannot be held responsible for any loss.

**Who will be leading the group?**

Experienced and fully qualified Walking Leaders will accompany and lead your trek. Our leaders are first aid qualified and have extensive experience in leading expeditions throughout Britain. They will be ultimately responsible for the running of the itinerary and the safety of your group and will be carrying full safety equipment and first aid kits with them at all times. They will also be in radio communication with the support team throughout the challenge.

**How fit do I need to be?**

This challenge is a long, sustained event and requires a moderate to good level of fitness. It will involve steep ascents and descents and, whilst within the capability of anyone who walks regularly, should not be underestimated.

The ideal training for this type of walking is, naturally, hill training. However, if you do not have the luxury of living near the hills, then the stairs at home (or an office block) are a great place to start training. Most training should be part of an ongoing lifestyle, but if this is not the case then you should begin training 2 - 4 months before the challenge and gradually build up as suggested. Some training advice is given below.

**Remember to use the walking boots that you will be wearing on the challenge in order to wear them in.**

- Start with 3 x 10 minute steady walks weekly, increasing each month by 10 minutes.
- Walk up and down stairs, at a steady pace, until you feel comfortably out of breath. Repeat daily and increase the number of repetitions. (During the second month, you should wear a small lightly packed day sack. This should then move onto your full challenge day sack after the second month of training).

However, there is no substitute for walking in the hills, so try to get out on a weekend and train in an area with steep hills plus test out your kit. You should progress to training with your boots on from week 4 at the latest but preferably from week 1. The more you exercise before the challenge, the more you will get out of it.

**What type of footwear should I be wearing?**

The choice of walking footwear is incredibly important and should not be decided on price alone. Whilst the terrain that you will be walking on is well trodden, it can be very uneven in places, so we would recommend good walking boots or trek shoes with ankle support.

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Socks are also very important and it is worth investing in some good pairs as they will help reduce the chance of blisters.

Wearing your boots and socks during your training period will help ascertain whether they are suitable for the challenge and prevent some painful lessons on the day. See the event kit list for more information on footwear and other kit.

### **What happens if I fall ill, can't keep up or there is an emergency?**

Your Walking Leader will have a mobile phone and radio in case of emergencies and the team are trained to deal with any emergency situations. The event is not run as a race though and you will not be expected to walk at a pace beyond your capabilities. Should you find yourself unable to continue for any reason, then a support team will be able to assist you coming down the mountain. Please note, there is no vehicle access available on the mountain. Emergencies will be coordinated with the local rescue services.

### **How many breaks will be taken during the trek and for how long?**

The timing of breaks is quite liberal and there will be regular breaks of around 10 minutes every hour when ascending and descending, to maintain a healthy pace and keep the group together. The exact times and places of breaks however will very much depend on the weather and the well-being of the group.

### **What food and drink is provided?**

You will be provided with supper on Saturday evening. Breakfast will be provided once you have completed the challenge. Lunch on the final day is not included. You may also wish to bring additional sweets and snacks to keep you going throughout the challenge. The drinking of alcohol is strongly discouraged.

### **What is included in the cost of the challenge?**

The following items are included in your challenge: Walking Leaders and support team, relevant back-up vehicles and drivers, group first aid supplies, supper the night before the challenge, breakfast after the challenge and water whilst trekking.

### **What is not included in the cost of the challenge?**

The following items are not included in your challenge and will be at your own expense: drinks with meals, personal spending money, snacks, any drinks you may want besides water and lunch on the day following the trek.

### **What shall I do about spending money?**

You should not need any money during the trek, but you may wish to keep some funds handy for pre and post challenge purchases, such as drinks and snacks. We would recommend that you bring at least £50.00 in cash and a debit/credit card.

### **What is the weather likely to be like?**

Your challenge takes place during the summer months, but the weather in England during this period can be highly unpredictable. That being the case, please ensure you bring clothing appropriate for the prevailing conditions and the higher altitudes. The weather on the coast can be highly unpredictable and thus you should make sure that you carry clothing appropriate for all conditions, even if the weather at the bottom of the mountain is good.

*(N.B. the information provided above was correct at time of going to print)*

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