



Rob Roy Way

THE COMPLETE GUIDE



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Overview

Rob Roy Way: A Complete Hiking Guide

The Rob Roy Way is a 127 km point-to-point trail in [Scotland](#), usually walked south to north from Drymen to Pitlochry in 6 to 8 days. It is a moderate route: mostly good tracks, cycleway and minor roads, with one tougher exposed moorland section between Killin and Ardtalnaig. It suits fit walkers with some experience who want a quieter Highland-edge trail linking lochs, forests, former railway paths and places associated with Rob Roy MacGregor.

Route Overview

The route starts in Drymen, near Loch Lomond, sharing its first steps with the West Highland Way before heading through Aberfoyle, Callander, Strathyre, Lochearnhead, Killin, Ardtalnaig on Loch Tay, Aberfeldy and finally Pitlochry. Much of the walking uses forest tracks, minor roads, tarmac cycleway and old railway alignments, including parts of the former Callander & Oban Railway and long stretches shared with National Cycle Route 7. It is a point-to-point trail, normally walked Drymen to Pitlochry rather than as a loop. If you are comparing Scottish multi-day routes, see the island [Arran Coastal Way](#) or the lower-level [Annandale Way](#).

Rob Roy MacGregor and the Great Trail

The Way links places associated with Rob Roy MacGregor (1671–1734), the Highland cattle drover, MacGregor clansman and outlaw later made famous as a folk hero by Sir Walter Scott. It begins in the Trossachs, where Rob Roy spent much of his life, and passes close to Balquhidder, where he is buried. The modern route was established in 2002 and became one of Scotland's Great Trails in spring 2012.

Notable highlights

- **Bracklinn Falls (Highland Boundary Fault):** A series of waterfalls on the Keltie Water above Callander. They sit where the Highland Boundary Fault crosses the river, making this a striking early landscape change.
- **Loch Lubnaig (old railway path):** A long, slender loch north of Callander whose Gaelic name means "crooked". The trail follows its wooded shore on an old railway route.
- **Glen Ogle Viaduct (former railway):** A disused 12-arch masonry viaduct above Lochearnhead. It now carries walkers and cyclists along the old Callander & Oban Railway alignment.
- **Rob Roy's Grave, Balquhidder:** Just off the route, Rob Roy MacGregor is buried in Balquhidder churchyard with his wife and two sons. It is one of the clearest historical links on the trail.
- **Falls of Dochart, Killin:** Rapids run through Killin at the western end of Loch Tay. They make a memorable arrival point before the route turns towards the tougher moorland section.
- **Birks of Aberfeldy (Moness Burn gorge):** A wooded gorge with the Falls of Moness. Its birch woods inspired Robert Burns's 1787 song "The Birks of Aberfeldy".

Challenges to expect

Most of the Rob Roy Way is moderate, but expect mixed surfaces: forest tracks, tarmac cycleway, minor roads, old railway trackbed and moorland paths. The hardest section is from Killin to Ardtalnaig, with a sustained climb to the Lochan Breaclaich dam and exposed, often boggy moorland near Ceann Creagach. Winter is only for experienced walkers, as daylight is short, weather is harsher and some accommodation closes.

Key Data

Country	United Kingdom, Scotland
Distance	127 km
Duration	6-8 days
Difficulty	Moderate
Trail type	Point to point
Elevation gain/loss	2325 m
Highest point	555 m
Terrain & landscape	Forest, Moorland, Lochside
Trail surface	Forest Tracks, Disused Railway Trackbed, Minor Roads, Cycleway, Tarmac, Moorland Footpaths
Accommodation	B&Bs, Guesthouses, Hotels, Hostels, Campsites, Glamping, Self Catering, Wild Camping Spots
Average daytime temp.	15°C
Chance of rainfall	Moderate
Estimated cost	\$\$\$
Optimal season	Spring, Summer, Autumn
Accessibility	Family Friendly, Dog Friendly On Leash
Facilities	Restrooms, Established Campsites, Picnic Areas, Public Transport Access Points
Permits & fees	No permits or fees

Introduction

The Rob Roy Way is a quieter south-to-north crossing from Drymen to Pitlochry, linking the Trossachs with Highland Perthshire over 127 km / 79 miles. It suits fit walkers who want Highland scenery, lochs, forests and history without committing to a technical mountain route.

The Way starts alongside the West Highland Way out of Drymen before turning towards Aberfoyle, Callander, Strathyre, Killin, Aberfeldy and finally Pitlochry. It crosses the Highland Boundary Fault near Callander, so the walk has a real sense of moving from Lowland edge into Highland country.

This is not a summit-bagging trail: most of the route uses forest tracks, old railway lines, minor roads, cycleway and valley paths. The rewards are practical and varied — Loch Lubnaig, Glen Ogle's railway viaduct, Rob Roy's grave near Balquhidder, the Falls of Dochart, the Birks of Aberfeldy and the final approach into Pitlochry.

The main difficulty is concentrated on the Killin to Ardtalnaig stage, where the route climbs onto exposed moorland near Craig Gharbh at about 565 m. That section can be boggy and remote, and it needs sound navigation, sensible weather judgement and enough stamina for a long day.

This guide covers stages, itinerary choices, accommodation, food and resupply, transport, terrain, navigation, gear, budget and common mistakes.

Stage-by-Stage Guide

Distances on the Rob Roy Way vary slightly between guidebooks, maps and route descriptions, especially where detours are included. The notes below follow the standard south-to-north itinerary from Drymen to Pitlochry and focus on the practical walking day rather than turn-by-turn navigation.

Stage 1: Drymen to Aberfoyle

This is a gentle opening stage, leaving Drymen village square on the same initial line as the West Highland Way before the Rob Roy Way branches away. The walking is mostly on quiet minor road and forest tracks, so it is a good first day for settling into the route.

The route heads north on the Old Drymen Road for several miles before entering Loch Ard Forest in the Queen Elizabeth Forest Park. Underfoot conditions are generally good, with no major technical difficulties, though the minor-road section needs normal care with traffic.

The main landmark is the Corrie Aqueduct, part of the Victorian Loch Katrine water supply scheme opened in 1859. Look out too for the domed inspection shafts in the forest and, near Aberfoyle, the roofless Kirkton Church with its mort-safes.

There are no reliable food or water stops between Drymen and Aberfoyle, so carry what is needed from the start. Drymen has pubs, a convenience shop and bus access, while Aberfoyle has a better spread of walker services including B&Bs, guesthouses, cafés, small shops, fish and chips, the Scottish Wool Centre, visitor centre and the large Rob Roy Hotel.

Navigation is straightforward on waymarked tracks, but the forest can make distances feel less obvious than on open ground. A map or downloaded route remains useful if forestry operations or temporary diversions affect the signed line.

Aberfoyle is a practical overnight stop with enough facilities to recover from the first day. There is bus access, but current services and times should be checked before travelling.

Stage 2: Aberfoyle to Callander

This stage crosses the Menteith Hills from Aberfoyle towards Callander, moving from enclosed forestry to broader views over Loch Venachar. It is not a hard mountain day, but there is a steady climb early on and the day feels more open than Stage 1.

The terrain is mainly forestry track, minor road and lochside path. The ascent north-east out of Aberfoyle is gradual but sustained, reaching a small lochan at roughly 220 m before descending towards Loch Venachar and the approach to Callander.

The route crosses the Highland Boundary Fault in this general section. It is not especially dramatic underfoot, but it marks the transition between the Lowlands and Highlands and helps explain why the scenery starts to change here.

There are limited services during the stage itself, so leave Aberfoyle with food and water. Callander is one of the best resupply points on the Rob Roy Way, with tearooms, pubs, outdoor shops, a supermarket, hostels, B&Bs, hotels and guesthouses.

Callander is also a good place for a rest day if the itinerary allows. Bracklinn Falls on the Keltie Water is a worthwhile signed detour from town, especially if there is spare time after arrival.

Navigation is generally easy on signed tracks and paths. Aberfoyle and Callander both have bus links, and Callander is served by buses south towards Stirling and Glasgow and north along the Callander–Strathyre–Lochearnhead–Killin corridor; current timetables should be checked before relying on them.

Stage 3: Callander to Strathyre

This is one of the easiest walking days on the route, following Cycle Route 7 north from Callander beside river, woodland and Loch Lubnaig. The surface is mostly tarmac or compacted cycleway on old railway formation, with only occasional muddier patches.

Soon after leaving Callander, a short detour at the River Garbh Uisge leads to the Falls of Leny. The falls are attractive, but the edges are steep, so take care if stopping for photographs or a break.

The highlight of the stage is Loch Lubnaig, followed for much of its length on the east side. The old railway path gives easy, level walking and long views across the narrow wooded loch.

Food options are limited between Callander and Strathyre. The café at Forest Cabin Holiday Park on the shore of Loch Lubnaig is a useful mid-stage stop, but opening times should be checked, especially outside the main season.

Strathyre is a small Highland village with a small shop and pub accommodation, including The Munro Inn and The White Stag Inn. Pubs and food service can be seasonal or reduced in the shoulder months, so overnight walkers should book and check meal availability before arrival.

Navigation is simple on the cycleway. Strathyre is on the C60 bus corridor between Callander, Lochearnhead and Killin, but services are limited and current timetables should be checked before planning a section-walk or bailout.

Stage 4: Strathyre to Killin

This is a longer day with more ascent, though it remains mostly on good forest and cycleway surfaces. The stage climbs through Strathyre Forest, drops towards Kingshouse, then climbs again into Glen Ogle before descending to Killin.

The first climb gains height through Strathyre Forest, with open sections giving views across the valley to Beinn an t-Sidhean. After descending to Kingshouse, walkers interested in the route's namesake can make the side trip to Balquhidder, where Rob Roy MacGregor, his wife Mary and two sons are buried in the churchyard.

Kingshouse is a useful stopping point, with Mhor 84 offering food and accommodation. There is also food at the Golden Larches restaurant at Balquhidder Station, but opening should be checked before relying on it.

The route then follows the cycleway north-east, passing high above Lochearnhead rather than dropping into the village. If services are needed, including the small post office/shop, a detour down from the main route is required.

Glen Ogle is the scenic centrepiece of the day. The path climbs on the old railway alignment above the glen and passes the 12-arch Glenogle Viaduct, part of the former Callander & Oban Railway.

Near the top, the route reaches Lochan Lairig Cheile before descending towards Killin and the River Dochart. The Falls of Dochart, beneath the A827 bridge in the centre of Killin, make a memorable entrance to the village.

Killin is a strong overnight stop, with a small supermarket, outdoor gear shop, cafés, B&Bs, guesthouses and hotels including the Falls of Dochart Inn and Killin Hotel. It is the last proper service centre before the remote Killin–Ardtalnaig crossing, so resupply here carefully.

Navigation is usually straightforward on forest track and cycleway. The C60 bus reaches Killin via the Callander corridor, but services are limited and current timetables should be checked.

Stage 5: Killin to Ardtalnaig

This is the hardest and most exposed stage of the Rob Roy Way. It crosses the high moorland between Killin and the south side of Loch Tay, reaching the route's high point near Craig Gharbh at about 565 m; some publications give a slightly lower figure.

The stage begins with a steady climb from Killin on rough track towards Lochan Breaclaich, a high-level reservoir linked to a hydro scheme. From there the route continues onto open hill ground, where wind, rain and poor visibility can make the day feel much more serious than the mileage suggests.

The descent from the high point uses faint paths over open hillside. Navigation between the pipeline and Newton Burn can be confusing in mist, and the moorland can be wet and boggy underfoot.

This stage should be treated as a proper hill day. Carry waterproofs, warm layers, food, water, a map and compass, and preferably a downloaded GPX track; waymarks exist but can be hard to spot in poor visibility.

Before leaving Killin, the Kinnel Stone Circle is a short detour for anyone with time. Once committed to the crossing, facilities are very limited: the Ardeonaig Hotel on the south Loch Tay road is the main possible option, but opening must be checked before relying on it.

After the moorland descent, the route passes Brae Farm and then follows nearly 5 km of minor public road down towards Ardtalnaig. This road section is not difficult, but it comes at the end of the toughest day and can feel long.

Accommodation at Ardtalnaig is very limited and must be booked well ahead, particularly in July and August. If no bed is available, some walkers arrange a taxi from Ardtalnaig back to Killin and return the next morning; there is no public transport to Ardtalnaig.

Road access is possible by taxi, and baggage-transfer companies serving the Rob Roy Way may be able to help with logistics. This should be arranged in advance rather than left until arrival.

Stage 6: Ardtalnaig to Aberfeldy

This is a long stage in walking time and should not be underestimated, even though the hardest high-level ground is behind you. The day starts with an extended road walk along the south side of Loch Tay before climbing to tracks and paths with wide views across the loch.

From Ardtalnaig, the route follows the minor south-shore road to Acharn for about 7.5 km. It is quiet and attractive, but it is still road walking, so stay alert on bends and verges.

At Acharn, the route turns uphill to the Falls of Acharn. The waterfall drops more than 20 m, and the nearby Hermit's Cave, built in the 1760s by the 3rd Earl of Breadalbane, gives this part of the stage a distinctive historic interest.

Beyond Acharn, the Way follows the Queen's Drive, a track associated with Queen Victoria. This section gives excellent views north across Loch Tay towards Schiehallion and the Ben Lawers range in clear weather.

The final approach to Aberfeldy comes through the Birks of Aberfeldy, the wooded gorge of the Moness Burn. The descent uses stepped and zig-zagging paths past the Falls of Moness, so take care if the stonework or timber steps are wet.

Acharn has very limited facilities and should not be treated as a reliable resupply point. Carry food and water from Ardtalnaig or, more realistically, from Killin if staying somewhere with limited supplies.

Aberfeldy is a proper service town and a good recovery stop after the long day. It has shops, a supermarket, cafés, pubs, restaurants, B&Bs, guesthouses and small hotels, along with the Aberfeldy Watermill bookshop and café.

Aberfeldy has bus connections to Pitlochry and Perth, but no railway station. The nearest rail access is at Pitlochry or Dunkeld & Birnam, so transport plans should be checked in advance if finishing or joining here.

Stage 7: Aberfeldy to Pitlochry

The final stage is shorter than the Ardtalnaig–Aberfeldy day, but it still includes a moorland crossing between Grandtully and Fonab Forest. Do not treat it as a simple riverside stroll all the way to Pitlochry.

Leaving Aberfeldy, the route crosses the old Tay Bridge, General Wade's bridge of 1733. A detour to Castle Menzies is possible if time and opening arrangements allow.

The first part of the day follows the River Tay and old railway trackbed towards Grandtully. This is easy, relatively flat walking and a gentle start after the previous stage.

Grandtully is a small village on the Tay, known for white-water kayaking. The only food option on the stage is the small store in nearby Strathtay, so check opening hours and carry supplies from Aberfeldy if in doubt.

After crossing the Tay at Grandtully, the route follows a public footpath through Strathtay Golf Club and then climbs beside the Tullypowrie Burn. The open ground above Grandtully requires attention in poor visibility, as waymarking can feel sparse before the route enters Fonab Forest.

In Fonab Forest, look out for Clachan an Diridh, a prehistoric four-poster stone circle also known as the Stones of the Ascent. It is easy to miss among the trees, so check the map if this is a priority.

The descent to Pitlochry follows the Clunie Walk through forest. Near the end, the route passes the Clunie Fish Ladder on the River Tummel, part of the Pitlochry Dam and hydroelectric scheme.

The official finish is at Pitlochry Memorial Garden at the end of the Clunie Walk. Pitlochry has a full range of accommodation, food, shops and onward transport, including its railway station on the Highland Main Line with services to Perth, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Inverness.

Navigation is mostly straightforward, but the Grandtully-to-Fonab Forest crossing deserves care in mist or poor weather. The stage is not technical, yet tired walkers near the end of the route should still keep map or GPX access handy.

Recommended Itinerary

The Rob Roy Way is most commonly walked south-to-north from Drymen to Pitlochry over 7 days. This direction works well because the finish has strong rail access at Pitlochry, while the start at Drymen is normally reached by bus or taxi.

The key booking constraint is Ardtalnaig. Accommodation there is very limited, so secure the Killin-Ardtalnaig night before fixing the rest of the itinerary.

Standard 7-day itinerary

Day	From	To	Approx. distance	Why this stage makes sense	Services/accommodation notes
1	Drymen	Aberfoyle	15 km	A straightforward opening day, initially sharing the route out of Drymen with the West Highland Way before heading through quiet minor roads and forestry tracks in Loch Ard Forest. The distance is modest, which helps if travelling to Drymen the same morning.	Drymen has pubs, shops, B&Bs, hotels and an ATM. Aberfoyle is a large village with good walker services, including B&Bs, hotels, shops and places to eat.
2	Aberfoyle	Callander	16 km	A manageable forest-and-moorland stage through the Menteith Hills, with some wetter or boggier sections possible. Callander is a practical overnight stop before the easier railway-path section northwards.	Callander has the best services on the southern half of the route: shops, cafés, pubs, restaurants, accommodation, ATM and bus connections. Bracklinn Falls can be visited as a side diversion from town.
3	Callander	Strathyre	15 km	The easiest stage of the route, mainly on disused railway trackbed and National Cycle Network route with gentle gradients. It gives a scenic but low-stress day along Loch Lubnaig.	Kilmahog, just outside Callander, has limited provisions; there is little else before Strathyre. Strathyre is small but suitable for an overnight stop, with a hotel, inn, B&B and village shop.

Day	From	To	Approx. distance	Why this stage makes sense	Services/accommodation notes
4	Strathyre	Killin	21 km	A longer but logical day using cycle path and old railway line, with views towards Loch Earn and the Glen Ogle section over the former Callander & Oban Railway route. This stage positions you at Killin before the hardest and most exposed crossing of the whole Way.	Lochearnhead is a possible services detour, with hotel and B&Bs. Killin has pubs, cafés, shops, B&Bs, hotels and an ATM. The Falls of Dochart are a major landmark in the village.
5	Killin	Ardtalnaig	19 km	This is the hardest stage. It climbs for a long time from Killin, passes the Lochan Breaclaich hydro dam area and crosses exposed moorland near Craig Gharbh, the route high point at around 565 m. Keep this as a standalone day rather than adding distance to it.	There are no services between Killin and Ardtalnaig. Ardeonaig, around 3 miles before Ardtalnaig on the south side of Loch Tay, has a seasonal hotel and is the only proper meal option on this stage; opening dates should be checked before travelling. Ardtalnaig accommodation is very limited, so book this night first.
6	Ardtalnaig	Aberfeldy	24 km	The longest standard stage, following the south side of Loch Tay before continuing towards Aberfeldy. The Birks of Aberfeldy can be visited on the descent into town if time and energy allow.	Acharn is a possible intermediate stopping point with accommodation, useful for walkers splitting this day. Aberfeldy is well served, with hotels, guest houses, B&Bs, cafés, restaurants, bars, shops and bus connections.
7	Aberfeldy	Pitlochry	19 km	A varied final day: River Tay paths, railway trackbed to Grandtully, then a climb over open moorland and through Fonab Forest into Pitlochry. The moorland section still deserves care in poor visibility, despite being lower than the Killin–Ardtalnaig crossing.	Grandtully and nearby Strathtay have food and drink options, including a small food store in Strathtay. Pitlochry has excellent accommodation, restaurants, pubs and shops, plus a station on the Highland Main Line.

