Before you go

No public body gives a distance or a time for this way. By our map it is about 6.5 km (4 miles) there and back with about 500 metres of climb, and it takes about 2.5 to 3.5 hours, more with stops, in poor weather or under snow. Under snow it is a winter mountain: crampons may be needed on icy slopes, and Killin Mountain Rescue Team says most incidents in its area come from slipping on hard snow without crampons or losing the way in mist. No avalanche forecast covers this hill, and the hill road is ungritted and not kept open in winter.

Check the mountain forecast. Carry a map and compass and know how to use them, and do not rely only on a phone or GPS. The ridge can be quite confusing in mist, the broad tops are disorienting in cloud, and the summit's highest point is hard to find in poor visibility. If you have not been trained to use a map and compass in poor visibility, turn back early by a safe route.

Wear waterproof boots for the bog. Deer stalking can take place at any time of year, the first three weeks of October being the busiest and hinds being stalked from 21 October to 15 February: find out before you go.

The road from Loch Tay or Bridge of Balgie is one lane wide with few places to pass, unsuitable for caravans and other large vehicles. A second small parking place lies about 400 metres back towards the lochan. There are no toilets at the start or on the hill. The first stretch crosses the Ben Lawers National Nature Reserve: Scottish Adventures says the National Trust for Scotland asks that dogs be kept on a lead there.

After the walk

Meall Corranaich, a Munro of its own about 3 km to the south, is the hill most walkers climb with this one: this walk keeps to Meall a' Choire Leith and comes back the way it went.

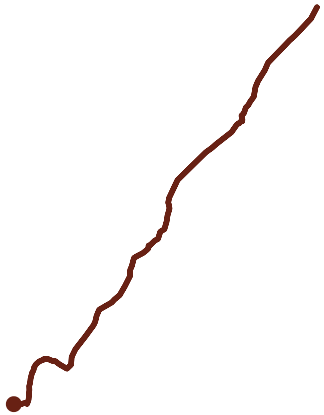
The walk online, with its film and map:
hiddenscotland.com/walks/meall-a-choire-leith-from-lochan-na-lairige

It starts at the small parking place by the cairn at the north end of Lochan na Lairige, on the hill road between Loch Tay and Glen Lyon, NN 593 415.

In an emergency, call 999 or 112 and ask for Police and Mountain Rescue, Mountaineering Scotland says, and give your location as exactly as you can, ideally a six-figure grid reference and a named feature. Do not rely only on a phone or GPS.

