Before you go

No public body gives a route, a distance or a time for this hill. By our map it is about 9¼ km (5¾ miles) there and back with about 940 metres of climb. Allow about 4½ to 5½ hours, by our map's distance and climb, more with stops, in poor weather or under snow. Under snow it is a winter mountain, for walkers with winter skills, an ice axe and crampons: the steep slope to the track may be hard to find and a problem for the inexperienced, one guide says, and fresh or deep snow can add two or three hours, a walker says. No avalanche forecast covers it, which is no sign there is no risk.

Check the mountain forecast. It grows colder as you climb, about 1°C for every 100 metres, and the wind usually rises with height; visibility can change markedly with the cloud, and streams can rise markedly in a day, MunroMagic says. Carry a map and compass and know how to use them, with warm, waterproof clothing, food and drink. Phone reception is often patchy or missing, Mountaineering Scotland says: leave word with someone of where you are going and when you will be back.

Parking is very limited: a few spaces on the verge between the farm track and the bridge over the Allt Mhoille, with more room by the road junction at the head of Loch Awe. Never park in a passing place, and never block a gate or the farm's access. Plan for no toilets. Heading for the Scottish Hills names Inverliever Estate's stalking north of the ridge, stags from early August to 20 October, never on a Sunday, hinds from 21 October to 20 December and 4 January to 15 February, and no estate for the south ridge. Stags may now be stalked at any time of year, Mountaineering Scotland says, and the first three weeks of October are the busiest. Keep dogs under close control, on a lead near the cattle and sheep.

After the walk

Without a car, Loch Awe station, on the line between Glasgow and Oban, is just over a mile from the start, one guide says, and buses stop on the A85 near the B8077 turn.

The walk online, with its film and map:
hiddenscotland.com/walks/beinn-eunaich-from-castles-farm

It starts at the foot of the Castles Farm track on the B8077, near the head of Loch Awe, west of Dalmally, NN 136 288.

In an emergency, call 999 or 112 and ask for Police and Mountain Rescue, Mountaineering Scotland says, and give a six-figure grid reference and a named feature if you can. To text 999 where a call will not connect, register first by texting register to 999.