Slower 8-day options

An 8-day itinerary suits walkers who prefer shorter days, want more time for side trips, or are new to multi-day walking. It is also a sensible choice if accommodation availability forces a split in the middle of the route.

Two practical ways to slow the route down are:

Option	How to split it	Who it suits	Notes
Split Strathyre to Killin	Strathyre to Lochearnhead, then Lochearnhead to Killin	Walkers wanting an easier run into the hardest stage, or time for the Balquhidder diversion	Lochearnhead has hotel and B&B accommodation. This split also gives more scope to visit Rob Roy MacGregor's grave at Balquhidder, which is off the main route.
Split Ardtalnaig to Aberfeldy	Ardtalnaig to Acharn, then Acharn to Aberfeldy	Walkers who do not want a 24 km day after the exposed Killin–Ardtalnaig crossing	Acharn has limited accommodation, so this should be booked early. This split gives more time for the Falls of Acharn and the Birks of Aberfeldy.

Faster 6-day option

A 6-day Rob Roy Way is possible, but it is best reserved for fit walkers with long-distance experience. Daily distances become significantly longer, and the Killin–Ardtalnaig stage should not be underestimated.

The most practical fast approach is to merge two of the easier southern or central stages while leaving the final three days close to the standard itinerary. Combining Callander to Strathyre and Strathyre to Killin creates a very long day of roughly 35–36 km, so it is demanding and not ideal immediately before the moorland crossing.

Another option is to combine Drymen to Aberfoyle and Aberfoyle to Callander into a single long first day of about 31 km. This avoids overloading the day before the Killin–Ardtalnaig stage, but it requires an early start and enough time to reach Drymen beforehand.

Variants to treat with caution

The wilderness alternative from Ardtalnaig to Aberfeldy via Glen Almond and Glen Quaich adds roughly 26 km / 16 miles and at least one extra day. It is remote, needs good navigation and is not a practical standard itinerary for most walkers, particularly because the Amulree hotel has closed.

Only consider that variant if experienced, self-sufficient and able to make firm accommodation or camping plans in advance. This should be checked before travelling.

Planning the Route

The Rob Roy Way is best planned around overnight stops, not around perfectly even daily distances. The standard south-to-north itinerary from Drymen to Pitlochry naturally falls into seven walking days, because those are the settlements where accommodation is realistically available.

Most walkers should allow **7 walking days / 8 nights**. A 6-day schedule suits fit walkers happy with longer days, while 8 days gives more time for slower starts, side visits and poor-weather flexibility. Walking it faster rarely makes the logistics easier, because the middle section has limited beds and little scope for improvisation.

Choosing how many days to allow

Pace	Typical plan	Best for	Main caveat
Fast	6 walking days	Fit walkers with light packs and booked accommodation	Longer days reduce flexibility, especially around the Killin–Ardalnaig–Aberfeldy section
Standard	7 walking days	Most independent walkers	Still requires early booking at Ardtalnaig / Ardeonaig
Relaxed	8 walking days	Walkers wanting shorter days or more time in the towns	Extra night must be fitted around places with accommodation, not necessarily halfway between stages
Cycling	3–4 days	Experienced cycle tourers	The route includes tracks, minor roads and rougher upland sections; planning differs from a walking itinerary

The official stage pattern is the most practical starting point. It keeps the early days moderate, gives a sensible build-up to the high moorland crossing after Killin, and finishes with good transport at Pitlochry.

The standard 7-stage plan

Day	Stage	Approx. distance	Planning notes
1	Drymen to Aberfoyle	15 km	Straightforward first day, but Drymen has no railway station, so arrival logistics need planning.
2	Aberfoyle to Callander	16 km	Check the official route updates before travel; this section has had recent route changes due to forestry works.
3	Callander to Strathyre	15 km	A good shorter day on the Loch Lubnaig / old railway corridor. Strathyre has fewer beds than Callander or Killin.
4	Strathyre to Killin	21 km	Longer but still logistically simple compared with the next two days. Killin is the key resupply point before the remote middle section.
5	Killin to Ardtalnaig	19 km	The hardest day: exposed moorland, the high point near Craig Gharbh, boggy ground in places and more serious navigation in poor visibility.

Day	Stage	Approx. distance	Planning notes
6	Ardtalnaig to Aberfeldy	24 km	Long day with limited services before Aberfeldy. This stage depends heavily on where accommodation was secured the previous night.
7	Aberfeldy to Pitlochry	19 km	Manageable final day, with excellent onward rail options from Pitlochry. Staying the final night avoids rushing for an evening train.

Book Ardtalnaig first

The main constraint on the Rob Roy Way is **not the walking distance**. It is the shortage of accommodation between Killin and Aberfeldy, especially around Ardtalnaig.

Ardtalnaig has very limited beds. The Ardeonaig Hotel, a few kilometres along Loch Tay, is another possible option, but it has seasonal closures. If nothing is available, the usual fallback is a taxi back to Killin for a second night, then a return transfer the next morning. That arrangement must be planned in advance; Ardtalnaig has no public transport.

For an independent itinerary, secure the Ardtalnaig / Ardeonaig night before booking the rest of the route. After that, build the Drymen, Aberfoyle, Callander, Strathyre, Killin, Aberfeldy and Pitlochry nights around it. The Acharn area also has only limited accommodation, so it should not be treated as an easy last-minute alternative.

July and August can book out months ahead, and pressure also rises around weekends and bank holidays. Drymen, Aberfoyle, Callander, Aberfeldy and Pitlochry have the strongest choice of beds, but Strathyre and the Loch Tay side need earlier attention.

Where the route is easy — and where it is not

The early half is relatively forgiving. Drymen to Killin uses a succession of villages and towns with workable accommodation, and the walking is mainly on tracks, cycleway, minor roads and old railway paths.

The character changes after Killin. The Killin to Ardtalnaig stage climbs past the Lochan Breaclaich hydro dam towards the high ground near Craig Gharbh, officially around 565 m, though some mapping and guide sources give a slightly lower figure. This is the wildest section of the route and the one most affected by low cloud, wind and wet ground.

Published total ascent figures for the Rob Roy Way vary. HikeList uses about 2,325 m for the route, while some long-distance path listings give a higher total. In practical terms, the key point is that the sustained climb and most serious upland exposure come between Killin and Ardtalnaig.

Food, water and resupply planning

Plan resupply around the overnight settlements, especially before leaving Killin. There are no reliable shops or cafés to depend on between Killin and Aberfeldy, so carry enough food for the Killin–Ardtalnaig stage and the following Ardtalnaig–Aberfeldy stage.

If staying at Ardtalnaig, check what food is available with the accommodation when booking. If relying on a transfer back to Killin, make sure the next day's food is still sorted before returning to the trail.

Water planning is most important on the longer and more remote middle stages. Fill bottles before leaving overnight stops, and do not assume there will be convenient serviced stops between Killin and Aberfeldy. In warm weather, the exposed moorland day can feel much longer than the distance suggests.

Navigation and route updates

The Rob Roy Way is waymarked as one of Scotland's Great Trails, using green/brown posts with a thistle symbol. Waymarking is helpful, but it is not enough on its own. Some junctions are less obvious, and the high moorland crossing after Killin needs competent navigation if visibility deteriorates.

Carry a map and a current GPX file. The Rucksack Readers guidebook, *The Rob Roy Way*, and the Harvey Rob Roy Way dedicated strip map are the main route-specific planning tools. A GPX file can be used in OS Maps, Komoot, Outdooractive or similar apps, but batteries, weather and screen visibility should be planned for.

Check the official Rob Roy Way route updates page before travelling. The route has had changes in recent years, particularly where forestry operations affect access. The previous Aberfoyle–Callander diversion has been lifted and the original route restored, but this should still be checked before travelling.

Section hiking and shortening the route

The Rob Roy Way works well as a section hike. Killin is the natural dividing point, giving a first section from Drymen to Killin and a second section from Killin to Pitlochry.

A common split is:

Section	Typical use	Notes
Drymen to Killin	About 4 nights	Easier accommodation pattern and good progression through the Trossachs and Loch Lubnaig / Glen Ogle corridor.
Killin to Pitlochry	About 3 nights	More remote at the start and more dependent on Ardtalnaig / Ardeonaig logistics.
Callander to Killin	Long-weekend option	One of the most scenic and accessible sections, using Callander, Strathyre and Killin as practical bases.
Callander to Pitlochry	Longer public-transport-friendly section	Useful for walkers who want the Highland Perthshire half without arranging access to Drymen.

The roadside stretches along Loch Tay can sometimes be shortened by arranging pick-up or drop-off with a baggage transfer or taxi operator. This is a practical option for walkers who want to avoid a long road-heavy day, but it needs booking rather than assuming transport will be available on demand.

Extending the route

There is an optional wilderness alternative from Ardtalnaig towards Aberfeldy via Glen Almond and Glen Quaich, passing Amulree. It adds roughly 26–30 km and at least one extra day.

This is not a casual extension. It is remote, requires good navigation and has awkward accommodation logistics, especially because the Amulree Hotel has closed. It is mainly suitable for wild campers or walkers with flexible transport and accommodation plans. This should be checked before travelling.

Transport planning

Drymen has no railway station, so the start needs more planning than the finish. Most walkers reach Drymen by public transport and taxi via Balloch or Alexandria, or by bus from Glasgow or Stirling.

From Glasgow, the usual public-transport approach is by train to Balloch on the North Clyde Line, then bus or taxi to Drymen. Balloch to Drymen is a short onward transfer, but bus times should be checked at traveline.info before booking accommodation.

Pitlochry is much easier at the far end. It has a station on the Highland Main Line, with services towards Perth, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Inverness. Trains are frequent enough for most plans, but staying in Pitlochry on the final night is still the least stressful option, especially after a 19 km final stage.

Mid-route public transport is useful but limited. Callander, Strathyre and Killin are served by the C60 Callander–Killin bus, which is infrequent and has changed operator in recent years, so the current operator and timetable should be checked before travelling. Aberfeldy is connected to Pitlochry by Stagecoach bus services. Current timetables should be checked before travelling.

There is no public transport at Ardtalnaig. If accommodation falls through there, the practical solution is a taxi arrangement from Killin or another pre-booked transfer.

Baggage transfer and supported itineraries

Baggage transfer is widely used on the Rob Roy Way and can make the accommodation bottleneck easier to manage. Highland Transfers covers the full Drymen–Pitlochry route, with bags ready by 9am, delivery to the next stop by 4pm and a 20 kg maximum per bag.

Self-guided holiday companies such as Contours, EasyWays, Absolute Escapes, Macs Adventure, Wilderness Scotland, Hillwalk Tours, The Natural Adventure and Maximum Adventure also offer Rob Roy Way packages. These typically bundle accommodation, baggage transfer, maps or guidebook material and travel directions.

A supported package is most useful if Ardtalnaig accommodation is proving difficult, or if there is no time to piece together taxis, buses and baggage arrangements independently.

Permits, access and camping

No permit is required to walk the Rob Roy Way. Responsible access rights apply across most land in Scotland under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, subject to the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

Campers need to pay closer attention. The early part of the route passes through Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park, where camping byelaws apply in designated areas between 1 March and 30 September. A camping permit may be required in affected zones.

Beyond the National Park, wild camping is permitted when done responsibly: small numbers, short stays, no damage, no litter and no fires during dry periods. The route's accommodation pressure makes

camping attractive to some walkers, but the moorland and Loch Tay sections still require careful food, water and weather planning.

Weather and timing

Spring, summer and autumn are the normal walking seasons. Winter is possible only for experienced walkers who are comfortable with short daylight, colder conditions and reduced accommodation availability.

May, June, September and early October are often the most practical months for a balance of daylight, accommodation availability and walking conditions. July and August bring peak accommodation demand and more midge pressure, especially in still, damp conditions.

Whatever the month, the Killin to Ardtalnaig crossing should be treated as the weather-critical day. If the forecast is poor, allow enough flexibility to start early, slow down, navigate carefully or adjust transport and accommodation plans rather than pushing across the high ground late in the day.

Towns, Villages and Overnight Stops

Accommodation is straightforward at the start and finish, but the middle of the Rob Roy Way needs careful booking. The main pinch-point is Ardtalnaig, where beds are extremely limited and there are no shops, pubs or cafés.

For a standard 7-day itinerary, the most practical overnight stops are **Drymen, Aberfoyle, Callander, Strathyre, Killin, Ardtalnaig, Aberfeldy and Pitlochry**. Gartmore, Balquhidder, Lochearnhead, Acharn and Grandtully are useful stopping points or alternatives, but they are not all standard overnight bases.

Drymen

Drymen is the usual start of the Rob Roy Way, with the route beginning at the Village Square before sharing its early miles with the West Highland Way. It is a small but well-served Stirlingshire village and a practical place to stay the night before starting.

Accommodation includes hotels such as The Winnock Hotel and Buchanan Arms Hotel, plus B&Bs. The village is used to long-distance walkers, and luggage-transfer vans are commonly seen around the square.

Food and supplies are good for a route start. Options include The Clachan Inn, the Winnock Hotel, Skoosh Cafe, Drymen Bakery & Deli, a small Spar supermarket, a chemist, butcher and Drymen Beer Shop. There is an ATM.

Drymen has no railway station. Most walkers reach it by bus or taxi from Balloch or Alexandria on the North Clyde Line, or by bus from Glasgow or Stirling. McColls Bus 309 links Alexandria, Balloch station and Drymen on a daily service, but current timetables should be checked before travelling.

Useful local touches include a bike maintenance station and e-bike charging point at the Village Square. For walkers arriving late, Drymen is one of the better places on the route to buy last-minute snacks before setting off.

Gartmore

Gartmore lies between Drymen and Aberfoyle on the first stage, with the Rob Roy Way and NCN Cycle Route 7 passing through the village. It is a small planned village on the A81 and is more useful as a break point than as a main overnight stop.

Accommodation is very limited, with a pub/hotel in the village. Most walkers continue to Aberfoyle, which has far better facilities and is only around 15 km from Drymen on the standard first stage.

Food and drink options are limited to the village pub/hotel. Village services are minimal, so Gartmore should not be treated as a resupply point.

Public transport is limited and infrequent. For most itineraries, Gartmore is best used for a pause rather than a logistical base.

Aberfoyle

Aberfoyle is the usual first overnight stop, around 15 km from Drymen. It sits at the edge of Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park and is one of the most convenient service villages on the southern half of the route.

Accommodation is plentiful, with multiple B&Bs and hotels. Camping is available at Cobleland, a Forestry Commission campsite a few kilometres away and accessible by cycle path; Trossachs Holiday Park lies a few miles further away and offers holiday caravans.

The main street has pubs, restaurants and cafés, along with a Post Office, bank, supermarket, garden centre and the Scottish Wool Centre. There is an ATM, making Aberfoyle a sensible early resupply point.

There is no railway station. Bus C11 runs from Stirling but is infrequent, and the seasonal Trossachs Explorer shuttle bus links Drymen, Aberfoyle and Callander from July to October. This is particularly useful for section walkers, but timetables should be checked before travelling.

The Trossachs Discovery Centre on Main Street provides visitor information and is open all year. Aberfoyle is the last well-served village before Callander, so top up food here if accommodation or evening meal plans are uncertain.

Callander

Callander is the standard second overnight stop, around 16 km from Aberfoyle. It is the largest town on the Rob Roy Way and one of the easiest places to arrange accommodation, food and supplies.

Accommodation is broad, with hotels, guesthouses, B&Bs and hostel accommodation. It is also one of the best places on the route for a rest day or itinerary adjustment.

The High Street has pubs, tearooms, cafés, restaurants, takeaways, independent shops, a supermarket and ATMs. This is the strongest resupply point on the southern half of the walk.

Callander has no railway station. Bus services to and from Stirling are limited, and the seasonal Trossachs Explorer shuttle serves the town from July to October. Public transport is useful but not frequent enough to leave connections to chance.

Bracklinn Falls, on the Keltie Water gorge above the town, is a popular short detour. The Highland Boundary Fault crosses nearby, and this is a good place to reset before the quieter Trossachs and Highland-edge sections north of town.

Strathyre

Strathyre is the usual third overnight stop, around 15 km from Callander. The route reaches it after following the former railway line north beside Loch Lubnaig.

Accommodation is limited but practical if booked ahead. Options include The White Stag Inn, which offers rooms, pub food and drink, and Rosebank House B&B.

Food options are limited but generally sufficient for a single overnight, centred on The White Stag Inn. There is a village shop for essentials and snacks, but no supermarket.

There is no railway station. Bus services towards Callander and Killin are limited and should be checked before travelling. ATM availability is uncertain; this should be checked before travelling.

Strathyre is a useful base for walkers who want to visit Balquhidder without making Balquhidder an overnight stop. Do not arrive expecting a wide choice of evening meals or spare beds in busy periods.

Balquhidder

Balquhidder is just off the main Rob Roy Way rather than directly on the standard line. It sits in a quiet glen and is reached by a signed detour from the Strathyre or Lochearnhead area.

The main reason to visit is Rob Roy MacGregor's grave in Balquhidder kirkyard, at Balquhidder Church. The grave is marked with the motto "MacGregor Despite Them" and is one of the key cultural stops on the route.

Balquhidder is not a standard overnight stop for most walkers because of its position off-route and limited transport. Strathyre is usually the more practical base.

Accommodation in the wider glen includes Monachyle Mhor Hotel, with hotel and self-catering options further down the glen, and Mhor 84 Motel, which offers motel-style rooms, food and drink. Self-catering cottages are also available.

Food options include Mhor 84 Motel and Broch Cafe in the village. There is no public transport serving Balquhidder, so any detour needs to fit comfortably into the walking day or be arranged around accommodation.

Lochearnhead

Lochearnhead lies at the head of Loch Earn, between Strathyre and Killin. The route passes through or close to the village before entering Glen Ogle, where the old railway line climbs above the glen and crosses the disused 12-arch viaduct.

It can be used as an overnight stop, but most walkers continue to Killin on the standard itinerary. Accommodation includes B&Bs, self-catering cottages and small hotels, with Lochearnhead Hotel noted locally; Clachan Cottage Camping is nearby.

Food is limited, with Lochearnhead Hotel offering a traditional restaurant and other choices relatively sparse. There is a small village shop for essentials.

Lochearnhead has no railway station. Bus services are limited, and the village sits on the A84/A85 road corridor.

For most walkers, Lochearnhead is a good lunch or short-break point rather than the end of the day. The Glen Ogle viaduct above the village is one of the most memorable structures on the route and is worth allowing time for.

Killin

Killin is the standard fourth overnight stop, around 21 km from Strathyre. The route reaches the village after Glen Ogle and the old railway viaduct, then arrives at the Falls of Dochart at the western end of Loch Tay.

