Before you go

No public body gives a distance or a time for the whole way. By our map it is about 7 km (4½ miles) there and back with about 750 metres of climb, and it takes about 4 to 5 hours, more with stops, in poor weather or under snow. This is a walk for non-winter conditions. Under snow it is a winter mountain, in the Glencoe avalanche forecast's area: in the winter of 2010, the avalanche service records, a large natural avalanche swept across the path up to the bealach, and the slope above the bealach catches the snow. Go then only with winter gear and the experience to use it.

Check the mountain forecast, and under snow the Scottish Avalanche Information Service's Glencoe forecast. Wear sturdy footwear and carry waterproof and warm layers, water and food. Carry a map and compass and know how to use them: visibility can change markedly with the cloud level, MunroMagic warns, and on open ground in poor visibility following a path without your compass may get you lost. If the cloud comes down, the wind rises or anyone is tiring, turn back by the way you came. The National Trust for Scotland manages the hill, and the Heading for the Scottish Hills tables list no stalking issues.

The car park is on the south side of the A82, about 7 km west of the Kingshouse Hotel, and by our map it is free. When it is full, one guide says, there is a lay-by just uphill and another towards The Study. No source lists toilets, and one guide says there are no facilities, so plan for none.

After the walk

Stob Coire Raineach, at 925 metres the lower of the hill's two Munros, is up the path north-east of the bealach, and most walkers climb both, Wikipedia says: this walk keeps to Stob Dubh.

The walk online, with its film and map:
hiddenscotland.com/walks/stob-dubh-from-glen-coe-by-the-lairig-eilde

It starts at the car park at the foot of the Lairig Eilde, on the south side of the A82, NN 188 562.

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.

HIDDEN SCOTLAND

A MUNRO WALK UP

Stob Dubh



A HIDDEN SCOTLAND WALK

From Glen Coe

Stob Dubh is 958 metres, the southern and higher of the two Munros on Buachaille Etive Beag, at the head of Glen Coe. This is its usual way on its own: the Lairig Eilde path from the A82, a built path up to the bealach between the hill's two tops, then south-west along the ridge over a top of 902 metres and up a narrow crest to the summit, and back. It is a steep climb from beside a fast, busy road, with a narrow, airy crest at the top: for hillwalkers who can navigate.

