Before you go

Forestry and Land Scotland calls the tourist path an 8 mile round trip, a rough and strenuous route for fit and experienced walkers, with a climb of about 960 metres by OS Terrain 50. Allow about 5 to 6 hours there and back, more with stops or in poor weather. Even in summer the weather can change very quickly here. In winter the hills can become icy, snow-covered giants that need experience and mountaineering skills, and no avalanche forecast covers Ben Lomond.

Bring good walking boots, warm and waterproof clothing, plenty of food and drink, and a torch in case the day runs long. Tell someone where you are going and when you expect to be back.

The car park is at the end of the road up the east shore of Loch Lomond, 12 miles from Drymen (G63 0AR is the nearest postcode). Parking is £2 for up to an hour or £5 for the day, by coins, card or RingGo, and free for Blue Badge holders. No buses run to Rowardennan; in summer a ferry crosses from Tarbet and Luss. The public toilets are open from Easter to October.

After the walk

Ben Lomond is a Site of Special Scientific Interest: the National Park Authority names black grouse, ptarmigan, eagles, red deer, mountain hares and pine martens among its wildlife. Balmaha, about 10 minutes back down the road, has a café, St Mocha.

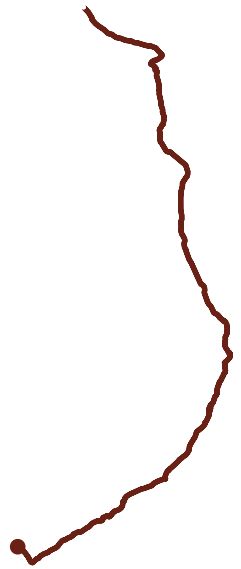
The walk online, with its film and map:
hiddenscotland.com/walks/ben-lomond-by-the-tourist-path-from-rowardennan

It starts at Forestry and Land Scotland's car park at Rowardennan, on the east shore of Loch Lomond, NS 360 986.

In an emergency, call 999 or 112 and ask for the police.

A MUNRO WALK UP

Ben Lomond



A HIDDEN SCOTLAND WALK

By the Tourist Path

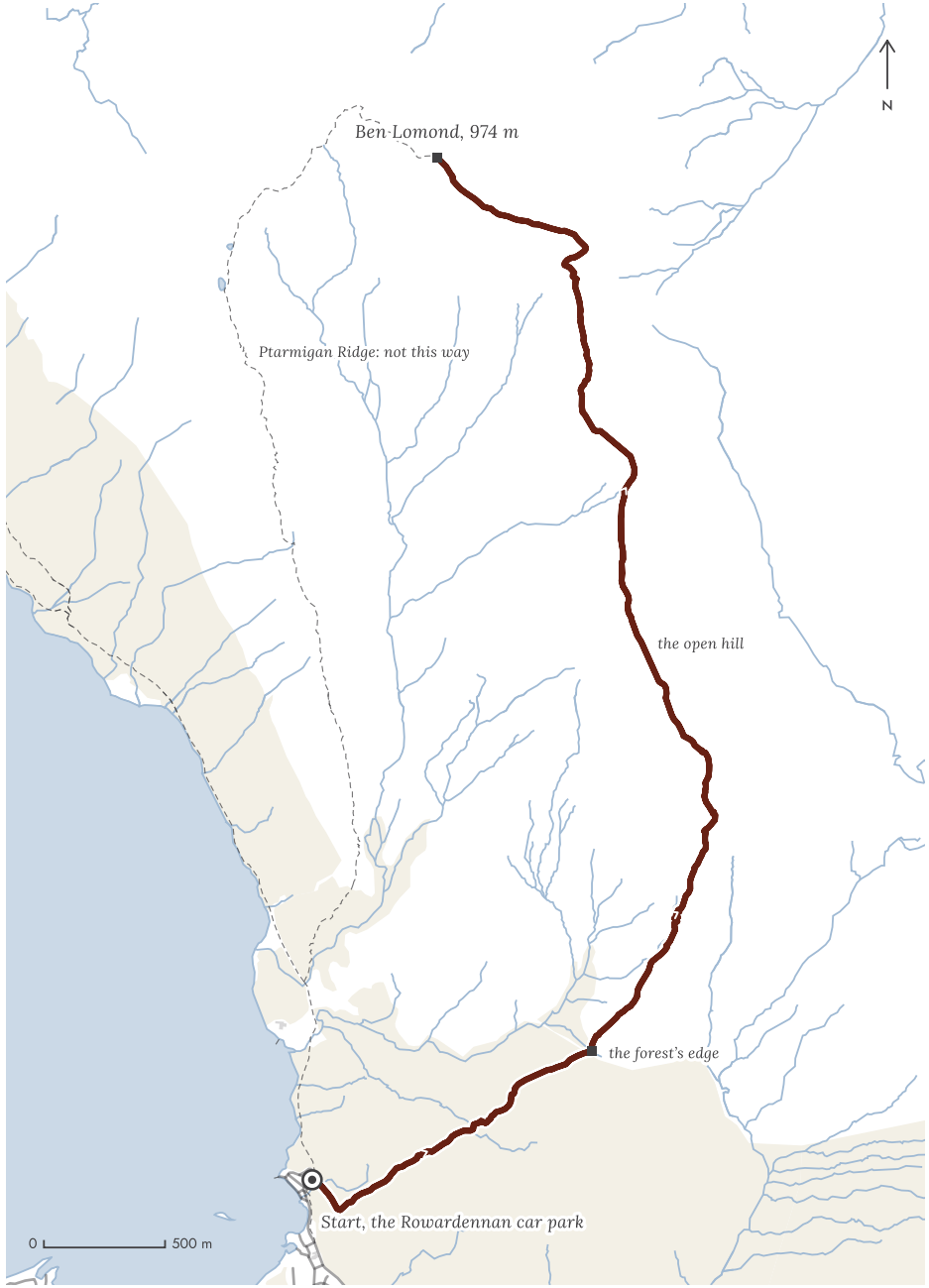
Ben Lomond rises to 974 metres above Loch Lomond, the most southerly of the Munros. Its well-laid tourist path climbs from Rowardennan, on the loch's east shore, through the forest and up the open hill to a trig point on the summit, then back the same way. Out on the hill there are no waymarkers: it is a day for walkers who can find their way with a map and compass.

words // Hidden Scotland

The hill path leaves the east side of the car park and climbs through the forest. About 1 km up, a 200-metre stretch had worn away, and in October 2026 Forestry and Land Scotland set about repairing it with stone flown in by helicopter. Check its Rowardennan alerts before you go, since work on the path or a storm can close it; follow the signs on the ground, and turn back if anything looks unsafe.

Out of the trees, the path climbs on up the open hillside towards the summit, with views over Loch Lomond. There are no waymarkers or signposts out here, and paths can be hard to follow: carry a map and compass and know how to use them, and do not rely only on a phone or GPS. If the cloud is coming down, the wind is rising or anyone is tiring, turn back.

The summit is 974 metres, with a trig point. Two paths meet there: the one you came up, and the path along the Ptarmigan Ridge, the more challenging route. Go home by the path you came up, checked with your map and compass in cloud, down the open hill and back through the forest to Rowardennan: leave plenty of daylight for it.



Up Ben Lomond and back the same way: about 5 to 6 hours.

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