This is a key overnight base. Accommodation includes multiple hotels, guesthouses and B&Bs, with the Falls of Dochart Inn one of the best-known options.

Food and drink are good, with the Falls of Dochart Inn overlooking the falls, plus several other pubs, restaurants and cafés. There are local shops and a Co-op supermarket for resupply, and an ATM is available.

Killin has no railway station; the former Callander & Oban Railway closed in 1965. Local bus services link Callander, Strathyre and Killin on a limited timetable, with further bus links towards Crianlarich and Stirling. Timetables should be checked before travelling.

Killin is the last proper resupply point before Aberfeldy and comes immediately before the hardest and most remote stage: the moorland crossing to Ardtalnaig over the Craig Gharbh area. Carry food from here for the next day, and do not rely on buying anything at Ardtalnaig.

Ardtalnaig

Ardtalnaig is the most important accommodation pinch-point on the Rob Roy Way. It is a tiny hamlet on the south shore of Loch Tay, reached after the exposed moorland crossing from Killin via the Craig Gharbh area and Lochan Breaclaich.

Accommodation is extremely limited. Options include Kindrochit private house stays, Holly Cottage garden rooms or pods, Ardeonaig Hotel around three miles before Ardtalnaig, and Bracken Lodges just beyond the village. Ardeonaig Hotel is seasonal and closes from November to February.

There is no pub, café, restaurant, shop or ATM in Ardtalnaig. There is also no public transport to the hamlet; access is by the Rob Roy Way and the single-track road along Loch Tay.

This stop should be booked as early as possible, especially for summer trips. Some walking holiday companies avoid the accommodation problem by transferring walkers back to Killin for a second night, then returning them to Ardtalnaig the next morning.

If no bed is available, the whole itinerary may need changing. Carry all food and essentials from Killin, including enough for the evening and the following morning.

Acharn

Acharn is a tiny village on the south shore of Loch Tay, a short distance beyond Ardtalnaig on the stage towards Aberfeldy. It is more of a passing point than a standard overnight base.

Accommodation is very limited, with The Old Mill Acharn one notable option. This can be useful if Ardtalnaig accommodation is full, but availability should be checked before building an itinerary around it.

There are no shops, pubs or cafés in the village itself, and no public transport. Do not treat Acharn as a resupply point.

The route continues east along Loch Tay before heading over towards Aberfeldy. Walkers staying in this area need self-sufficient food planning from Killin.

Aberfeldy

Aberfeldy is the standard sixth overnight stop, around 24 km from Ardtalnaig. It is a market town on the River Tay and the best-served place between Callander and Pitlochry.

Accommodation is plentiful, with hotels, guesthouses and B&Bs. Aberfeldy is a popular Highland Perthshire base, so booking ahead is still sensible in busy periods.

Food and supplies are good. The town has pubs, restaurants, cafés, independent shops, a supermarket and ATMs. Dewar's World of Whisky is a major local attraction with a visitor centre.

There is no railway station in Aberfeldy. The nearest rail options are Perth, Dunkeld & Birnam and Pitlochry on the Highland Main Line. Bus 23 connects Aberfeldy with Pitlochry and other places, and there are also bus connections towards Perth; timetables should be checked before travelling.

The Tourist Information Hub at The Square has limited opening hours, listed as Monday to Friday, 10am to 2pm, and closed at weekends. The Birks of Aberfeldy, the Moness Burn gorge and Falls of Moness, are a worthwhile short detour from town.

Grandtully

Grandtully lies between Aberfeldy and Pitlochry, around 9 km from Aberfeldy, on the final stage. The route follows an old dismantled railway trackbed into the village.

It is a good lunch stop and can also work as an overnight for walkers splitting the final stage over two days. Accommodation includes the Inn on the Tay, Grandtully Hotel and Grandtully Station Campsite, which uses the former station car park and is bookable in advance for tents, caravans and motorhomes.

Food and drink are available at the Inn on the Tay and Grandtully Hotel. There is also a local shop and the Highland Chocolatier nearby.

Bus 23 links Grandtully with Aberfeldy and Pitlochry, making it useful for section walking or shortening the final day. Check current timetables before relying on it.

Grandtully is quieter than Pitlochry and can be a practical choice if accommodation at the finish is full. The campsite is also popular with canoeists, so booking ahead is sensible.

Pitlochry

Pitlochry is the finish of the Rob Roy Way and the easiest place on the route for onward travel. It is a large Highland Perthshire visitor town with strong accommodation, food and transport options.

Accommodation is excellent, with hotels, guesthouses, B&Bs, hostels and campsite options. It is still worth booking ahead in peak season, as Pitlochry is busy beyond the walking market.

Food and drink choices are broad, with restaurants, cafés, bars and pubs. The Old Mill Inn is a well-known town pub with live music on Fridays and Saturdays, and there are outdoor shops along Atholl Road, West Moulin Road and Bonnethill Road. Full supermarket services and ATMs are available.

Pitlochry railway station is on the Highland Main Line, set back about 100 m from the main street. It has regular services to destinations including Perth, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Inverness, Dundee, Aberdeen, Blair Atholl, Dunkeld & Birnam and Kingussie.

This rail access is the route's strongest transport advantage. It is possible to finish and travel home the same day, but staying overnight gives more flexibility if the final stage runs late or weather slows progress.

Getting to the Start

The Rob Roy Way starts in Drymen village square, in the G63 0BL area. Drymen has no railway station, so most walkers reach the start via Balloch, then continue by bus or taxi.

By train

There is no direct train to Drymen. The nearest railway station is Balloch, around 7–8 miles / 11–13 km from Drymen, on ScotRail's North Clyde Line.

From Glasgow, take a direct ScotRail service from Glasgow Queen Street Low Level or Glasgow Central to Balloch. The journey from Glasgow Queen Street to Balloch takes around 50 minutes, with trains roughly twice an hour for much of the day.

From Edinburgh Waverley, travel to Glasgow Queen Street, then change for Balloch. Allow around 2 hours 45 minutes to 3 hours in total, depending on the connection.

Alexandria station, one stop before Balloch, is also on the North Clyde Line and is slightly closer to the start of the 309 bus route. In practice, Balloch is the simpler interchange for most walkers.

From Balloch, continue to Drymen by the 309 bus or by taxi. Rail times should be checked on ScotRail before travelling.

By bus

McColl's service 309 links Alexandria, Balloch, Drymen and Balmaha. For the Rob Roy Way start, use the Balloch Bus Terminus to Drymen Square section; the journey takes around 20–25 minutes.

Frequency is approximately hourly to two-hourly on weekdays and less frequent at weekends. Rural timetables can change seasonally, so the current 309 timetable should be checked before travelling.

There is no straightforward direct bus from Glasgow to Drymen. A journey from Buchanan Bus Station is possible with a change and takes around 2 hours 30 minutes, but this is usually less convenient than the train to Balloch followed by the 309 bus or a taxi.

From Stirling, bus access is indirect and takes around 2 hours. A taxi or car transfer is usually more practical from Stirling.

For timetable planning, use Traveline Scotland, McColl's Coaches for the 309, and ScotRail for trains to Balloch.

By car

Drymen is straightforward to reach by road, but the Rob Roy Way is a one-way walk finishing in Pitlochry. Leaving a car at the start means arranging collection at the end, or returning from Pitlochry by public transport and taxi/bus.

Approximate driving times to Drymen are:

From	Approximate drive
Glasgow city centre	30 minutes / 17–18 miles
Glasgow Airport	45–55 minutes / around 22 miles
Edinburgh	1 hour 15–20 minutes / around 78 km
Edinburgh Airport	1 hour 20–30 minutes / around 49–50 miles

Drymen has a village pay-and-display car park near the square, but it is primarily suited to short-term parking rather than a full 6–7 day walk. Current restrictions and charges should be checked before relying on it for multi-day parking.

Some walkers leave a car in Balloch, where there is parking around the station area, then take the 309 bus or a taxi to Drymen. Availability, daily charges and any long-stay restrictions at Balloch should be checked before travelling.

Guest parking may solve the problem if staying in Drymen the night before. The Winnock Hotel has rear parking for guests, and Drymen Camping may be able to advise on vehicle storage during its season, but this must be arranged directly in advance.

Local taxi options are useful if bus times do not line up. Balloch to Drymen takes around 15–20 minutes by taxi and is typically estimated at about £15–£20; fares should be agreed or checked before booking. Drymen Taxis operate locally on 01360 660077.

From the nearest airport

Glasgow International Airport is the more convenient airport for Drymen. It is around 22 miles from the village, but there is no direct public transport link to the start.

From Glasgow Airport, the simplest public-transport route is the Glasgow Airport Express into Glasgow city centre, then ScotRail to Balloch, then the 309 bus or a taxi to Drymen. Allow roughly 2.5–3 hours end to end, depending on connections.

A taxi or pre-booked private transfer from Glasgow Airport to Drymen usually takes around 45–55 minutes. Typical estimates are about £45–£55, but current fares should be checked before booking.

Edinburgh Airport is possible but less convenient. The public-transport route is tram to Edinburgh Park, train to Glasgow Queen Street, train to Balloch, then the 309 bus or taxi to Drymen. Allow around 3.5–4 hours.

A taxi from Edinburgh Airport to Drymen is a longer and more expensive transfer, with estimates around £84. Current prices should be checked before travelling.

Where to stay before starting

Arriving in Drymen the evening before Day 1 is the most reliable plan. The first stage to Aberfoyle starts directly from the village square, and relying on early-morning rural bus connections can add unnecessary risk to the first day.

Drymen has a good choice of walker accommodation because it also sits on the opening section of the West Highland Way. Book well ahead in summer, especially in July, August and on bank holiday weekends.

Central options include The Winnock Hotel on the village square, The Drymen Inn, Braeside Guest House, Ashbank and Kip in the Kirk. Drymen Camping is a seasonal option, usually operating from mid-March to mid-October, and welcomes walkers and campervans.

If accommodation in Drymen is full, Balloch can be used as a practical fallback because of its railway station and onward bus or taxi link to Drymen. In that case, leave enough time on the morning of departure to reach Drymen Square before starting the walk.

Getting Home from the Finish

The Rob Roy Way finishes in Pitlochry, one of the easiest trail ends in Scotland for onward travel. The town is on the Highland Main Line, has regular buses to Perth and has enough accommodation to make a final overnight stay straightforward.

By train

Pitlochry railway station is the main exit point from the route. It is central, only a very short walk from the main street, with two platforms, step-free access, a staffed ticket office and a small car park on Platform 1.

ScotRail services run south to Perth, Edinburgh Waverley and Glasgow Queen Street, and north to Inverness. Direct trains make it practical to finish the walk and leave the same day, provided you reach Pitlochry by mid-afternoon.

Destination	Typical journey	Notes
Edinburgh Waverley	About 2 hours	Direct services; up to around 11 trains per day on weekdays.
Glasgow Queen Street	About 1 hour 44 minutes	Direct services; up to around 11 trains per day on weekdays.
Inverness	About 1 hour 40 minutes to 2 hours 30 minutes	Direct northbound services; journey time varies by train.
London	Overnight or via Edinburgh/Glasgow	The Caledonian Sleeper stops at Pitlochry; LNER Highland Chieftain services also serve the Highland Main Line.

Sunday services are reduced, so do not assume a weekday-style timetable if finishing at the weekend. Train times, engineering works and sleeper departures should be checked before booking, especially in summer holidays and on busy weekends.

The Caledonian Sleeper is useful for walkers heading to London after a late finish. The southbound sleeper normally leaves Pitlochry late in the evening and reaches London Euston the next morning, but the exact timing should be checked at sleeper.scot.

By bus

Bus is a slower but useful fallback if trains are expensive, disrupted or do not suit your onward plan. Stagecoach East Scotland services link Pitlochry with Perth, where there are onward rail and coach connections to Edinburgh, Dundee and elsewhere.

Route 23 / 23X runs between Pitlochry and Perth city centre, with a journey of roughly 1 hour 20 minutes and multiple departures on a typical day. Route 27 also connects Pitlochry and Perth via Aberfeldy, though frequency varies.

For most walkers, the train is the simpler choice from Pitlochry. Use the bus if heading specifically to Perth, if you are making a local connection, or if the rail timetable leaves a long wait.

By car/taxi

Pitlochry sits on the A9, giving direct road access south towards Perth, the M90 and Edinburgh, and north towards Inverness. If a vehicle has been left at Drymen, the finish requires a shuttle, taxi arrangement, second vehicle or a pre-booked transfer back towards the start.

Highland Transfers offer Rob Roy Way baggage and vehicle-shuttle options. Anyone relying on a vehicle move should arrange it before starting the walk, not from Pitlochry at the end of the final day.

Taxis in Pitlochry are limited and should be booked ahead, particularly for evening arrivals, Sunday travel, airport transfers or a return to a trail village. Local operators include Elizabeth Yule Coaches / Yules Taxis, Seb Taxi Service, M-Taxi and Enroute Taxis; current availability and fares should be checked before travelling.

Allow extra time on road journeys using the A9, as roadworks and seasonal traffic can slow the main route. This matters if connecting with a flight, sleeper train or pre-booked long-distance train.

From the nearest airport

Edinburgh Airport is the nearest major airport for most walkers leaving Pitlochry. The usual public-transport route is train from Pitlochry to Edinburgh Waverley, then Airlink 100 bus or Edinburgh Trams to the airport.

Glasgow Airport is also practical, using the direct train from Pitlochry to Glasgow Queen Street, then onward transport across Glasgow to the airport. Glasgow Airport is not directly rail-connected, so allow time for the city transfer.

Inverness Airport can work well for northbound flights. Take the train from Pitlochry to Inverness, then the local airport bus from Inverness station area.

Dundee Airport is closer by road but has a very limited route network, so it is only useful if its current flights match your plans. Flight routes and airport transfer times change, so airport connections should be checked before booking non-refundable travel.

Where to stay at the finish

Pitlochry is a sensible place to spend the final night, especially if the last stage from Aberfeldy and Grandtully takes longer than expected. Staying over also avoids rushing for a reduced Sunday service or a late train after several days on trail.

Accommodation choice is much better here than in the remote middle of the Rob Roy Way. Options include B&Bs and guesthouses, hotels, a backpackers' hostel, and places just outside the centre such as Moulin.

The town also has the practical facilities most walkers want at the end: shops, cafés, pubs, restaurants and outdoor/walking gear shops. Booking ahead is still advisable in the main walking season, during school holidays and around busy Pitlochry events.

Which Direction Should You Walk?

Standard direction: Drymen to Pitlochry

Walk the Rob Roy Way south-to-north, from Drymen to Pitlochry, unless there is a strong personal reason to do otherwise. This is the traditional and overwhelmingly most common direction, and it is the direction assumed by the official 7-stage structure.

It also fits the character of the route. The opening miles leave Drymen on the same line as the West Highland Way before the Rob Roy Way branches away through the Trossachs towards Aberfoyle, making Drymen the natural starting point.

Why south-to-north works best

Factor	South-to-north advantage
Waymarking and route logic	The trail is set up and described for Drymen to Pitlochry travel, so navigation notes, stage planning and baggage logistics tend to align with this direction.
Prevailing wind	Scotland's prevailing wind is south-westerly, so walking north-east from Drymen to Pitlochry often puts the wind more behind than ahead.
Terrain build-up	The early stages through Aberfoyle and Callander use gentler forest tracks, cycleway and easier ground before the more exposed middle of the route.
Hardest day timing	The Killin-to-Ardalnaig moorland crossing over the high ground near Craig Gharbh comes on Stage 5 of 7, when most walkers have settled into the rhythm of the trail.
Scenery progression	The route builds from village and forest to lochside glens, Glen Ogle, Killin, the high moorland crossing, Loch Tay country, Aberfeldy and finally Pitlochry.
Finish logistics	Pitlochry has a railway station on the Highland Main Line, making it a much easier place to leave from after finishing.

The gradient argument is not about avoiding climbing altogether; the Rob Roy Way still has more than 2,000 m of ascent whichever way it is walked. The advantage is that the toughest and most exposed section does not arrive immediately.

In the standard direction, the demanding Killin-to-Ardalnaig stage comes after Drymen, Aberfoyle, Callander, Strathyre and Killin. In reverse, the same moorland crossing is reached very early, after only two walking days from Pitlochry.

Transport: slightly awkward start, easy finish

Drymen has no railway station, so reaching the start takes a little planning. The usual public-transport approach is to travel by train to Balloch or Alexandria on ScotRail's North Clyde Line, then continue to Drymen by bus or taxi.

From Glasgow, trains run to Balloch, with the journey taking about 50 minutes. McColls Bus 309 links Balloch with Drymen village, with a journey of about 15 minutes, but bus times should be checked

before travelling on Traveline Scotland.

The finish is much simpler. Pitlochry is on the Highland Main Line, with rail services towards Perth, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Inverness, and this is a major practical advantage at the end of a long walk.

For many walkers, this is exactly the right balance: sort out the more fiddly transport at the start, then finish somewhere with straightforward onward travel, accommodation and food.

Accommodation flow

South-to-north also works better for accommodation planning. Drymen, Aberfoyle and Callander offer the strongest early choice, so the first few nights are usually easier to organise.

The main bottleneck is around Ardtalnaig, where beds are very limited and advance booking is important. Walking south-to-north places that constraint in the middle of the trip rather than right near the start.

After the remote middle, the route returns to stronger accommodation options at Aberfeldy and Pitlochry. That makes the final stages easier to manage, especially if weather, fatigue or transport plans need adjusting.

Scenery and finish

The south-to-north direction gives the route a better sense of progression. The walk starts with the Trossachs and forested lower ground, then moves through Callander, Loch Lubnaig, Glen Ogle, Killin and the Falls of Dochart before the wildest moorland section between Killin and Ardtalnaig.

The final approach through Aberfeldy, Grandtully and into Pitlochry gives a strong finish in Highland Perthshire. Pitlochry is a practical and satisfying end point, with accommodation, shops, places to eat and drink, and immediate rail access.

Walking north-to-south

Walking from Pitlochry to Drymen is technically possible. The route can be followed in reverse, and competent navigators should have no difficulty adapting maps and GPX files.

The disadvantages are clear, though. You are more likely to face the prevailing south-westerly wind, the exposed Craig Gharbh moorland crossing comes early, and the Ardtalnaig accommodation pinch point arrives on the second night of a typical reverse itinerary.

Reverse travel also gives a less convenient finish. Instead of ending at Pitlochry's railway station, you finish in Drymen, where onward travel normally requires a bus or taxi connection to Balloch or Alexandria.

Recommendation

Walk the Rob Roy Way south-to-north, from Drymen to Pitlochry. It is the traditional direction, works better with the prevailing wind, gives a more natural build in terrain and scenery, places the hardest stage at a sensible point in the walk, and finishes at one of the best-connected trail-end towns in Scotland.