A MUNRO WALK UP

Beinn Eunaich



A HIDDEN SCOTLAND WALK

From Castles Farm

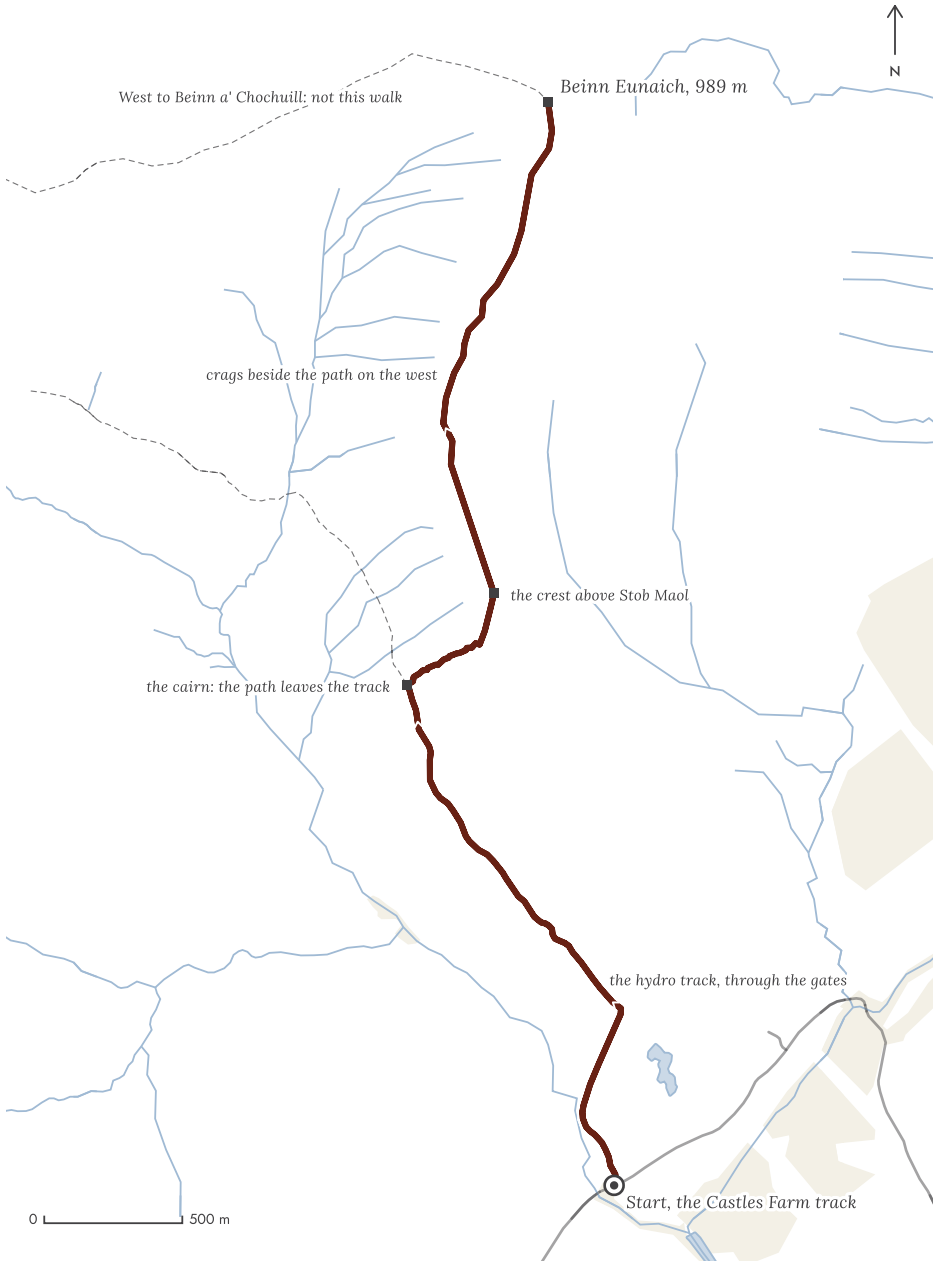
Beinn Eunaich, 989 metres, rises above the head of Loch Awe in Argyll. This is its usual way up on its own: from Castles Farm up the hydro track and a steep path onto the south ridge, north along it to the summit, and back the same way. The path is steep, eroded and loose in places, with crags beside the ridge: a day for hillwalkers who can find their way with a map and compass.

words // Hidden Scotland

Go through the farm entrance and follow the track round the edge of a field. Just before the farm buildings, take the track on the left through a couple of gates. Highland cattle often graze by this track, and walkers have met a bull among them: give them room. This is the hydro track, climbing north up the west side of the glen.

About 2.2 km from the road, about 280 metres up, a small cairn on the uphill side of the track marks where the hill path leaves it: if you reach the bridge over the burn from the col, you have gone too far. The path climbs steeply up the grass of the south ridge, faint at first, and eroded, loose and slippery in places: about 260 metres in 500 metres by our map, at its steepest about 65 metres in every 100. If the cloud is coming down, the wind is rising or anyone is tiring, turn back.

The slope eases onto the crest just north of Stob Maol, about 540 metres up. The path runs north for about 2 km, faint among rocks and boulders in places, with a line of crags close beside it on the west, about 15 to 75 metres off by our map. MunroMagic warns of steep slopes and crags: keep to the path, and in cloud know where you are. The summit cairn, 989 metres, stands where four ridges meet, with crags about 50 metres east of it. The ridge west to Beinn a' Chochuill and the craggy south-east and north-east ridges are not this walk. In cloud, check the line with your map and compass before you leave the summit, and come back down the south ridge. Lower down, leave the crest where the path zigzags steeply down to the cairn: the end of the ridge falls in crags, one guide says. That last stretch is eroded, loose and slippery, so take it slowly.



Up Beinn Eunaich by its south ridge and back the same way: about 4½ to 5½ hours, by our map's distance and climb.

Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors