

Higher Shelf Stones (621m), Bleaklow Head (633m) and Alport Moor (535m)

Summary

The walk starts from the summit of the A57 Snake Pass. The route initially heads along the Pennine Way, before turning left along Doctor's Gate and then following Crooked Clough and on to the summit and trig point of Higher Shelf Stones. Passing the famous crash site of the B29 Bomber, the path heads north towards the Hern Stones and the summit of Bleaklow Head. From here, the route goes east, along fairly featureless moorland to the fascinating wind-carved Bleaklow Stones. Heading south, the next summit is the somewhat shallow peak of Alport Moor, returning to the start via Hern Clough and the Pennine Way. This walk is very boggy in places when wet and at times crosses bleak featureless moorland. Care is needed with navigation in poor visibility.

Start/Finish

There is free roadside car park on the A57 about 4½ miles out of Glossop, at the summit of Snake Pass – What3Words: [///earlobe.landlady.crows](https://www.what3words.com/earlobe.landlady.crows)

1. Head north along the Pennine Way for about 500m until reaching the crossing with the Doctor's Gate path. Turn left and follow the Doctor's Gate for about 250m, then turning right to follow the path above Crooked Clough. Continue along the path for about a km and then cross Crooked Clough, following the path uphill to the summit and trig point of Higher Shelf Stones.



Pennine Way from A57,
looking towards Higher Shelf Stones



Crossing with Doctor's Gate



Path above Crooked Clough



Looking across Crooked Clough
to Higher Shelf Stones



View across Glossop to Manchester



Summit trig of Higher Shelf Stones

2. Head off from Higher Shelf Stones on the path in an ENE direction, to reach the Boeing RB-29A Superfortress "Overexposed" crash site. The plane was on a routine daytime flight heading to a US Air Force base at near Warrington. With the hills in cloud, a navigational error suggested that the aircraft had already crossed the hills, so the pilot started to descend. All 11 crew and 2 military passengers died.



Photos of the B29 crash site

3. From the crash site, take the path behind the memorial plaque heading north and aim for the Hern Stones – visible on the horizon about 500m away. This is relatively easy in good visibility, but fairly featureless, and can be very boggy when wet. The next destination is the Wain Stones (also known as the ‘Kissing Stones’ for obvious reasons) about a further 500m due north. There are good views from here to the west looking across to Manchester. From the Wain Stones it is a further 300m walk NW to the summit cairn of Bleaklow Head – the highest point on Bleaklow, but not especially interesting.



Hern Stones



Wain 'Kissing' Stones



Summit of Bleaklow Head

4. Head back to the Wain Stones and then follow a path due East for about 600m before heading NE for about a km to pass the summit of Bleaklow Hill (marked by a stake). Head East again for about a km to reach the impressively wind-carved Bleaklow Stones.



Bleaklow Hill



Bleaklow Stones



Bleaklow Stones



The Anvil Stone

5. Head South along the clear path from Bleaklow Stones to The Ridge. Pass through a gate in the fence, and head down the ridge. Continue up a rather eroded path and take the track to the left which heads towards the featureless summit of Alport Moor. This whole area can be pretty boggy when wet.



Gate leading to The Ridge



Turn left here for track to Alport Moor summit



Summit of Alport Moor looking towards Bleaklow

6. From Alport Moor, retrace your steps and continue in an Easterly direction. There is no obvious path here, but make for the track which runs above the Alport River. Carry on heading East, crossing the aptly named 'The Swamp', and follow the north bank of Hern Clough until it meets the Pennine Way. Cross the stream, turn left onto the Pennine Way, and return the 2½ km back to the start.



Alport River valley



Hern Clough crossing point

Walk details

Grade – hard

Distance – 16km/10 miles

Ascent - 450m/1250 ft

Walk time - approx. 4 hours