Accommodation Along the Route

Accommodation on the Rob Roy Way is straightforward in the larger towns and tight in the middle of the route. Drymen, Aberfoyle, Callander, Killin, Aberfeldy and Pitlochry all have a workable spread of B&Bs, guesthouses, inns and hotels, while Callander and Pitlochry also have hostel options.

The main planning issue is the long Killin to Aberfeldy stretch, where beds are scarce around Ardtalnaig, Ardeonaig and Acharn. This section should drive the whole booking plan: secure the remote middle first, then build the rest of the itinerary around it.

Accommodation by stop

Place	Accommodation level	Best for	Notes
Drymen	Good	Pre-walk night	Busy because it is also on the West Highland Way. Hotels, B&Bs and self-catering are available; book early for July and August.
Gartmore	Limited	Passing through	Small hamlet and not a standard overnight stop. Most walkers continue to Aberfoyle.
Aberfoyle	Good	Day 1 overnight	One of the better-served early stops, with hotels and B&Bs. Practical village base with shops and pubs.
Callander	Excellent	Day 2 overnight, rest day, resupply	The strongest service centre on the southern half. Hotels, B&Bs, guesthouses and Callander Hostel, which is on the route. Books quickly at peak weekends.
Strathyre	Moderate	Quiet overnight stop	Smaller village with a decent choice for its size, including hotel and B&B accommodation. Has a small shop and pub.
Lochearnhead	Limited	Alternative stage break	Hotel and shop available. Useful if splitting the Strathyre to Killin section differently.
Killin	Good	Final full-service stop before the remote section	Hotels, inns and B&Bs near the Falls of Dochart. Restock here before the Killin to Ardtalnaig stage.
Ardeonaig	Limited	Hotel-standard stop on Loch Tay	Ardeonaig Hotel is the key option on this stretch and is seasonal, closed November to February. Check opening before planning around it.
Ardtalnaig	Very limited	Essential remote overnight in the standard 7-day itinerary	The hardest place to book on the route. Very small-capacity options include glamping pods, private house stay/annexe accommodation and small B&B-style stays. No pub or shop.
Acharn	Very limited	Alternative to Ardtalnaig for a longer day	The Old Mill Acharn provides a B&B option, but the village is small and accommodation is otherwise very limited.

Place	Accommodation level	Best for	Notes
Aberfeldy	Good	Recovery and resupply after the remote middle	Hotels, guesthouses, B&Bs and self-catering. Good food and shopping options, including a Co-op supermarket.
Grandtully	Limited	Camping on the final stage	Grandtully Station Campsite sits by the route, with tent pitches, showers, toilets, WiFi and electric hook-ups. Most non-camping walkers continue to Pitlochry.
Pitlochry	Excellent	Finish night, recovery, onward travel	Wide choice of hotels, B&Bs, guesthouses, hostel accommodation and camping. Busy in summer, so book ahead.

Where to book first

Book Ardtalnaig first. The official route advice is to book the difficult places first, especially Ardtalnaig, and that is the single most important accommodation rule on this trail.

The standard itinerary places the fifth night at Ardtalnaig after the exposed moorland crossing from Killin. There are only a handful of small-capacity options in and around Ardtalnaig, Acharn and Ardeonaig, and there is no meaningful accommodation safety net between Killin and Aberfeldy.

Once the Ardtalnaig-area night is secured, book Callander and Strathyre next. Both are popular, and Callander in particular can fill quickly on summer weekends and holiday periods. Killin should follow, especially if walking in July or August.

Aberfoyle, Aberfeldy and Pitlochry normally offer more choice, but they are still worth booking ahead in peak season. Drymen also needs early attention because West Highland Way traffic increases demand before the Rob Roy Way even starts.

The Killin to Aberfeldy accommodation gap

The Killin to Aberfeldy section is the hardest part of the accommodation plan as well as the most remote walking section. The usual split is Killin to Ardtalnaig, then Ardtalnaig to Aberfeldy, but that only works if a bed is available around Ardtalnaig.

Ardtalnaig has no pub, shop or general facilities. Carry food from Killin, and check whether the booked accommodation provides breakfast, evening meal options or any packed-lunch support before arrival.

Ardeonaig can suit walkers looking for a hotel on the south side of Loch Tay, but its seasonal closure from November to February makes it unsuitable for winter planning. Acharn can work as an alternative overnight for walkers willing to adjust the day lengths, but capacity is also very limited.

If no accommodation is available in the Ardtalnaig, Ardeonaig or Acharn area, do not assume the stage can be improvised on arrival. Taxi or private transfer arrangements may be needed to bridge the gap, but this should be checked before travelling and arranged well in advance.

Best places for services and restocking

Callander is the best early-route service hub, with shops, pubs, restaurants and cafés. It is also the most obvious place to slow the itinerary with a rest day if walking an 8-day schedule.

Killin is the key resupply point before the remote Loch Tay section. Treat it as the last reliable full-service stop until Aberfeldy.

Aberfeldy is the first substantial town after the accommodation-scarce middle of the route. It is a good place to recover, eat properly and top up supplies before the final stage to Pitlochry.

Pitlochry has the broadest finish-night choice and strong onward transport from its Highland Main Line station. It is worth booking a finish-night bed rather than relying on late availability, especially in summer.

Seasonal and weekend pressure

July and August bring the highest accommodation pressure. For those months, booking at least two to three months ahead is sensible, with Ardtalnaig arranged even earlier where possible.

Easter, May half-term, Bank Holiday weekends and peak summer weekends can also tighten availability in Callander, Strathyre, Killin and Pitlochry. Drymen can be particularly busy because of West Highland Way demand.

Spring from April to early June can be a good balance of availability and walking conditions, though some seasonal businesses may not yet be operating. Autumn is often easier for accommodation than high summer, but some places begin closing later in October.

Winter is not a practical accommodation season for most Rob Roy Way walkers. Short days, harsher upland conditions and seasonal closures, including Ardeonaig Hotel from November to February, make the route harder to plan.

Inn-to-inn walking, baggage transfer and packages

The Rob Roy Way works well as an inn-to-inn walk if accommodation is booked in advance. The usual overnight pattern of Drymen, Aberfoyle, Callander, Strathyre, Killin, Ardtalnaig, Aberfeldy and Pitlochry is realistic, but only if the Ardtalnaig-area night is secured.

Self-guided operators such as Macs Adventure, Absolute Escapes, Contours Walking Holidays and Headwater offer packages with pre-booked accommodation, route notes and luggage transfer. These are particularly useful on this trail because the operator deals with the difficult middle-section accommodation.

Standalone baggage transfer is also available through Highland Transfers. Luggage transfer helps make the longer and rougher days easier by allowing walkers to carry only day kit, although it does not solve the shortage of beds around Ardtalnaig.

Baggage services commonly work on a one-bag-per-person basis with a weight limit, often around 20 kg. Current limits, pick-up rules and accommodation coverage should be checked before booking.

Camping and Wild Camping

The Rob Roy Way is a good route for campers, provided the first National Park stages and the remote Ardtalnaig section are planned properly. Formal campsites fit several of the normal stage ends, while the wildest central section is often better suited to responsible wild camping than to booked accommodation.

Campers should expect to carry their own kit. Baggage-transfer services on the Rob Roy Way are geared mainly towards inn-to-inn walkers, not to wild-camping itineraries with flexible overnight stops.

Wild camping law in Scotland

Wild camping is permitted in Scotland under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, when carried out responsibly under the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. On this route that means lightweight camping, small groups, short stays and leaving no trace.

Do not camp in enclosed fields, near buildings, in village centres, or where camping would obstruct work, access or livestock. Stay no more than 2–3 nights in one place, take all litter away, and avoid damaging vegetation.

Human waste should be dealt with well away from water, paths and buildings: at least 30 m away, buried in a shallow hole, or bagged and carried out where burial is not appropriate.

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park camping bylaws

The first part of the Rob Roy Way needs extra care because it passes through Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park. Drymen is just outside the park boundary, but Aberfoyle is inside it, and the route remains within or close to the park as far as the Callander area.

Camping Management Bylaws operate in the National Park from **1 March to 30 September**. Within designated Camping Management Zones, camping is allowed only at an official campsite or with a camping permit. The permit cost is **£4.30 per tent per night**, but current prices and zones should be checked before travelling.

The zones cover only part of the park, mainly popular lochside areas, but they matter for the first 2–3 days of this walk. The Three Lochs Forest Drive area near Aberfoyle is one of the permit-controlled areas. Check the current Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park camping zone map before planning any wild camp between Drymen, Aberfoyle and Callander: <https://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/things-to-do/camping/campingbylaws/>

From Strathyre northwards the route moves into more open Highland terrain, where the standard Scottish Outdoor Access Code applies without National Park camping permit zones.

Campsites on or near the route

Location	Camping option	Practical notes
Drymen	Drymen Camping	A very useful start-point site for Rob Roy Way and West Highland Way walkers. Hot showers, toilets, charging points and Wi-Fi. Tent pitches from about £14 per person ; glamping pods also available. Open mid-March to mid-October; no caravans or motorhomes.
Aberfoyle	Queen Elizabeth Forest Park camping/glamping option	Dog-friendly riverside camping and glamping around 5 minutes from Aberfoyle village centre. Permit zones may apply nearby from March to September, so check the National Park map before relying on informal camping.
Callander	Limited tent-camping options	Callander Woods Holiday Park is near the town but does not accept tents . Walkers need to use other accommodation, wild camp responsibly where permitted, or check smaller local options such as Wester Auchraw directly. This should be checked before travelling.
Strathyre	Immervoulin Caravan & Camping Park	Just south of Strathyre beside the River Balvaig. Has a large grass tent area, showers, toilets and laundry. Open 1 March–15 October . 2025 prices started from £25 for 2 adults and 2 children without electric, with a single-night supplement.
Killin	Maragowan Killin Club Campsite and other local pitches	On the A827, about 0.5 miles east of Killin past the Falls of Dochart, on the Killin–Kenmore road. It lies on National Cycle Route 7 and the Rob Roy Way, and accepts members and non-members. Other camping pitches exist along the A827 and north shore of Loch Tay.
Ardtalnaig / Loch Tay	No formal campsite in Ardtalnaig	This is the main gap in the campsite chain. Wild camping is the usual flexible option, but the ground is remote and exposed, especially on the Killin–Ardtalnaig moorland crossing.
Aberfeldy	Aberfeldy Caravan Park	In-town campsite well placed for Rob Roy Way walkers. Has 31 grass tent pitches, some with electric hook-up, plus showers, toilets, disabled facilities and laundry. Open March to October.
Grandtully	Grandtully Station Campsite	The Rob Roy Way passes directly through the campsite car park on the old railway trackbed between Aberfeldy and Grandtully. Grass tent pitches, showers, toilets, Wi-Fi and phone-charging lockers. Useful for breaking the final Aberfeldy–Pitlochry stage. Prices from about £27 per night ; open seasonally.
Pitlochry	No campsite directly on the route at the finish	Pitlochry has full town services, accommodation and the railway station. Most campers either finish and travel on, or use Grandtully Station Campsite before the final walk into Pitlochry.

Best sections for wild camping

The strongest wild-camping section is between **Killin and Ardtalnaig**, around Craig Gharbh and Lochan Breaclaich. This is the highest, wildest and most exposed part of the Rob Roy Way, with broad moorland, burns and lochans, and enough space to find a discreet pitch in settled weather.

This same section is also the least forgiving place to camp in poor weather. The ground can be boggy, shelter is limited, and wind exposure is a serious factor. A robust three-season tent with good wind stability is the minimum sensible choice; a four-season tent is better for shoulder-season trips.

The **Loch Tay shore east of Ardtalnaig** also offers good wild-camping potential, with terraced ground above the loch and more shelter near woodland around Acharn. An old forestry car park roughly 5 km east of Ardtalnaig towards Acharn is used by wild campers and gives views over Loch Tay towards Fearnan.

Other workable areas include the forestry sections north of Callander and around Loch Lubnaig, and parts of **Glen Ogle** above Lochearnhead where the old railway trackbed creates a long, level corridor. These lower, more sheltered places can be much worse for midges in summer.

Sections where camping is more awkward

The first two days, from **Drymen to Aberfoyle and Callander**, are the most complicated for wild camping because of National Park permit zones. Using Drymen Camping and the Aberfoyle area camping option is usually simpler than trying to build an informal wild-camp itinerary through this section between March and September.

Callander itself is not a straightforward tent stop. The nearby Callander Woods Holiday Park does not accept tents, so walkers need to use other accommodation, check smaller local options, or move beyond the town to camp responsibly where access rights allow.

Camping is also impractical in village centres and enclosed farmland along the route. The Scottish access rights do not give permission to pitch in enclosed fields, gardens or close to houses.

Water for campers

Water is generally abundant on the Rob Roy Way. Burns, streams and lochans are common, and Scotland's rainfall means natural sources are rarely dry on this route.

Water should still be filtered or boiled, especially where there is farmland or sheep grazing upstream. This applies to much of the lower route and also to parts of the Killin–Ardtalnaig moorland.

On the high section, burns and lochans provide useful water, but do not assume every pitch will have a clean source immediately beside it. Fill up before committing to an exposed camp, and avoid taking water within 30 m of farms, buildings or obviously contaminated ground.

Fires, stoves and Leave No Trace

Use a camping stove. Open fires are allowed only with great caution under the Scottish Outdoor Access Code, but they are a poor choice on this route because of forestry, moorland and peat.

Do not light fires during dry spells, near woodland, on farmland, close to buildings, or on peat. The Killin–Ardtalnaig moorland is largely peat-based, so fires should be avoided there entirely.

Leave every pitch unmarked. Pack out all litter, food waste and hygiene products, move tents before vegetation is damaged, and keep camps small and unobtrusive.

Seasonal issues for campers

The main camping season is spring to autumn, matching the normal walking season for the Rob Roy Way. Many campsites open from March to October, but exact dates vary and should be checked before booking.

Midges are a serious issue from **June to August**, especially on still, humid evenings in sheltered places such as Aberfoyle, Strathyre and around Loch Lubnaig. A head net and effective repellent are essential for summer wild camping.

Higher, breezier camps above about 400 m, such as the Killin–Ardtalnaig moorland, are usually less affected by midges. They are also colder, windier and more exposed, so the trade-off is comfort versus weather protection.

Winter camping is only suitable for experienced walkers with appropriate equipment. Short daylight, harsher weather and reduced accommodation or campsite availability make winter a very different proposition on this route.

Food, Water and Resupply

The Rob Roy Way is straightforward for food and drink until Killin, then becomes much more serious. Drymen, Aberfoyle, Callander, Killin, Aberfeldy and Pitlochry are the main resupply stops; Strathyre is useful but small; Ardtalnaig has no food services at all.

The key planning point is the stretch from Killin to Aberfeldy via Ardtalnaig. This is roughly 43 km / 27 miles over two stages with no shops, cafés or pubs between Killin and Aberfeldy, so food for two walking days must be carried from Killin.

Resupply by section

Section	Food availability	Water availability	Notes
Drymen to Aberfoyle	Good at both ends. Drymen has a Spar, bakery/deli, pubs and hotels; Aberfoyle has a Co-op, cafés, deli/butcher and inns.	Tap water at accommodation and cafés. Natural water may be available, but refill in villages where possible.	Easy first-day logistics. Buy lunch in Drymen or Aberfoyle depending on start time.
Aberfoyle to Callander	Good at both ends. Aberfoyle has a Co-op and cafés; Callander is one of the best resupply towns on the route, with a small Tesco, bakery, cafés, pubs and ATMs.	Tap water at services and accommodation. Burns and rivers are present, but filtering is sensible if using natural sources.	Callander is a strong place to restock snacks and lunch supplies before the quieter middle section.
Callander to Strathyre	Callander has excellent supplies. Strathyre has limited village services, including pubs/hotels and a small shop; nearby seasonal food options should not be relied on without checking.	Tap water at accommodation. Lochside and burn water may be available on the route north of Callander; filter or purify if used.	Do not treat Strathyre as a full supermarket stop. Carry what is needed from Callander.
Strathyre to Killin	Limited food around Strathyre; Mhor 84 on the route corridor near Balquhidder is a useful food stop when open, with meals and a small shop. Killin has the key Co-op resupply.	Tap water at accommodation and services. Natural water is generally available in the glen and lochside sections, but should be treated if taken from burns or lochs.	Killin is the last proper shop before the remote Ardtalnaig section. Arrive with time to shop.
Killin to Ardtalnaig	No food between Killin and Ardtalnaig. Ardtalnaig has no shop, café or pub.	Carry at least 2 litres from Killin. Streams cross the high moorland and Lochan Breaclaich is passed, but water should be filtered or purified.	This is the exposed Craig Gharbh moorland crossing and the most important carry of the route. Pack a full day's food plus emergency snacks.
Ardtalnaig to Aberfeldy	No services at Ardtalnaig or Acharn. No reliable food until Aberfeldy.	Loch Tay and several burns provide natural water, but treat it, especially near grazing land. Tap water only once services are reached.	Start with breakfast, lunch and snacks already carried from Killin unless meals are arranged with accommodation in advance.

Section	Food availability	Water availability	Notes
Aberfeldy to Pitlochry	Aberfeldy has a Co-op, independent food shops, cafés and restaurants. Grandtully may have food options, but should not be relied on. Pitlochry has full town services.	Tap water at Aberfeldy and Pitlochry. Natural water sources exist, but most walkers can manage on carried water for the stage.	Buy final-day lunch in Aberfeldy. Pitlochry has cafés, pubs, restaurants and a Co-op for onward supplies.

Main food stops

Drymen is a practical starting point, with a Spar, Drymen Bakery & Deli, a chemist, pubs and hotels around the village. It is worth starting the route with lunch, snacks and at least a full bottle of water already packed.

Aberfoyle is a good first resupply stop. The Co-op on the main street is the most useful shop, with cafés, a delicatessen, butcher, inns and takeaway-style lunch options also available. Rural opening hours can vary, so check current times if arriving late or walking in the shoulder season.

Callander is the strongest food stop in the first half of the route. Shops and cafés are concentrated around Main Street and Ancaster Square, with a small Tesco, Mhor Bread, tearooms, pubs and ATMs. This is the best place to restock before the smaller Strathyre stop.

Strathyre has enough for a simple overnight, but not for a major shop. There are pub and hotel options, plus a small village shop, while Mhor 84 near Balquhiddy is a useful walker-friendly food stop on the route corridor when open. Do not leave Callander assuming Strathyre will cover all resupply needs.

Killin is the critical resupply point. The Co-op Food on Lyon Road is the main shop and is open seven days, normally 7am–10pm, with ATMs and cafés/pubs also available in the village. Buy food here for the Killin–Ardtalnaig stage and at least lunch for the Ardtalnaig–Aberfeldy stage.

Ardtalnaig has no shop, café, pub or public transport. Walkers staying there must arrive with all required food, including dinner and breakfast unless meals have been specifically arranged with accommodation in advance. Acharn, a few kilometres further on, is also not a resupply point.