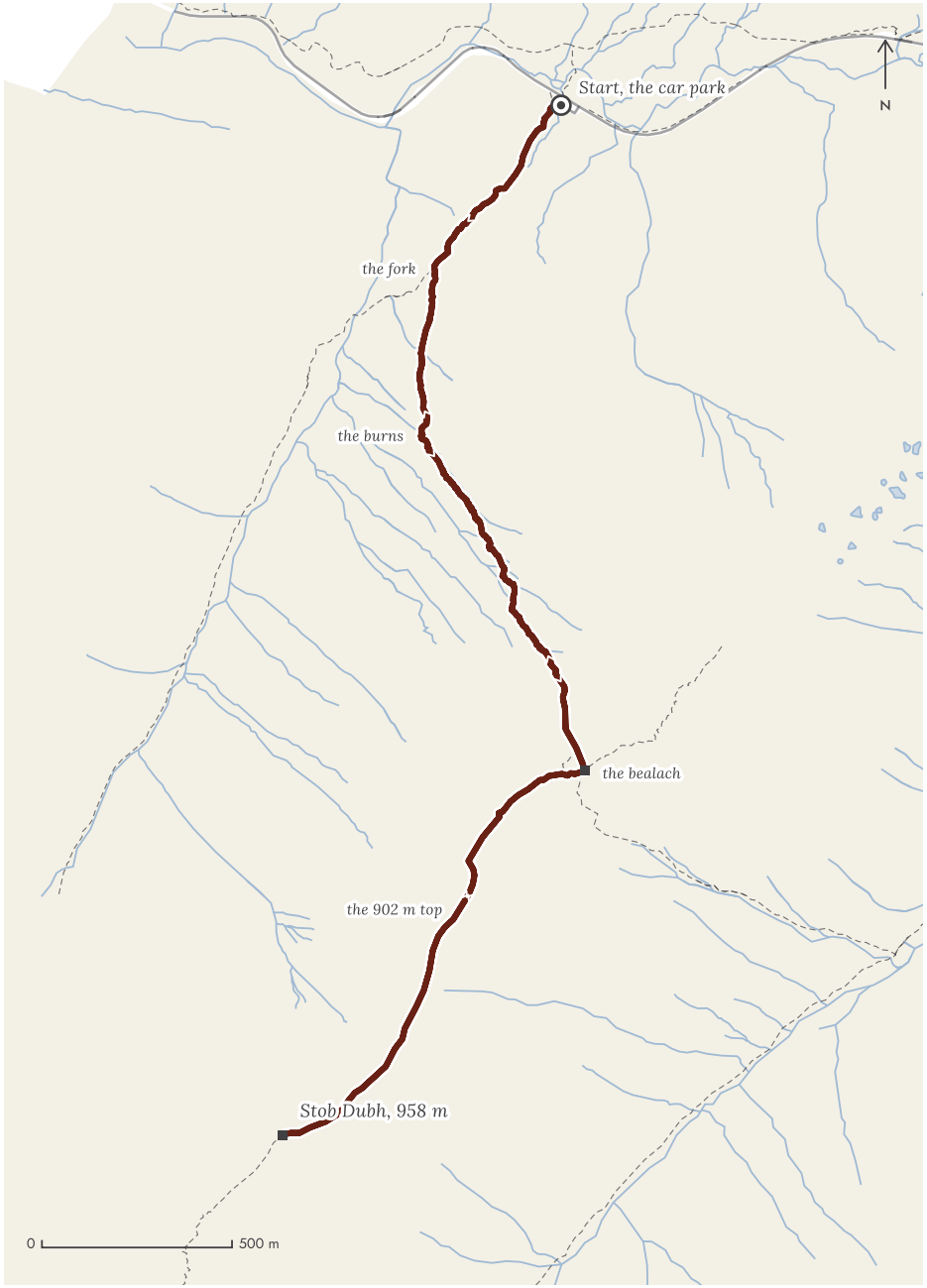
words // Hidden Scotland

The car park is on the south side of the A82, a fast trunk road, 60 mph by our map, criticised for its poor accident record and closed to traffic in snow. It can be very busy in summer and at weekends: turn in and out with care, and keep children and dogs close. The Lairig Eilde path climbs gently south-west; about 600 metres out it forks. Keep left, uphill.

The left fork is boggy at first and fords a small burn about 800 metres out and another about 1 km out, with no bridge. The built path then climbs steeply, about 435 metres in about 1.6 km, fording four more small streams. One guide calls it a consistently steep ascent, hard going in wet or windy weather, and erosion is taking its toll. Streams can rise markedly after rain: if they are running high, turn back.

At the bealach, about 750 metres up, a small cairn marks the junction: one path climbs north-east to Stob Coire Raineach, another drops south-east to the Lairig Gartain. Turn right, south-west, up steep, stony slopes with loose gravel to a top of 902 metres, with a short cliff a few metres left of the path. After a dip the ridge narrows and steepens to a scrambly crest with a real airy feel, Steven Fallon says: no real difficulties, he says, but a short stretch of rockier ground near the top. One walker followed the edge of a cornice here in April. Cliffs run beside the path on the right for the last 80 metres.

Beyond the summit the ridge to Glen Etive is unrelentingly steep, a scree field and not a path: it is never the way, so turn back here. Going down, turn left, north, at the bealach cairn, and right at the Lairig Eilde path.



Up Stob Dubh from Glen Coe and back the same way: about 4 to 5 hours.

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