A MUNRO WALK UP

Meall a' Choire Leith



A HIDDEN SCOTLAND WALK

From Lochan na Lairige

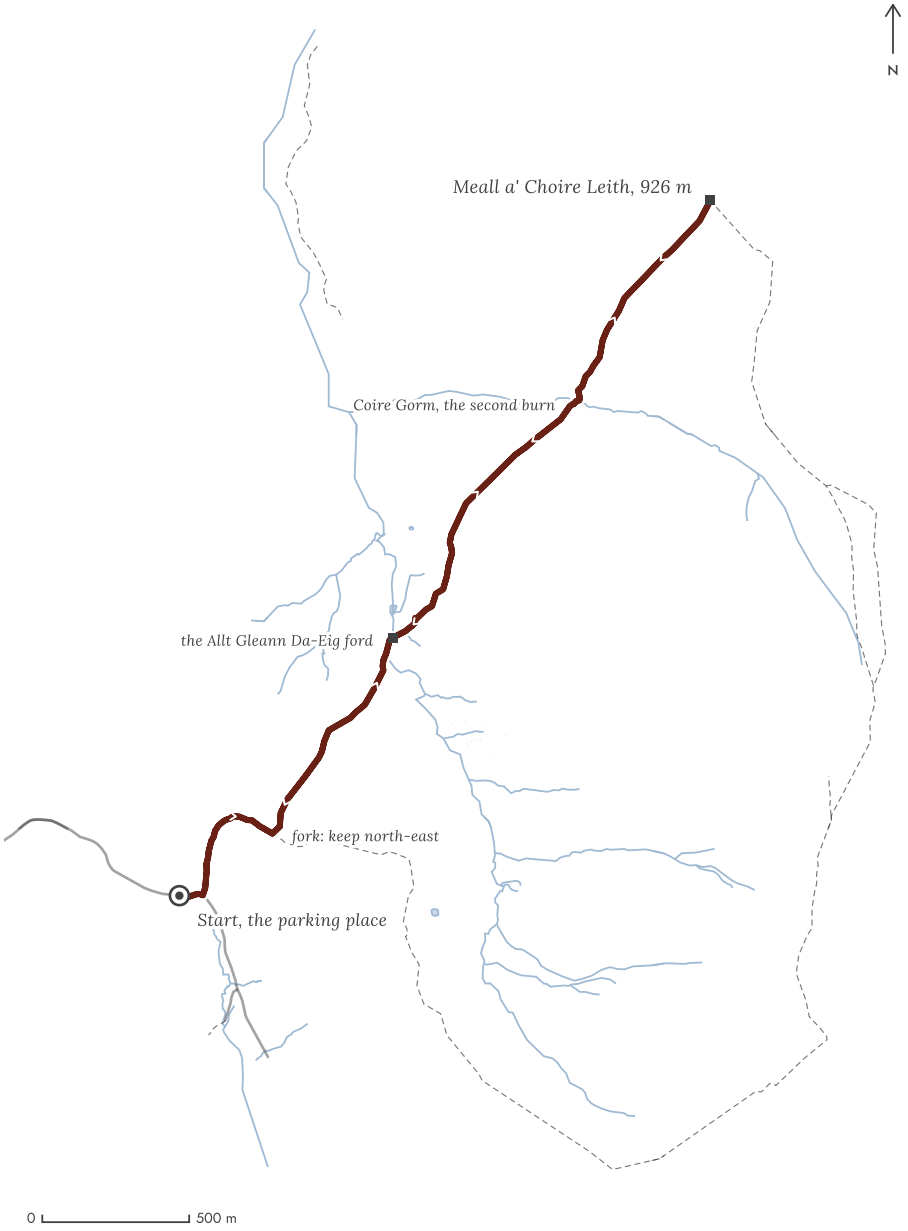
Meall a' Choire Leith is 926 metres, a broad, grassy dome at the north end of the Ben Lawers hills, above Glen Lyon. This is the hill on its own, the way from the hill road by Lochan na Lairige: across Gleann Da-Eig and its burn, up by Coire Gorm to the summit, and back the same way. Most walkers climb it with Meall Corranaich. It is a short Munro, but the ground is boggy, the burns have no bridge and the top is hard to read in mist: for hillwalkers who can find their way with a map and compass.

words // Hidden Scotland

From the parking place walk a few metres back along the road towards the lochan, where a gravel path leaves it on the left and climbs north through the heather, with bog close beside it. About 500 metres out the path forks: the one bearing right climbs towards Meall Corranaich, and one walker took it by mistake. Keep on north-east, and the path drops gently into Gleann Da-Eig.

About 1.4 km out, about 545 metres up, the path fords the Allt Gleann Da-Eig. There is no bridge. After heavy rain it can run high and fast, and stream levels can rise markedly in one day: if the crossing looks unsafe, do not try it. Turn back. Beyond it the path climbs north-east over boggy ground, passes small crags off to the side and fords a smaller burn out of Coire Gorm, again with no bridge, about 2.4 km out.

From there the climb steepens, on grass: the last 800 metres rise more than 40 metres in every 100 for much of the way, and the path fades about 3.1 km out. The summit, 3.3 km out, is a broad dome with a small cairn. Crags lie near the top, and a cornice can hang over the steep east side: keep well back. Before you leave the top, take a bearing south-west. The way down is the way you came, and the walk out is very boggy.



Up Meall a' Choire Leith from Lochan na Lairige and back the same way: about 2.5 to 3.5 hours.

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