Aberfeldy is the recovery resupply after the remote section. It has a town-centre Co-op, independent food shops, cafés, hotel restaurants and ATMs. Stock up here for the final day to Pitlochry, rather than depending on Grandtully.

Pitlochry has the best finish-town choice, with a Co-op on West Moulin Road, cafés, restaurants, pubs, hotels and rail access. It is also a useful place for onward food shopping before travel home.

How much food to carry

For most stages before Killin, one packed lunch, snacks and an evening meal plan at the overnight stop are enough. Village cafés and pubs are useful, but rural Scottish opening hours can be shorter on Sundays and outside the main walking season.

From **Killin**, carry enough for:

- lunch and high-energy snacks for the Killin to Ardtalnaig moorland stage;

- dinner and breakfast if staying in Ardtalnaig without arranged meals;
- lunch and snacks for the Ardtalnaig to Aberfeldy stage;
- a small emergency food reserve in case weather, navigation or fatigue slows progress.

Many B&Bs and guesthouses can prepare packed lunches if asked the night before. This is especially useful in Killin, where leaving early for the moorland crossing is preferable.

Water planning

Tap water is available at accommodation stops and in the main towns and villages. For inn-to-inn walkers in normal weather, a 1-litre bottle is usually adequate on the easier serviced stages, provided it is refilled whenever possible.

The Killin to Ardtalnaig stage is different. Carry at least **2 litres from Killin** for the exposed moorland crossing, and more in hot weather. Streams cross the moor and water is present around Lochan Breaclaich, but it may be peaty and should be filtered or purified.

Natural water is generally plentiful along the route, including burns, lochs and rivers such as those around Loch Lubnaig, Loch Earn and Loch Tay. Use a filter or purification tablets, particularly near grazing land, forestry drainage or slow-moving water. Burns are usually preferable to field drains or loch edges close to settlements.

The route passes near major water infrastructure around Callander, including the Loch Katrine aqueduct system, but this is not a walker drinking-water source. Plan to refill from taps, cafés and accommodation rather than relying on infrastructure shown near the path.

Opening hours, Sundays and cash

Co-ops in larger stops such as Killin and Pitlochry are normally open seven days and into the evening, but smaller village shops, cafés and pubs may reduce hours on Sundays or outside April–October. This should be checked before travelling if the itinerary depends on a specific lunch stop or evening meal.

ATMs are available in Drymen, Aberfoyle, Callander, Killin, Aberfeldy and Pitlochry. Do not expect cash machines in Strathyre, Lochearnhead, Ardtalnaig, Acharn or Grandtully. Carry some cash for small B&Bs, village pubs, honesty boxes or places where card payments are not available.

Navigation and Waymarking

The Rob Roy Way is an official, waymarked Scotland's Great Trail, but it is not a route to walk on signage alone. Most of the line is straightforward on forest tracks, old railway paths, minor roads, cycleway and clear paths, yet there are enough gaps and route changes to make a map and offline GPX strongly advisable.

The standard waymarks are blue-and-white circular discs carrying the letters **RRW** and directional arrows. Waymarking has been improved since 2024, with faded discs and damaged posts being replaced, but walkers should still expect uneven coverage in places.

How easy is it to follow?

For much of the route, navigation is moderate rather than technical. The easier sections use obvious tracks, roads and old railway alignments, so the main task is spotting the correct turn at junctions.

Forest areas can be more awkward than the open sections because junctions appear quickly and markers may be less visible under tree cover. A quick map or GPX check at every forest junction is the best habit on this trail.

The official route has also had significant changes in recent years, including changes in 2023 and 2025. Check the Rob Roy Way official website's **Route Updates** page before setting off, especially if using an older guidebook, old printed map or GPX file downloaded before 2024.

The key navigation challenge: Killin to Ardtalnaig

The Killin to Ardtalnaig stage is the one section where proper hill navigation matters. After leaving Killin along the South Loch Tay road, walkers branch onto a private road while cyclists continue towards Kenmore.

The route then climbs on rough track towards Lochan Breaclaich and the hydro dam, continuing to the high ground around Craig Gharbh at about 565 m. At the high point, a large pipeline or infrastructure marker is an important landmark: this is where the walking route leaves the established track.

Beyond this point, the descent towards the Newton Burn and Brae Farm crosses open hillside where the path is not always clear and waymarking is limited. In mist, poor visibility or winter conditions, this section can require map-and-compass skills, not just following a line on a phone.

After the open hillside, the route uses farm roads towards the Ardeonaig Hotel area, followed by roughly 3 miles of public road into Ardtalnaig. Load the day's GPX offline before leaving Killin and carry a paper backup for this stage.

Other places to take care

Area	What to watch for
North of Aberfoyle	Storm damage in 2024 led to a temporary detour, later lifted, with the path realigned in 2025. Check the official Route Updates page before walking this part.

Area	What to watch for
Forest sections generally	Junctions can be confusing and waymarks may be less frequent or less obvious under trees. Pause and check the map before committing to a turn.
Glen Ogle above Lochearnhead	The open hillside and railway-line sections are waymarked, but a map check helps avoid small errors where paths and tracks meet.
Killin to Ardtalnaig	The most exposed and least forgiving navigation on the route. Poor visibility can make the line off Craig Gharbh difficult to follow.

Recommended maps

A dedicated map is sensible for the Rob Roy Way. Even with a phone or GPS watch, a paper map is a worthwhile backup, particularly for the Killin to Ardtalnaig moorland crossing.

Map option	Best use
Harvey Rob Roy Way XT40, 1:40,000	The most practical single paper map for the whole route. Waterproof, double-sided and covers Drymen to Pitlochry, including the Glen Quaich/Amulree alternative.
OS Explorer 1:25,000	More detailed, useful for careful navigation, but requires multiple sheets: 348, OL38, OL46, OL47, OL48, OL49 and 379. Carrying all seven is bulky.
OS Landranger 1:50,000	Broader overview with fewer sheets: 57, 51 and 52. Adequate for general orientation, but less ideal for the moorland section.

If relying on a guidebook, use a current edition and check route updates before travelling. Older printings and old GPX files may not match the current line of the route.

GPX and digital navigation

A GPX file is strongly recommended for this trail. The most useful approach is to load the full route and the individual day's stage offline before starting each morning.

Good digital options include:

- **Rucksack Readers GPX** — a free full-route GPX is available with their Rob Roy Way bonus content and has been updated for recent route changes.
- **Walkhighlands GPX files** — useful per-stage files for planning and daily navigation.
- **OS Maps app** — suitable for offline OS mapping at 1:25,000 or 1:50,000 scale.
- **Avenza Maps** — useful if using the digital version of the Harvey Rob Roy Way map.
- **Outdooractive, Komoot or AllTrails** — can help with GPS tracking, but check that the route line reflects recent changes before relying on it.

Do not depend on live mobile data to load maps in the field. Save mapping and GPX files offline, and carry a power bank if using a phone as the main navigation device.

Mobile signal and battery planning

Mobile signal is variable along the Rob Roy Way. Settlements such as Callander, Killin and Aberfeldy generally offer better coverage, but deeper glens and the open moorland between Killin and Ardtalnaig can have poor or absent signal.

Treat the phone as a navigation aid, not the only navigation tool. A wet phone, flat battery or lost signal is a serious problem on the high section, so carry a paper map and compass and know how to use them.

Navigation skill level

Most of the Rob Roy Way suits walkers with limited navigation experience, provided they are comfortable checking a map or GPX at junctions. It is not a technically difficult route for most of its length.

The exception is the Killin to Ardtalnaig moorland crossing. Walkers without confident map-and-compass skills should aim to cross it in clear weather, start early, and avoid the stage in poor visibility or winter conditions unless properly experienced.

Terrain, Conditions and Difficulty in Practice

What makes the Rob Roy Way moderate rather than easy

The Rob Roy Way is not a technical mountain route for most of its length. Much of the walking is on forest roads, compacted gravel, tarmac cycleway, old railway trackbed and quiet minor roads, so progress is often quicker than on rough Highland paths.

The difficulty comes from three practical factors: a noticeable amount of tarmac, several wet or boggy sections, and one genuinely exposed moorland crossing between Killin and Ardtalnaig. That stage changes the character of the whole route and should not be treated like the easier railway-path and forest-track days.

Published ascent totals differ, with HikeList using about 2,325 m while LDWA lists a higher figure. In practice, the climbing feels concentrated rather than constant: Glen Ogle, the Killin to Ardtalnaig crossing, and the final rougher climb between Aberfeldy and Pitlochry are the main efforts.

Main surface types

Surface type	Where it is most noticeable	What it means in practice
Forest tracks	Drymen to Aberfoyle, Aberfoyle to Callander, parts of Strathyre to Killin, Ardtalnaig to Aberfeldy, descent to Pitlochry	Usually firm, sheltered and easy to follow, though muddy after rain.
Tarmac cycleway and old railway trackbed	Callander to Strathyre along Loch Lubnaig; Glen Ogle; sections towards Pitlochry	Fast, firm walking, shared with cyclists in places, especially on National Cycle Route 7.
Minor roads	Short sections throughout; the end of Killin to Ardtalnaig; a long section on the south side of Loch Tay	Quiet single-track tarmac, but tiring underfoot over long distances. Road awareness is still needed.
Moorland and open hill	Mainly Killin to Ardtalnaig; shorter section between Aberfeldy and Pitlochry	Wet, exposed and slower. Paths can be faint, especially in poor visibility.
Riverside and lochside paths	Loch Lubnaig, the River Tay, Killin area	Generally easy, flatter walking with few technical difficulties.

There is little in the way of rocky or technical terrain. The route does not require scrambling, but wet grass, bog, indistinct trods and wind exposure can make the high ground much more serious than the map distance suggests.

Stage-by-stage terrain notes

Stage	Terrain and difficulty in practice
Drymen to Aberfoyle	Starts on minor tarmac roads shared with the West Highland Way before moving onto good forest tracks through Loch Ard Forest. This is gentle, sheltered walking with no major climb.

Stage	Terrain and difficulty in practice
Aberfoyle to Callander	Forest tracks, minor roads and some wetter path sections. The route climbs gradually through the Trossachs forests beneath the Menteith Hills and follows the line of the Highland Boundary Fault before descending towards Loch Venachar and Callander. Boggy patches are possible in wet periods.
Callander to Strathyre	One of the easiest underfoot days. Much of it follows tarmac cycleway and old railway alignment beside Loch Lubnaig, with firm surfaces and straightforward navigation.
Strathyre to Killin	A longer day with two moderate climbs: through Strathyre Forest and then up Glen Ogle. Glen Ogle uses the former Callander & Oban Railway alignment, including the 12-arch viaduct, and is mostly firm gravel or cycleway, though the uphill approach can be muddy and eroded in places.
Killin to Ardtalnaig	The hardest and most exposed stage. The route climbs on rough track past the Lochan Breaclauch hydro dam, then crosses open boggy moorland near Craig Gharbh at around 565 m. Paths above the dam and on the descent can be faint, wet and slow, and navigation matters in poor visibility.
Ardtalnaig to Aberfeldy	Starts with a long quiet road walk along the south side of Loch Tay before switching to grassy tracks, hillside paths, open fields, forestry and moorland. Expect gates and farmland sections, plus some short stiff climbs. The Birks of Aberfeldy section uses managed gorge paths by the Moness Burn and Falls of Moness.
Aberfeldy to Pitlochry	Begins easily along the River Tay towards Grandtully, using riverside path and old railway-style surfaces. The later climb through moorland and forest is sharper and rougher, with boggy ground possible before the forest-track descent to Pitlochry.

The key hard section: Killin to Ardtalnaig

This is the stage that decides whether the Rob Roy Way feels moderate or strenuous. It is remote, open and much less forgiving than the earlier forest and cycleway sections.

The climb out of Killin is steady on rough track towards the Lochan Breaclauch hydro dam. Above the dam, the ground becomes wetter and more open, with bog, heather, wet grass and less obvious path lines.

The high point near Craig Gharbh is around 565 m, and the upper section has no meaningful shelter. Wind, low cloud and rain can make it cold and disorientating even outside winter.

The descent towards Ardeonaig and Ardtalnaig is the most navigationally demanding part of the Way. Faint paths cross open hillside between the pipeline area and the Newton Burn / Ardeonaig side, so map-and-compass competence is important if visibility drops.

There is a stepping-stone ford near Ardeonaig. If water levels are high, follow the fence left before the gate to reach the bridge alternative.

The day finishes with about 3 miles of quiet tarmac road on the south side of Loch Tay. After the moorland, this can feel mentally and physically longer than it looks on paper.

Road walking and hard surfaces

The Rob Roy Way has more hard-surface walking than many walkers expect. This includes tarmac cycleway, old railway alignment and quiet single-track roads.

The longest continuous road section is on the south shore of Loch Tay from Ardtalnaig towards Aberfeldy, with about 12.5 km of minor-road walking at the start of that stage. There is also about 3 miles of road at the end of the Killin to Ardtalnaig day, plus smaller road sections elsewhere.

These roads are generally quiet, but they still affect footwear choice and fatigue. Boots or shoes with enough cushioning help on the tarmac, while waterproofing remains important for the boggy moorland and forest sections.

Mud, bog and wet ground

Wet ground is not constant, but it appears often enough to shape the walk. The most reliable problem area is the Killin to Ardtalnaig moorland crossing, where boggy, indistinct ground is part of the route rather than an occasional nuisance.

Other wet sections are usually shorter. Expect possible boggy patches between Aberfoyle and Callander, mud on the Glen Ogle approach, occasional wet hillside ground between Ardtalnaig and Aberfeldy, and boggy ground on the final climb between Aberfeldy and Pitlochry.

After prolonged rain, these sections slow progress and make poles useful. Gaiters are strongly recommended for the Killin to Ardtalnaig stage and are worthwhile in spring or autumn.

Climbs, descents and exposure

Most days are not especially steep by long-distance walking standards. The opening stages are gentle, and the Callander to Strathyre stage is particularly easy underfoot.

The first sustained effort comes between Strathyre and Killin, with a climb through Strathyre Forest and another up Glen Ogle. The Glen Ogle section is open enough to feel exposed in strong wind, but the surface is mostly good.

The largest single climb is on the Killin to Ardtalnaig stage, rising to the high moorland near Craig Gharbh. This is the only part of the main route where exposure, navigation and underfoot conditions combine in a serious way.

The final approach from Aberfeldy to Pitlochry includes a shorter but sharper rougher climb through moorland and forest. It is not as remote as the Killin crossing, but it can still be wet and slower than the easier River Tay section at the start of the day.

Livestock, gates and field sections

Farmland appears on several lower-level sections, and livestock may be present. Keep dogs under close control and close gates behind you.

The Ardtalnaig to Aberfeldy stage has several gates and passes through open fields, hillside ground and farmland. There is no major stile issue on the route, but gates and fences are part of the walking day in these sections.

Seasonal conditions

Spring is often a good walking season, with longer days and quieter accommodation areas, but high ground can still be wet and early-season snow is possible on the upper sections. The Killin to Ardtalnaig

crossing should be judged on the forecast, not the calendar.

Summer normally gives the most forgiving conditions: longer daylight, firmer ground and better margins for the moorland stage. Even then, the high crossing can be windy, cold and wet.

Autumn brings attractive woodland colour but wetter ground. The boggy sections, especially between Killin and Ardtalnaig, become slower and muddier as rainfall increases.

Winter is for experienced walkers only. Short daylight, harsher weather, ice, saturated moorland and reduced accommodation availability make the route much more serious, particularly on the exposed high ground above Loch Tay.

Footwear and kit for the terrain

Waterproof walking boots are the safest default choice for the Rob Roy Way. The amount of tarmac means very stiff mountain boots may feel excessive, but the moorland crossing and wet Scottish ground make non-waterproof trail shoes a poor choice for many walkers.

Gaiters are strongly advised for Killin to Ardtalnaig and useful in wet spring or autumn conditions elsewhere. Trekking poles help on boggy moorland, long road sections and the rougher climbs.

A map and compass should be carried and usable, not just packed as a backup. Waymarking and obvious tracks cover much of the Way, but the high moorland between Killin and Ardtalnaig is exactly the kind of section where a phone-only approach can fail in poor visibility or bad weather.

Weather and Best Time to Walk

The Rob Roy Way is best walked in **May, June or September**. These months give the strongest balance of daylight, manageable weather, open accommodation and fewer midges than high summer.

This is a wet Scottish route, especially through the Trossachs. Callander receives around **1,512 mm of rain a year**, while Pitlochry is a little drier at around **1,233 mm**. Waterproofs are not optional, even in the best months.

The main weather-critical section is **Killin to Ardtalnaig**, where the route climbs onto exposed moorland near **Craig Gharbh at about 565 m** after the long climb past the Lochan Breaclaich hydro dam. In low cloud, strong wind or wind-driven rain, this stage becomes a much more serious navigation day than the rest of the route.

Best months at a glance

Month	Verdict	What to expect
Late April	Good for experienced walkers	Often cool and quiet; April is statistically one of the drier months, but paths may still be muddy and high ground can feel wintery.
May	Excellent	Long daylight, most accommodation open, midges not yet a major problem, and generally a strong choice for a first Rob Roy Way attempt.
June	Very good	Maximum daylight and warmer walking conditions; midges begin to build, especially in still, damp woodland and lochside areas.
July–August	Viable but midge-heavy	Warmest period, but peak midge season and busy accommodation. Book well ahead and carry a headnet.
September	Excellent	Often the best autumn choice: midge season tails off, daylight remains workable, and accommodation is generally still available.
October	Feasible with planning	Attractive autumn walking, but rapidly shortening days, wetter ground and some rural accommodation beginning to close.
November–March	Not recommended for most walkers	Short daylight, winter weather, snow risk on the high moorland section and reduced accommodation availability.

Spring: mid-March to May

Spring temperatures are typically around **7–14°C**, with changeable conditions and frequent showers. April is statistically the driest month at both Callander and Pitlochry, but that does not make the route dry underfoot.

Expect muddy tracks and boggy moorland after winter, particularly on the Killin–Ardalnaig stage. Snow is still possible on high ground in March and early April, so late spring is a safer choice for most walkers.

May is one of the best months for the Rob Roy Way. The days are long, accommodation is usually open from Easter onwards, the route is quieter than summer, and midges are generally only just beginning to appear.

Summer: June to August

Summer temperatures are usually around **12–19°C**, with July and August the warmest months. Pitlochry's warmest period is typically July–August, with average maximums around **17–17.5°C**.

June has the strongest daylight advantage. Around the summer solstice, Pitlochry has nearly **18 hours of daylight**, with sunrise around **04:30** and sunset around **22:11**. This gives large margins for longer stages, poor weather delays and the Killin–Ardtalnaig crossing.

The drawback is midges. The Trossachs and Highland Perthshire are both midge-prone areas, and the Rob Roy Way passes through exactly the places where they thrive: woodland, boggy ground, sheltered lochside sections and still river valleys.

July and August are the peak midge months. If walking then, carry repellent such as Smidge, take a headnet, and avoid lingering in still, damp places. Midges are less active in wind above about **7 mph**, rain, bright sunshine and temperatures below **12°C**.

Accommodation is busiest in July and August. Book well ahead, especially where daily stage options are limited.

Autumn: September to October

September is another excellent month. Temperatures can still be comfortable, the worst of the midge season is usually fading, and daylight is still adequate for a standard 6–7 day itinerary.

Daylight drops quickly through autumn. Early September has much more flexibility than late October; by October, expect roughly **10–11 hours of daylight**, shortening rapidly through the month. October itineraries need earlier starts and less margin for navigation delays.

Paths also get wetter as autumn progresses. The moorland between Killin and Ardtalnaig is likely to be boggy, and low cloud can make the high section harder to follow.

Some rural B&Bs and seasonal accommodation may begin closing later in October, particularly after the school half-term period. This should be checked before travelling.

Winter: November to March

Winter is not recommended for most Rob Roy Way walkers. Temperatures are typically around **2–6°C**, but the practical problems are short daylight, closed accommodation and winter conditions on the higher ground.

In December and January, daylight can be as little as **6–7 hours**. That is a serious constraint on full stages, especially if weather, navigation or slow ground conditions add delays.

Snow and ice are most likely to affect the Killin–Ardtalnaig moorland crossing around Craig Gharbh. In winter conditions this section may be treacherous or impassable without appropriate skills and equipment.

Only experienced winter walkers with map-and-compass navigation skills, full winter hill kit and the ability to use crampons and an ice axe should consider the route in winter conditions.

Rain, wind and visibility

Weather can change very quickly on this route. Cloud, wind, rain, hail and sunshine can all occur in the same day, and conditions can deteriorate within half an hour.

Check the **Met Office** forecast and the **MWIS South East Highlands** forecast before each day's walk. This is especially important before leaving Killin for Ardtalnaig, where poor visibility and strong wind have far greater consequences than on the lower forest, lochside and cycleway sections.

Low cloud is a particular issue on the high moorland. Even in summer, cloud can drop to hilltop level around Craig Gharbh, turning an otherwise moderate walking day into a navigation problem.

Trail surface by season

Most of the Rob Roy Way uses forest tracks, minor roads, old railway paths, cycleway and low-level paths, so long periods of technical mountain terrain are not the main issue. The recurring problem is wet ground.

After prolonged rain, expect muddy forest sections, slippery leaves or roots in woodland, and wetter going on unsurfaced paths. The moorland between Killin and Ardtalnaig is the section most likely to be boggy underfoot.

Waterproof boots are strongly preferable to lightweight trail shoes outside the driest summer spells. Gaiters are useful in spring, autumn and after wet weather.

Midges and ticks

Midges are active from **May to early September**, with the worst conditions usually in **July and August**. They are most troublesome near water, in woodland and over boggy ground, all of which feature regularly on the Rob Roy Way.

To reduce midge exposure, choose **May or September** if possible. If walking in June–August, start early, keep moving through sheltered lochside and woodland areas, and use the Smidge midge forecast before travelling.

Ticks are active from **March to October**, especially in long grass, heather and woodland. Check daily, carry a tick-removal tool, and follow NHS guidance if bitten or if symptoms develop afterwards.

Safety Notes

The Rob Roy Way is a moderate, waymarked trail, but it is still a Scottish long-distance walk with exposed upland ground, remote gaps between services and several road sections. The main safety issue is not technical terrain; it is being prepared for poor visibility, fast-changing weather and limited help on the Killin to Ardtalnaig stage.

Emergency contacts

In an emergency in the UK, call **999** or **112**. For a mountain or remote-area incident, ask for **Police**, then **Mountain Rescue**.

Mobile signal is generally available in the main towns and villages, including Drymen, Aberfoyle, Callander, Strathyre, Killin, Aberfeldy and Pitlochry. It becomes unreliable on the high moorland between Killin and Ardtalnaig, and can also be patchy in forest and remote valley sections.

Do not rely solely on a phone for navigation or emergency calls. Carry a paper map and compass as a backup, and keep a charged power bank somewhere dry.

Navigation and the remote high section

Waymarking is generally good, but the places where markers are least helpful can also be the places where navigation matters most: forest tracks, open hillside and the descent from the high ground near Craig Gharbh.

The hardest stage is **Killin to Ardtalnaig**, around 19 km. It climbs past the Lochan Breaclaich hydro dam to the route high point near **Craig Gharbh**, around 565 m, then descends across open hillside where the path can be faint or unclear. In mist, low cloud or heavy rain, map and compass skills may be needed.

Section	Main risks	Practical response
Killin to Ardtalnaig	Exposed moorland, wind, rain, mist, boggy ground, limited habitation	Start early, carry full waterproofs and warm layers, use map/compass or GPS in poor visibility, and avoid pressing on blindly if the line is unclear
Around Craig Gharbh	Highest, most exposed part of the route	Treat it as a hill day rather than an easy trail stage, even in summer
Descent towards Ardtalnaig	Faint paths and open hillside	Check position regularly before losing height; do not wait until uncertain to look at the map

There is no public transport in or out of Ardtalnaig. If you need to bail out from this part of the route, the practical options are limited, and you may have to continue towards Acharn or Aberfeldy.

Weather, daylight and temperature

Scottish Highland weather can change quickly at any time of year. Wind, rain and cold are the main concerns on the exposed crossing between Killin and Ardtalnaig, where shelter is limited.

Even in summer, carry waterproof jacket and trousers, an insulating layer, hat and gloves for the high stage. In warm weather, the long tarmac and track sections can feel draining, so carry enough water between services and protect against sun exposure.

Daylight is a major planning factor outside summer. At this latitude, late June has very long days, while late December has only around 6–7 hours of daylight. Between October and March, start at first light, check sunset times and carry a headtorch.

Winter conditions make the moorland section much more serious, and some accommodation closes out of season. Winter attempts are best left to experienced walkers with suitable navigation, clothing and emergency kit.

Road walking and crossings

The Rob Roy Way uses minor roads in several places, including early sections around Drymen and Callander. The longest and most notable road stretch is along the south shore of Loch Tay between Ardeonaig and Acharn, where traffic is usually light but drivers may not expect walkers.

Walk facing oncoming traffic where there is no pavement, step in well on bends, and be particularly visible in dull weather. A small high-visibility item or bright pack cover is useful on grey days.

The final approach to Pitlochry involves crossing the **A9**, a fast and busy main road. Cross only when it is clearly safe, and do not assume approaching vehicles can slow down for you. After the A9, the route crosses the River Tummel by footbridge into Pitlochry.

Water, burns and falls

A ford or stepping-stone crossing on the Newton Burn just outside Ardeonaig can be unsafe or impassable after heavy rain. If the water is high, follow the fence left before the gate to reach a bridge instead.

After heavy rain, low-lying sections and parts of the high moorland can be wet or boggy. Waterproof footwear is useful, but the more important safety point is pacing: boggy ground slows progress and can make a planned stage take longer than expected.

Take care near steep water features such as **Bracklinn Falls** above Callander and the **Falls of Leny**. Stay on the path and keep away from wet rock edges.

Livestock and dogs

The route crosses farmland throughout, with cattle and sheep in fields, especially around Drymen, Aberfoyle and in Highland Perthshire. Give cattle plenty of room, particularly cows with calves.

Dogs must be kept under close control and on leads near livestock. Dogs are not welcome in fields with livestock where they may cause disturbance or danger.

Ticks and midges

Ticks are present from roughly March to October in woodland, moorland and long grass, all of which the Rob Roy Way crosses. Wear long trousers, consider tucking trousers into socks in tick-prone areas, and check skin at the end of each day, especially the neck, armpits and groin.

Remove ticks promptly with a tick remover or fine tweezers, without squeezing the body. If a rash develops around a bite, or flu-like symptoms appear in the days or weeks after the walk, seek medical advice promptly.

Midges are most active from June to August, especially in damp, still conditions around dawn and dusk. They are more of a comfort and morale problem than a major safety hazard, but repellent, long sleeves and a head net are worthwhile if camping or stopping near vegetation.

Solo walking

The Rob Roy Way is generally suitable for solo walkers with normal hillwalking judgement. The towns and villages are frequent enough on most stages, and the route is well established.

The exception is the Killin to Ardtalnaig stage. A solo walker should leave a clear plan with accommodation or a trusted contact, carry a whistle, headtorch and foil blanket, and avoid setting off onto the high ground if the weather forecast is poor or visibility is already deteriorating.

Tell accommodation your expected arrival time where practical, especially before and after the remote middle stages.

Check before setting off each day

Before leaving each morning, check:

- the weather forecast for the relevant area;
- route updates on the official Rob Roy Way website;
- that the day's accommodation is open and expecting you;
- food and water needs for the next service gap, especially Killin to Ardtalnaig and Ardtalnaig to Aberfeldy;
- daylight and expected finish time, particularly outside high summer;
- phone battery, offline maps, paper map, compass and headtorch.

If taking the optional wilderness alternative via Glen Almond and Glen Quaich, treat it as a separate remote route. Navigation must be reliable, accommodation is extremely limited around Amulree, and all conditions, beds and onward options should be checked before travelling.

Gear Recommendations

The Rob Roy Way is not a technical mountain route, but it does ask more of your kit than the easy-looking surfaces suggest. Much of the trail is on firm forest tracks, old railway lines, tarmac cycleway and minor roads, while the Killin to Ardtalnaig stage crosses wet, exposed moorland over Craig Gharbh at about 565 m.

Pack for a wet Scottish week, hard surfaces underfoot and one genuinely remote upland day. The aim is not to carry expedition gear, but to have dependable waterproofs, footwear that copes with bog and tarmac, and navigation that still works when the waymarks thin out.

Footwear

Waterproof, well-worn-in walking boots are the safest all-round choice for the Rob Roy Way. Mid- or high-cut boots give better ankle support and more confidence on the boggy Killin to Ardtalnaig crossing, while still being suitable for the forest and railway-path sections.

Some walkers use waterproof hiking shoes on the easier southern and railway-path stages, but lower-cut footwear is less forgiving in wet grass, mud and prolonged rain. The long tarmac and cycleway sections, particularly around Callander, Strathyre and the Glen Ogle approach, can also be hard on feet and knees, so cushioning matters.

Gaiters are strongly recommended in wet weather and for the Killin to Ardtalnaig moorland stage. Carry spare dry socks and use merino or synthetic walking socks rather than cotton.

Waterproofs and clothing layers

A reliable waterproof jacket is non-negotiable on this route. Scottish weather can switch between rain, wind and sun in the same day, and the exposed high ground beyond Killin gives little shelter.

Waterproof over-trousers are worth carrying even if the forecast looks settled. They are particularly useful on the moorland crossing, where wet vegetation and bog can soak trousers quickly.

Use a simple layering system:

Layer	What to carry	Why it matters here
Base layer	Synthetic or merino top	Wicks moisture and dries faster than cotton
Mid layer	Lightweight fleece or insulated layer	Needed for cool starts, evenings and high ground
Outer layer	Breathable waterproof shell	Essential for rain and wind exposure
Accessories	Warm hat and gloves	Useful even in summer on Craig Gharbh and in poor weather

Avoid cotton for walking clothing. Once wet, it dries slowly and can become a serious problem in wind or falling temperatures.

Use dry bags or a waterproof rucksack liner inside the pack. A rucksack cover helps, but internal dry bags give more reliable protection for spare clothes, electronics and a sleeping bag if camping.

Navigation: do not rely on waymarks alone

The Rob Roy Way is waymarked with blue-and-white plaques, and the markings are generally straightforward on tracks, forest roads and cycleway sections. The exception is the Killin to Ardtalnaig moorland crossing, where waymarking is sparser and the ground is more open.

Carry a proper map and know how to use it. The dedicated Harvey XT40 Rob Roy Way map is the most convenient paper option because it covers the full route on one waterproof, tear-resistant sheet at 1:40,000 scale. OS Landranger maps also cover the route, but require three sheets: 57, 51 and 52.

A GPX file is available from the official Rob Roy Way website and should be loaded onto a phone or GPS device before starting. Use offline mapping in apps such as OS Maps or AllTrails, as phone signal can be patchy in remote moorland and wooded glen sections.

A sensible navigation set-up is:

- Harvey XT40 Rob Roy Way map, or OS Landranger 57, 51 and 52
- Phone with offline maps and the GPX loaded
- Power bank
- Compass
- Waterproof map case or protected pocket

The Rucksack Readers Rob Roy Way guidebook is also useful for route notes, stopping points and background. Current editions of maps and guidebooks should be checked before travelling, especially where route updates may affect navigation.

Water and food carry

For most stages, a 1–1.5 litre bottle or bladder is enough for typical conditions, provided water is topped up where services are available. The route passes many burns, lochs and streams, but natural water should be treated if used, especially near grazing or when camping.

The Killin to Ardtalnaig stage needs more self-sufficiency. There are no shops or cafés on the moorland crossing, so carry enough water, lunch and emergency snacks for the full day.

Campers should carry a water filter or purification tablets. Inn-to-inn walkers may not need to filter water often, but a compact treatment option is still useful if plans change or the weather slows progress.

Rucksack size and packing style

Walking style	Typical pack size	Gear approach
Inn-to-inn with luggage transfer	20–30 litres	Day essentials only: waterproofs, layers, food, water, navigation, first aid and electronics
Inn-to-inn carrying own bag	40–50 litres	Full clothing and overnight kit, but no camping equipment
Camping	55–65 litres	Tent, sleeping system, stove, food and full wet-weather kit

Most walkers on the Rob Roy Way go inn-to-inn or use baggage transfer, which keeps the daily load manageable. Companies such as Highland Transfers serve the route, but luggage arrangements and current operating details should be checked before booking.

Even with luggage transfer, never send all warm or waterproof clothing ahead in the main bag. The exposed stage between Killin and Ardtalnaig requires full day-hill kit in the pack.

Camping gear

Campers need a lightweight but weather-capable three-season set-up. A tent, sleeping bag, sleeping mat, stove, fuel and food for remote sections are the core items; the pack weight should be kept low because the route includes hard tarmac as well as boggy moorland.

A three-season sleeping bag is the sensible minimum for spring, autumn and cooler Scottish nights. In summer, midges can make lingering around camp unpleasant, so a tent with reliable insect mesh is useful.

Wild camping rules differ along the route. In Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park, camping management zones operate in some areas from March to September, with permits or designated areas required where those rules apply. North into Highland Perthshire, responsible wild camping is allowed under Scotland's access rights, but Leave No Trace practice is essential; current local rules should be checked before travelling.

Trekking poles

Trekking poles are not essential on the easier track and railway-path days, but they are useful on this route. They help with balance on boggy ground between Killin and Ardtalnaig, reduce knee strain on long tarmac sections, and add stability on steeper forest-track descents.

Poles are especially worthwhile for campers and anyone carrying a heavier pack. Inn-to-inn walkers with light day packs may choose to leave them behind, but they are still a good option in wet weather.

Electronics, emergency kit and first aid

A phone is often the main navigation tool, so keep it protected from rain and carry a power bank. A 10,000 mAh power bank is enough for most walkers to keep a phone topped up between accommodation stops, particularly when using GPS and offline maps.

Carry a headtorch on every stage. Short daylight is a serious factor from autumn through spring, and a slow day on the moorland or a delayed arrival can leave walkers finishing in poor light.

A compact first aid and emergency kit should include:

- Blister treatment, such as Compeed or equivalent
- Antiseptic wipes and wound closure strips
- Pain relief such as paracetamol or ibuprofen
- Tick removal tool
- Foil emergency blanket
- Whistle

- Personal medication

For emergencies in the UK, call 999 or 112. Phone signal can be unreliable in the more remote sections, so do not treat a mobile phone as the only safety measure.

Midges, ticks and sun protection

Midges are a real summer nuisance on the Rob Roy Way, especially from June to August in still, humid conditions near water, woodland and at dawn or dusk. Carry midge repellent in summer; Smidge is widely used in Scotland. A head net is worthwhile for campers and for anyone likely to stop for long breaks in sheltered, damp areas.

Ticks are present from spring into autumn, particularly in bracken, long grass and woodland. Wear long trousers or gaiters where vegetation is high, use light-coloured clothing to spot ticks more easily, and check skin carefully at the end of each day. A tick removal tool should be part of the first aid kit.

Sun cream is still worth carrying. Open sections, lochside tracks and high moorland can give prolonged exposure when the weather clears, even if the forecast has looked unsettled.

Seasonal extras

Season	Gear adjustment
Spring	Expect wet ground and cool starts; carry warm layers and be prepared for lingering snow on the highest moorland section
Summer	Waterproofs still required; add midge repellent, sun cream and possibly a head net
Autumn	Fewer midges but cooler evenings; carry a warmer insulated layer and a dependable headtorch
Winter	Suitable only for experienced walkers; short daylight, snow or ice on Craig Gharbh, and harsher weather may require winter skills and micro-spikes if icy

In winter, accommodation and services may also be more limited. This should be checked before travelling.

Advice for fast and section hikers

Fast hikers covering the route in fewer days should keep pack weight low, but not by cutting waterproofs, navigation or emergency kit. Trail-running shoes may work on dry, easier stages, but boots remain the more reliable choice for Killin to Ardtalnaig in wet conditions.

Section hikers can scale kit to the day, but the moorland stage should be treated as a proper upland walk. For that section, carry full waterproofs, warm layers, map, compass, offline GPX, headtorch, food and enough water for the full crossing.

Budget and Costs

The Rob Roy Way is a moderately priced Scottish long-distance walk. It is much cheaper as an independently booked hostel or bunkhouse trip, but costs rise quickly if using B&Bs every night, luggage transfer, single rooms or a self-guided package.

There is no trail permit or national park entry fee for the Rob Roy Way. The main costs are accommodation, food, transport to Drymen and home from Pitlochry, plus any baggage transfer.

Prices below are in pounds sterling and should be checked before booking, especially for summer weekends, single rooms and the accommodation-limited Killin–Ardtalnaig–Aberfeldy section.

Typical total cost per person

These estimates assume a 7-day / 7-night itinerary and do not include travel from outside Scotland to Glasgow, Edinburgh, Stirling or another main access city.

Style	What it usually means	Likely total per person
Budget independent	Hostels/bunkhouses where available, simple food, public transport, no luggage transfer	£390–£555
Mid-range independent	B&Bs/guesthouses, packed lunches, pub meals, own luggage, public transport	£715–£1,090
Self-guided package	Accommodation, baggage transfer, route notes/support; meals and travel usually extra	£1,045–£1,430
Comfortable/upscale	Better B&Bs/hotels, baggage transfer, higher food budget	£1,055–£1,485+

Solo walkers should budget more. Package operators commonly add a single supplement of about **£46–£80 per night**, while independently booked B&Bs may charge roughly **£20–£40 extra per night** compared with sharing a room.

Accommodation costs

Accommodation is the biggest variable. The towns and villages on the route have a mix of B&Bs, guesthouses, inns, hotels, hostels, campsites and self-catering, but the middle of the route is much tighter than the start and finish.

The most important booking point is the **Killin–Ardtalnaig–Aberfeldy** stretch. Beds around Ardtalnaig are very limited, so budget walkers should book early rather than assuming a cheap last-minute option will be available.

Accommodation style	Typical cost
Bunkhouse / hostel bed	about £17–£41 per person per night , depending on place and season
Pitlochry Youth Hostel dorm bed	about £20–£28 per person per night

Accommodation style	Typical cost
Killin hostel/bunkhouse options	about £20–£30 per person per night
B&B / guesthouse	about £65–£100 per person per night , usually including breakfast
Hotel room in places such as Callander, Aberfeldy or Pitlochry	about £100–£160+ per room per night
Higher-end hotel or luxury finish	significantly more; check current rates before booking

For a 7-night independent trip, accommodation alone is roughly **£140–£210 per person** if using hostels and bunkhouses wherever possible. A B&B-based trip is more likely to be **£455–£700+ per person**.

Camping can reduce costs where campsites line up with the stages, but opening dates, pitch availability and facilities vary. Do not assume a continuous campsite itinerary without checking each night's stopping point in advance.

Food and drink costs

B&B stays usually include breakfast, which makes daily food planning simpler. Hostel, bunkhouse and self-catering itineraries need a separate breakfast budget unless the accommodation provides one.

Useful resupply points include **Drymen, Aberfoyle, Callander, Strathyre, Killin, Aberfeldy and Pitlochry**. Callander and Aberfeldy have small Co-op stores, while Pitlochry has a wider choice of shops and places to eat.

The sparse section is the middle of the route. Between **Killin and Ardtalnaig**, and again between **Ardtalnaig and Aberfeldy**, carry enough food for the day and do not rely on finding a shop or café.

Item	Typical cost
Packed lunch from shop / deli	£5–£10
Light café breakfast, if not included	£8–£15
Pub evening meal	£15–£30
Pint of beer / glass of wine	£4–£8
Typical daily food spend	£25–£50

A budget walker using shops, simple breakfasts and occasional pub meals should allow about **£175–£250** for food over a week. A more comfortable budget with pub dinners most nights is closer to **£250–£350**.

Transport costs

Drymen has no railway station, so most walkers reach the start by bus or taxi from the rail network. The common approach is to travel to **Balloch** or **Alexandria** on the North Clyde Line, then continue to Drymen by local bus or taxi.

Journey	Typical cost
Local bus in the Glasgow / Balloch / Drymen area	about £5-£8 for an adult single, depending on journey
Taxi from Balloch to Drymen	about £12-£18
Taxi from Glasgow city centre to Drymen	about £35-£50

Pitlochry is easier at the finish because it has its own station on the Highland Main Line. Trains run to **Perth, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Inverness.**

Journey from / to Pitlochry	Typical one-way fare
Edinburgh Waverley – Pitlochry	from about £15.20
Glasgow – Pitlochry, usually via Perth	about £20-£35
Inverness – Pitlochry	about £15-£25

Rail and bus fares change, so check current times and prices before booking. Rural taxis should also be booked ahead where possible, especially if being used to solve an accommodation gap.

Luggage transfer

Baggage transfer is useful on this route if staying in B&Bs or hotels and wanting to avoid carrying a full pack over the longer days. It is particularly helpful before the exposed Killin-to-Ardalnaig stage, although walkers still need proper waterproofs, warm layers, food, water, navigation and emergency kit in a day pack.

Kings House Travel lists Rob Roy Way baggage transfer at **£75 per bag for the full Drymen-to-Pitlochry route**, with part-route drops at **£13 per bag per drop**. Bags normally need to be ready by **09:30** and are delivered before arrival each day.

Highland Transfers also offers baggage-only services on the Rob Roy Way. Current prices should be requested directly before booking.

Self-guided and guided package costs

Self-guided packages usually include accommodation, baggage transfer, route notes or app access, and some form of support. They normally exclude evening meals and travel to and from the route.

Package prices are usually per person based on two sharing. Solo travellers should expect a significant supplement.

Operator / package type	Typical price
Contours, 6 nights / 5 walking days	about £730 pp
Contours, 7 nights / 6 walking days	about £851 pp
Contours, 8 nights / 7 walking days	about £972 pp

Operator / package type	Typical price
Contours, 9 nights / 8 walking days	about £1,092 pp
EasyWays, 7 walking days / 8 overnights	from about £955 pp
Celtic Trails	from about £855 pp ; single supplement about £57 per person per night
Walkers Ways	from about £580 pp for 6 days / £650 pp for 7 days
Upgraded package with best available rooms	around £1,365 pp

Other operators, including Absolute Escapes, Macs Adventure, The Natural Adventure and Wilderness Scotland, also offer the route. Current inclusions and prices should be checked carefully, as package duration, room standard, baggage rules and support arrangements vary.

Maps, guidebook and small costs

A dedicated guidebook and map are inexpensive compared with the overall trip and are worth budgeting for, even if using GPX files.

Item	Typical cost
Rucksack Readers "The Rob Roy Way" guidebook	about £14-£16
Harvey Rob Roy Way dedicated strip map	about £12-£15
Guidebook + map together	about £25-£30
Incidentals, coffee stops, small extras	about £30-£60 over the trip

Some very small rural accommodation providers may prefer or require cash, and card acceptance can be patchy in remote places. Keeping about **£50 in notes** as backup is sensible, particularly around the quieter middle stages.

Luggage Transfer, Guided Tours and Support Services

The Rob Roy Way is straightforward to organise independently, but support services make a noticeable difference if you want to walk with a daypack or avoid the accommodation bottleneck around Ardtalnaig. The most important point to plan is the Killin–Ardtalnaig section: Ardtalnaig has very limited accommodation, no pub, no shop and no public bus, so walkers often need a pre-booked taxi transfer if not staying there.

Luggage transfer couriers

Standalone baggage transfer is available for walkers booking their own accommodation. This is useful on the Rob Roy Way because the route has several longer days and one exposed moorland crossing where a lighter pack is a real advantage.

Most services work on the standard long-distance walking model: leave your labelled bag at the accommodation in the morning, walk with a daypack, and collect it at the next overnight stop. Weight limits are normally strict, so do not assume a heavy suitcase will be accepted.

Provider	Rob Roy Way coverage	Key details
Highland Transfers	Full route from Drymen to Pitlochry, including Aberfoyle, Callander, Strathyre, Killin, Ardtalnaig and Aberfeldy	2026 season: 22 March–19 October. Bags ready by 9am and delivered by 4pm. Maximum 20kg per bag. Suitable for walkers and cyclists.
Kingshouse Travel	Full route Drymen to Pitlochry, with unlimited stops, or partial-route drops	Full route listed at £75 per bag; partial route £13 per bag per drop. Collection deadline 9.30am; delivery 10am–4pm. Maximum 20kg per bag. Full payment required two weeks before the holiday starts.
Transcotland	Scottish long-distance baggage transfer specialist listed by the Rob Roy Way	Useful to compare if booking independently or if your itinerary has non-standard stops.

For Kingshouse Travel, accommodation must be able to accept luggage between 10am and 4pm, so check this when booking B&Bs, guesthouses or self-catering stays. Valuables such as laptops and tablets should not be packed in transferred luggage.

Baggage-transfer seasons broadly run from March or April to October. Dates, prices and operating windows change, so check current details before booking, especially for early spring, late October and peak summer weeks.

The Killin–Ardtalnaig transfer problem

This is the key logistical issue on the Rob Roy Way. Many walkers complete the Killin to Ardtalnaig stage, transfer back to Killin for the night, then return to Ardtalnaig the next morning to continue towards Aberfeldy.

Self-guided walking-holiday companies often build this transfer into the itinerary. Independent walkers need to arrange it themselves well ahead of time, because it is not a place to rely on last-minute taxis.

Provider	Area covered	Why it matters
Saltire Private Hire / Killin Taxis	Based in Killin; covers Killin, Lochearnhead, Aberfeldy, Criannlarich, Tyndrum, Balquhidder, Strathyre and surrounding areas	Particularly useful for transfers between Killin and Ardtalnaig. Operates 24/7, with vehicles for up to 4 or up to 8 passengers. Contact: 07387 982976; saltireprivatehire@gmail.com .
Killin Taxis	Local taxi provider for the Killin / Ardtalnaig area	Another option to contact early for the remote middle section.

A taxi may also be useful for off-route accommodation near Strathyre, Balquhidder, Lochearnhead, Killin or Aberfeldy, but this should be arranged with the accommodation or driver in advance. Do not assume mobile signal, evening availability or same-day taxi capacity on the quieter Highland Perthshire sections.

Self-guided walking holidays

Self-guided packages suit walkers who want the route planned for them but do not need a guide on the trail. These holidays typically include accommodation, daily luggage transfer, route notes or app-based navigation, maps, and an emergency or support contact.

They are most useful if walking in high season, travelling from overseas, or wanting the Ardtalnaig logistics solved without negotiating separate accommodation and taxi arrangements. They are less necessary for experienced UK walkers who are comfortable booking B&Bs directly and arranging a baggage courier.

Operator	Typical offering	Indicative pricing / notes
Macs Adventure	8 days / 7 nights, self-guided inn-to-inn holiday with smartphone navigation, maps and GPX, 24/7 UK emergency support, and 1 bag per person up to 20kg	From £815 per person. Includes a return taxi transfer between Killin and Ardtalnaig, which resolves the limited accommodation at Ardtalnaig. Minimum age 12.
Contours Walking Holidays	Self-guided itineraries with accommodation, daily luggage transfer, custom holiday pack and maps	Full route options from £730 for 6 nights to £1,092 for 9 nights; short breaks from £373. Season listed as 14 March–31 October. Dog-friendly options on selected itineraries.
Celtic Trails	7- or 8-night self-guided Rob Roy Way holidays covering Drymen to Pitlochry, with accommodation, daily luggage transfer, route notes, trail guide, mapping and accommodation directions	RRW2, 7 nights, from £930 per person; RRW1, 8 nights, from £1,055 per person. Custom mileage and night options available on request.
Wilderness Scotland	Self-guided Rob Roy Way trips with route notes, maps, 24-hour assistance and luggage transfer	1 bag per person, maximum 20kg.
Let's Go Walking	Self-guided Rob Roy Way holidays with luggage transfer	Based in the Trossachs National Park area.
Absolute Escapes	Rob Roy Way walking holidays	Offers 2025 and 2026 departures.

Other companies listed for Rob Roy Way arrangements include BookaTrekking, Easyways Walking Holidays, Gemini Walks, Hillwalk Tours, Mickledore, Walk Across Scotland, Walkers' Britain and Walkers

Ways. Package inclusions vary, so compare whether taxi transfers, maps, GPX files, evening meals, extra nights and single-room supplements are included before paying a deposit.

Fully guided options

Fully guided Rob Roy Way trips are less essential than on a remote mountain route, because the Way is waymarked and much of it follows tracks, cycleway, minor roads and old railway paths. A guide can still be worthwhile for groups, less experienced walkers, overseas visitors, or anyone who prefers not to manage navigation, timings and local transfers.

Guided or guide-on-request options are offered by companies such as Celtic Trails, Gemini Walks, Walk Across Scotland and Wilderness Scotland. Availability is more date-dependent than self-guided holidays, so guided trips should be booked earlier.

What to book ahead

Book accommodation first, especially around Killin, Ardtalnaig and Aberfeldy, then align baggage transfer and taxis with the final itinerary. Couriers need the exact accommodation list, and taxi operators need clear pick-up points and times for the Ardtalnaig transfer.

Before setting off, check:

- baggage weight limit, usually 20kg;
- morning collection deadline and delivery window;
- whether each accommodation can receive bags during the day;
- whether the Ardtalnaig transfer is included in a package or must be booked separately;
- current prices, seasons and payment deadlines;
- what support number to call if a bag, taxi or accommodation transfer goes wrong.

Walkers carrying their own kit and staying directly on route can complete the Rob Roy Way without paid support services. The exception is practical rather than compulsory: if sleeping away from the path near Ardtalnaig, a pre-booked transfer is the difference between a clean itinerary and a difficult end to the day.

Shorter Hikes and Best Sections

The Rob Roy Way is easy to break into shorter sections at its southern and northern ends, but much harder to section-hike through the middle. Ardtalnaig is the key constraint: it has no public transport, very limited accommodation and usually requires a taxi, lift, baggage-transfer arrangement or a full through-walk itinerary.

For most section walkers, the most practical bases are Callander, Strathyre, Killin, Aberfeldy and Pitlochry. Drymen, Aberfoyle and Callander also work well in summer and early autumn when the Trossachs Explorer bus is running.

Best for	Section	Approx distance	Why choose it	Transport notes
Best single-day walk	Callander to Strathyre	15 km	Loch Lubnaig, easy surfaces, low commitment	Bus access at Callander; C60 bus from Strathyre, limited timetable
Easier short day	Aberfeldy to Grandtully	9–10 km one way	River Tay, old railway trackbed, straightforward walking	Bus 23 can return from Grandtully to Aberfeldy
Best weekend	Callander to Killin via Strathyre	About 36 km	Loch Lubnaig, Glen Ogle Viaduct, Falls of Dochart	C60 links Callander, Strathyre, Lochearnhead and Killin, but check times carefully
Best 3–5 day section	Callander to Aberfeldy	About 71 km over 4 days	The strongest run of scenery and variety	Ardtalnaig is the difficult logistics point; book and plan well ahead
Best for beginners	Callander to Strathyre	15 km	Good paths, minimal climbing, strong scenery	One of the simplest sections to arrange by bus
Best for public transport	Aberfeldy to Pitlochry	19 km	Finish at Pitlochry railway station	Aberfeldy has bus connections; Pitlochry has Highland Main Line trains
Best for villages and accommodation	Drymen to Callander	About 31 km over 2 days	Drymen, Aberfoyle and Callander offer the easiest southern logistics	Trossachs Explorer helps in season; Drymen has no railway station

Best single-day walk: Callander to Strathyre

Start: Callander

Finish: Strathyre

Distance: About 15 km

This is the best all-round day on the Rob Roy Way for walkers who want strong scenery without taking on the more committing Highland stages. The route uses good surfaces for much of the way, following National Cycle Route 7 north from Callander and running beside Loch Lubnaig.

It is also the most beginner-friendly section. The walking is mostly straightforward, the climbing is modest, and the route has a clear linear shape with useful bus access at both ends.

A short diversion can be made to the Falls of Leny from the main track. This adds interest without changing the character of the day into a difficult hill walk.

Transport: Callander is served by bus. Strathyre is on the C60 Callander–Strathyre–Lochearnhead–Killin service, but the timetable is limited, has no Sunday service, and the operator has changed in recent years, so check the current operator and times on Traveline Scotland before committing to the walk.

Easier short option: Aberfeldy to Grandtully

Start: Aberfeldy

Finish: Grandtully

Distance: About 9–10 km one way

This is the easiest short taste of the northern Rob Roy Way. It follows the River Tay and old Aberfeldy railway trackbed, with generally flat, easy walking underfoot.

It suits first-timers, mixed-ability groups or anyone wanting a half-day route with simple logistics. The section passes Dewar's Distillery, and Grandtully gives a natural finish with food-stop potential, including its well-known chocolatier.

Transport: Bus 23 links Grandtully and Aberfeldy, making this one of the neatest out-and-back-by-bus options on the route. Timetables should be checked before travelling.

Best weekend section: Callander to Killin via Strathyre

Start: Callander

Finish: Killin

Distance: About 36 km over 2 days

This is the strongest two-day section for walkers who want the feel of the full trail without committing to the remote Ardtalnaig stage. It combines the easy Loch Lubnaig railway-path walking with a more demanding second day over Glen Ogle.

A sensible split is:

Day	Section	Approx distance	Character
1	Callander to Strathyre	15 km	Easy cycleway and lochside walking beside Loch Lubnaig
2	Strathyre to Killin	About 21 km	Longer day with climbs, Glen Ogle Viaduct and descent to Killin

The second day is the more rewarding and the more tiring. It includes Glen Ogle's disused 12-arch railway viaduct above Lochearnhead, views over Loch Earn and the arrival at the Falls of Dochart in Killin.

Transport: The C60 bus links Callander, Strathyre, Lochearnhead and Killin, but services are limited, roughly a few times per day Monday to Saturday, with no current Sunday service. This section should be planned around the bus timetable rather than the other way round.

Best 3–5 day section: Callander to Aberfeldy

Start: Callander

Finish: Aberfeldy

Distance: About 71 km over 4 days

For walkers choosing only part of the Rob Roy Way, this is the best scenery-focused multi-day section. It covers Callander, Strathyre, Killin, Ardtalnaig and Aberfeldy, taking in Loch Lubnaig, Glen Ogle, the Falls of Dochart, the moorland high point near Craig Gharbh and the descent towards Loch Tay.

It also includes the toughest stage of the whole trail: Killin to Ardtalnaig. That day climbs past Lochan Breaclaich towards the exposed high ground near Craig Gharbh, where navigation, weather and boggy ground matter much more than on the southern stages.

The usual split is:

Day	Section	Approx distance	Notes
1	Callander to Strathyre	15 km	Easy start on good paths beside Loch Lubnaig
2	Strathyre to Killin	21 km	Glen Ogle Viaduct, Loch Earn views, Falls of Dochart
3	Killin to Ardtalnaig	19 km	Hardest and most exposed stage; needs good navigation
4	Ardtalnaig to Aberfeldy	24 km	Long day from a remote start towards Aberfeldy

Transport and accommodation: Callander has bus access and Aberfeldy has bus connections, but Ardtalnaig has no public transport and very limited beds. Accommodation or transfer arrangements around Ardtalnaig must be booked well ahead.

Alternative 3-day northern section: Killin to Pitlochry

Start: Killin

Finish: Pitlochry

Distance: About 62 km over 3 stages

This is the best shorter option for experienced walkers who want the wildest part of the Rob Roy Way and a strong transport finish. It follows Killin to Ardtalnaig, Ardtalnaig to Aberfeldy, then Aberfeldy to Pitlochry.

The reward is a compact version of the trail's Highland Perthshire character: the exposed moorland high point, the remote Loch Tay side, the Birks of Aberfeldy and the final approach to Pitlochry. The drawback is the difficulty of the first two days, especially the Killin to Ardtalnaig stage.

Transport: Killin has bus access but no railway station. Pitlochry is the easiest finish on the whole route, with a station on the Highland Main Line for Perth, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Inverness. Ardtalnaig remains the main planning problem, with no public transport.

Best section for scenery: Strathyre to Killin

Start: Strathyre

Finish: Killin

Distance: About 21 km

This is the most rewarding single standard stage for scenery and route variety. It leaves the easier railway-path feel of the previous day and builds towards Glen Ogle, where the old railway viaduct is one of the defining sights of the route.

The stage also gives views towards Loch Earn, forest walking and a memorable finish at the Falls of Dochart in Killin. It is longer and hillier than Callander to Strathyre, so it suits walkers with a little more fitness.

Transport: Strathyre and Killin are both on the C60 bus route, but the limited timetable makes this awkward as a casual day walk. Check times before travelling, especially on Saturdays and outside the main walking season.

Best section for beginners: Callander to Strathyre

Start: Callander

Finish: Strathyre

Distance: About 15 km

This is the safest recommendation for new long-distance walkers. The route is mostly on good cycleway surfaces, navigation is generally straightforward, and the scenery is immediate without needing a high or remote crossing.

It is also a useful test section before committing to the full Rob Roy Way. Anyone finding this day comfortable can step up to the longer Strathyre to Killin stage; anyone finding it hard should avoid the Killin to Ardtalnaig moorland crossing until better prepared.

Transport: Callander has bus services and Strathyre has the C60 bus, subject to a limited timetable. The Trossachs Explorer also improves access to Callander in season.

Best section for public transport: Aberfeldy to Pitlochry

Start: Aberfeldy

Finish: Pitlochry

Distance: About 19 km

This is the most practical section if the priority is ending at a railway station. Pitlochry sits on the Highland Main Line, with services towards Perth, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Inverness.

The section also works well as a northern finale after shorter walks around Aberfeldy and Grandtully. Bus 23 helps with variations between Aberfeldy and Grandtully, while Strathay has bus links towards Ballinluig and Aberfeldy.

A shorter standalone option is the Strathay to Pitlochry part, about 3.7 miles, passing Dunfallandy stone, an ancient stone circle and Fonab Forest. This is useful for walkers wanting a modest half-day rather than the full Aberfeldy to Pitlochry stage.

Transport: Aberfeldy has bus connections but no railway station. Pitlochry is the strongest public-transport point on the route.

Best section for villages, pubs and accommodation: Drymen to Callander

Start: Drymen

Finish: Callander

Distance: About 31 km over 2 days

The southern opening is the easiest part of the Rob Roy Way to arrange around village services. Drymen, Aberfoyle and Callander all have established walker infrastructure, with more accommodation and food options than the remote middle of the route.

It is also a good choice for walkers who want a sociable, lower-risk introduction before deciding whether to continue north. The first miles from Drymen share the line of the West Highland Way before the Rob Roy Way branches away.

Transport: Drymen has no railway station, so access is by bus or taxi from places such as Balloch, Alexandria, Glasgow or Stirling. In season, the Trossachs Explorer bus links Drymen, Aberfoyle and Callander and is especially useful for section hiking; dates and fares should be checked before travelling.

Camping and low-budget section choices

Camping can work on the Rob Roy Way, but this is not the easiest trail to section-hike purely by public transport and campsites. The most practical camping or low-budget sections are generally around the better-served towns and villages, rather than the isolated Killin to Ardtalnaig to Aberfeldy stretch.

For a short camping-style itinerary, the southern Drymen–Aberfoyle–Callander section is the simplest place to start, because there are more services and, in season, better bus links. For a wilder itinerary, Killin to Pitlochry gives the strongest landscape, but it also brings the hardest navigation and the Ardtalnaig accommodation gap.

Do not assume there will be convenient camping or indoor fallback options at Ardtalnaig. Availability, access arrangements and any local restrictions should be checked before travelling.

Key transport warnings for section walkers

Ardtalnaig is the main obstacle to neat short itineraries. There is no public transport there, and access or escape usually means a taxi, lift, pre-arranged transfer or continuing on foot.

There is also no direct public-transport solution that neatly links every point between Killin and Aberfeldy. Walkers trying to sample only the remote middle of the route should plan the logistics first, then choose the walking days.

The C60 bus is useful but limited, and currently does not run on Sundays. The Trossachs Explorer is excellent for the southern part of the route when operating, but it is seasonal; dates, fares and times should be checked each year.

Highlights and Points of Interest

The Rob Roy Way is strongest when treated as more than a through-walk. Several of its best places sit just off the direct line, or reward a slower afternoon rather than a rushed arrival into town. If time allows, build in extra margin at Callander, Killin, Acharn, Aberfeldy and Pitlochry, and consider whether the Balquhiddy detour is important to the trip.

Stage-by-stage highlights at a glance

Stage	Main points of interest	Why it matters	Planning note
Drymen to Aberfoyle	Shared start with the West Highland Way, Loch Ard Forest, Loch Katrine aqueduct, River Forth at Aberfoyle	A gentle opening through forest and early industrial heritage	Good stage for easing into the walk rather than racing ahead
Aberfoyle to Callander	Trossachs forests, Menteith Hills, Loch Venachar views, Callander, Bracklinn Falls	The route begins to feel more Highland, with one of the finest waterfall detours	Allow time in Callander if visiting Bracklinn Falls
Callander to Strathyre	Falls of Leny, Loch Lubnaig, old railway path	One of the most scenic lochside stretches of the Way	Straightforward walking, but worth slowing down for the loch views
Strathyre to Killin	Balquhiddy detour, Lochearnhead, Glen Ogle Viaduct, Falls of Dochart, Finlarig Castle	Strong mix of Rob Roy history, railway engineering and village scenery	A longer stage; detours need to be planned rather than added casually
Killin to Ardtalnaig	Kinnel Stone Circle, Lochan Breacloch hydro dam, Craig Gharbh high point, remote moorland	The wildest and most exposed section of the whole trail	Navigation, weather and stamina matter more here than anywhere else on the route
Ardtalnaig to Aberfeldy	South shore of Loch Tay, views towards Ben Lawers, Falls of Acharn, Hermit's Cave, Castle Menzies, Birks of Aberfeldy	A long, varied Highland Perthshire stage with major natural and cultural stops	The stage is long already; extra stops may make for a full day
Aberfeldy to Pitlochry	Grandtully, Tay Forest Park, Clachan an Diridh Stone Circle, Pitlochry	A varied final approach through woodland and Highland Perthshire villages	Pitlochry has enough services and attractions to justify an extra night

Drymen, Loch Ard Forest and the Loch Katrine aqueduct

The opening from Drymen shares its first miles with the West Highland Way before the Rob Roy Way branches away towards the Trossachs. This is a useful psychological start: good tracks, established waymarking and a quick transition from village square to countryside.

Loch Ard Forest gives the first properly wooded section of the route. The forest tracks pass through ancient woodland, with roe deer and red squirrels possible in quieter conditions.

The route also follows the line of the Loch Katrine aqueduct, part of the Victorian water scheme opened in 1859 by Queen Victoria to bring water from Loch Katrine to Glasgow. It is not a single showpiece landmark, but it adds worthwhile industrial context to the first day's walking.

Aberfoyle and the approach to Callander

Aberfoyle sits on the River Forth at the edge of the Trossachs and makes a practical early overnight stop. The stone bridge over the River Forth gives a clear sense of arrival into the village.

North of Aberfoyle, the route climbs gently through Trossachs forest beneath the Menteith Hills. The descent towards Callander brings views passing Loch Venachar before entering one of the main service towns on the Way.

Callander is a sensible place to spend extra time. It has good walking services, pubs and shops, and it is strongly associated with Rob Roy heritage.

Bracklinn Falls above Callander

Bracklinn Falls is one of the most worthwhile short detours on the Rob Roy Way. The falls lie above Callander on the Keltie Water, where the river crosses the Highland Boundary Fault.

The attraction is not just the water volume, but the setting: cascades cut through red sandstone in a wooded gorge. The footbridge sits directly above the centre of the falls, giving the most dramatic viewpoint.

The current metal bridge opened in March 2023, replacing the earlier wood-and-copper bridge. Access is usually made from a car park near Callander, with the visit taking a couple of hours return, so it is best treated as an add-on to the Callander overnight rather than squeezed into a tight walking day.

Falls of Leny and Loch Lubnaig

Between Callander and Strathyre, the route follows one of its easiest and most rewarding corridors. The Falls of Leny sit in forest where the River Leny tumbles through a rocky gorge at the Pass of Leny.

Loch Lubnaig then provides a long lochside section on a converted old railway path. This is one of the most scenic parts of the Way: sheltered woodland, open water and views across to wooded hills.

The old railway alignment keeps the walking relatively efficient. It is a good section for walkers who enjoy steady miles without losing the sense of Highland scenery.

Balquhiddier and Rob Roy MacGregor's grave

Balquhiddier is just off the main route, but it is the key Rob Roy detour. Rob Roy MacGregor, who died in 1734, is buried in the kirkyard with his widow Mary Helen MacGregor and their sons Coll and Robin.

The grave lies a little east of the Old Church and is covered by a grey slab engraved with a claymore. A later gravestone carries the phrase "MacGregor Despite Them", referring to the outlawed MacGregor name.

This detour has historical weight, but it adds time to the Strathyre-to-Killin day. It should be planned in advance, especially if accommodation or meal timings in Killin are fixed.

Glen Ogle Viaduct and the old Callander and Oban Railway

Glen Ogle is the route's standout railway-engineering landscape. The Rob Roy Way follows around three miles of the old Callander and Oban Railway trackbed through the glen.

The 12-arch Glen Ogle Viaduct is the centrepiece. Built between 1866 and 1870 for the line towards Oban, it now carries the walking route, with full-length handrails installed when it was adapted for the path.

The classic view is down towards Lochearnhead from the viaduct. This is one of the places where the route's use of old railway lines genuinely improves the walking, keeping gradients manageable while giving broad glen views.

Killin, the Falls of Dochart and Finlarig Castle

Killin is one of the best overnight stops on the Rob Roy Way, both for services and for interest. The Falls of Dochart run through the middle of the village, where the River Dochart breaks into a broad staircase of white water at the western end of Loch Tay.

The falls are easy to appreciate without a long detour, so they are a natural focus at the end of the Strathyre-to-Killin stage. In high water they are especially forceful, but paths and viewpoints still require normal care.

Finlarig Castle lies just north of Killin, on a peninsula between the River Lochay and Loch Tay. The early 17th-century tower-house ruin was built in 1629 by "Black" Duncan Campbell of Glenorchy, and Rob Roy visited in 1713.

The castle is ruinous rather than a formal visitor attraction. Nearby are the Breadalbane Mausoleum and a reputed beheading pit, though the pit's original purpose is disputed.

Kinnel Stone Circle and the high moorland to Ardtalnaig

Near Killin, Kinnel Stone Circle adds a prehistoric stop before the route's hardest day fully commits to open ground. The Bronze Age monument has six slabs, some up to two metres tall.

The crossing from Killin to Ardtalnaig is the wildest section of the Rob Roy Way. The route climbs past the Lochan Breaclaich hydro dam and reaches its high point near Craig Gharbh at around 565 m, although quoted heights vary slightly.

This is not a casual sightseeing section. The ground can be boggy, shelter is limited and navigation matters, particularly in poor visibility. In good weather, however, it gives the strongest sense of remoteness on the whole trail.

Ardtalnaig and the south shore of Loch Tay

Ardtalnaig is a tiny hamlet on the south shore of Loch Tay and feels very different from the larger service towns. Its appeal is its remoteness, but that also means accommodation is limited and should be booked well ahead.

The following stage tracks the south side of Loch Tay towards Aberfeldy. Views open across the water towards Ben Lawers, the highest peak in the southern Highlands at 1,214 m.

This is a long stage, so pauses along Loch Tay need to be balanced against the distance still to cover. The scenery is rewarding, but the day can feel extended if several detours are added.

Falls of Acharn and the Hermit's Cave

Acharn is one of the best places on the route to make time for a short side visit. A track from the village climbs through woodland to the Falls of Acharn, where the burn drops through a gorge.

The distinctive feature is the Hermit's Cave, an artificial tunnel structure built in the 1760s by the 3rd Earl of Breadalbane. It was designed to hide the waterfall until the final moment, when walkers emerge at a balcony overlooking the cascade.

Both Robert Burns and William Wordsworth visited the site. It is a small but memorable example of 18th-century designed landscape, and it fits naturally into the Ardtalnaig-to-Aberfeldy day if time and energy allow.

Castle Menzies and Aberfeldy

Castle Menzies stands at Weem, near Aberfeldy, and the route passes close by. The 16th-century Z-plan tower-house was the seat of Clan Menzies for more than 400 years.

Its history includes occupation by Cromwell's forces in the 1650s, and Bonnie Prince Charlie stayed there for two nights in 1746 on his way to Culloden. The castle has been restored by the Menzies Clan Society and is open to visitors, with current opening times best checked before building a day around it.

Aberfeldy itself is one of the most useful towns on the Way, with accommodation, shops, cafés, pubs and visitor attractions. It is also the right place to pause before the final stage to Pitlochry.

The Birks of Aberfeldy

The Birks of Aberfeldy is one of the route's most rewarding natural and literary highlights. The path passes through the wooded Moness Burn gorge, where water cascades through the trees at the Falls of Moness.

"Birks" refers to birch trees, and the gorge is closely associated with Robert Burns. Burns visited in August 1787 during a Highland tour with William Nicol and wrote "The Birks of Aberfeldy".

A plaque marks the traditionally reputed spot where Burns is said to have composed the song. For walkers with spare time in Aberfeldy, this is one of the easiest and most worthwhile places to linger.

Grandtully, Tay Forest Park and the approach to Pitlochry

The final stage passes through Grandtully before entering Tay Forest Park. This gives the last day a quieter woodland character before the route drops towards busy Pitlochry.

On the approach to Pitlochry, Clachan an Diridh Stone Circle is a notable final surprise. The Bronze Age circle is around 3,500–3,600 years old, with three stones standing and one lying flat.

Pitlochry marks the end of the walk at the War Memorial and has the strongest finish-point services on the route. It is also a practical place to add a recovery night, with rail access on the Highland Main Line

and nearby attractions such as Edradour Distillery just outside town; tour availability should be checked before planning a visit.

Common Mistakes and Planning Tips

Assuming Drymen has a railway station

Drymen is not on the rail network, so the first logistical task is getting to the start. The nearest station is Balloch on the North Clyde Line from Glasgow Queen Street, roughly 7-8 miles from Drymen village.

Bus 309 runs from Balloch to Drymen and is much more useful on weekdays than at weekends. A taxi from Balloch to Drymen is typically around £15-20, but fares should be confirmed before booking.

Fix: plan the journey to Drymen before fixing the first night's accommodation. Check Traveline Scotland before travelling, especially for weekends, holidays and evening arrivals.

Leaving accommodation too late, especially Ardtalnaig

The Rob Roy Way is not a route where every stage-end has abundant beds. Ardtalnaig is the key constraint: it is a tiny hamlet, accommodation is very limited, and there is no realistic fallback if everything is full.

Callander and Pitlochry have more choice, but they can still fill in July and August. Killin is also limited for its size, and the remote middle of the route needs more forward planning than the early Trossachs stages.

Fix: book Ardtalnaig first, then work outwards in both directions. For a summer walk, booking 3-6 months ahead is sensible rather than excessive.

Underestimating the Killin to Ardtalnaig stage

The 19 km stage from Killin to Ardtalnaig is the hardest day on the standard itinerary. It climbs past the Lochan Breaclaich hydro dam to the exposed moorland near Craig Gharbh, the route's high point at about 565 m.

The ground can be boggy, the path is not always obvious above the treeline, and waymarks should not be treated as a complete navigation system. In mist or low cloud, this section needs competent map-and-compass use or a reliable GPS backup.

Fix: check the Highland Perthshire forecast the day before, start early, and carry a proper map such as the Harvey Rob Roy Way map or the relevant OS 1:25,000 Explorer sheets (OL48 Ben Lawers & Glen Lyon covers the Killin-Ardtalnaig high ground). Do not rely on waymarks alone on this stage.

Not carrying enough food and water from Killin

There is no shop, café or pub in Ardtalnaig. Between Killin and the overnight stop, the only realistic food option is the Ardeonaig Hotel, around 3 miles before Ardtalnaig on the South Loch Tay road, and it should not be relied on without checking opening and booking requirements.

The following day from Ardtalnaig to Aberfeldy is also long at around 24 km and starts from a place with no shop. Breakfast, snacks and emergency food need to be sorted before leaving Killin or through the accommodation used that night.

Fix: leave Killin with a full day's food, plenty of water and emergency rations. Confirm any meal arrangements in Ardtalnaig or at Ardeonaig before setting off.

Relying on old GPX files or faded waymarks

The Rob Roy Way has had several route changes and temporary diversions in recent years, including forest closures, felling diversions and bridge works. Older GPX files from apps or third-party websites may not match the current route.

Waymarking can also be inconsistent, particularly on remote and forested sections. Some original discs are faded, damaged or missing, and not every junction is signed clearly.

Fix: download current route information immediately before the walk, check the Route Updates page on robroyway.com, and carry either the Rucksack Readers guidebook or a dedicated trail map plus a loaded digital map. Treat waymarks as confirmation, not navigation.

Following the West Highland Way out of Drymen by mistake

The Rob Roy Way shares its opening miles with the West Highland Way from Drymen village square. The two routes then diverge, with the West Highland Way continuing north and the Rob Roy Way heading towards Gartmore and Aberfoyle.

This is an easy early error if the split has not been checked in advance. A wrong turn here can waste time before the walk has properly started.

Fix: study the route departure from Drymen before setting off. Confirm the correct turn on the map or GPX where the Rob Roy Way leaves the West Highland Way.

Compressing the route into too few days

Most walkers use a 6- or 7-day itinerary, but the standard 7-stage split still puts the toughest section in the middle: Strathyre to Killin at about 21 km, Killin to Ardtalnaig at about 19 km over exposed moorland, then Ardtalnaig to Aberfeldy at about 24 km.

There are few easy escape options around Ardtalnaig, and public transport in this middle section is effectively absent for practical walking purposes. Once committed to these stages, shortening the day is difficult without a pre-arranged lift or taxi.

Fix: be realistic about daily distance on days 4-6. A 7-day or 7-plus-day plan is usually more sensible than forcing the route into 6 days unless fitness, weather and accommodation all line up.

Assuming every village has a shop, ATM or card facilities

The smaller settlements on the route should not be treated as resupply towns. Gartmore, Strathyre, Lochearnhead and Ardtalnaig have minimal or no banking facilities, and services can be limited or seasonal.

Even where there is a post office, petrol station or community shop, opening hours may not suit a walking schedule. Some small accommodation providers and pubs may also have limited card facilities.

Fix: withdraw enough cash in Callander or Aberfoyle to cover several days. Carry key food items rather than assuming the next village will have exactly what is needed.

Forgetting the A9 crossing near the finish

The final stage from Aberfeldy to Pitlochry includes a crossing of the A9. There is no pedestrian bridge at this point, so walkers cross the carriageway itself.

Traffic is fast and the crossing can feel abrupt after several days on quieter tracks, roads and paths. It is not a place to arrive tired, rushed or in failing light.

Fix: cross only at the designated point, use the available sight-lines, wait for a safe gap and move decisively. Aim to reach the crossing well before dark.

Ignoring midges in July and August

July and August are peak midge months on this route, especially around Loch Lubnaig, wooded lochside sections and still, overcast places. Early mornings and evenings are usually worst, while wind and bright sun reduce the problem.

This is also the busiest and often most expensive period for accommodation. The walking itself may be good, but campsites, glamping, lochside stops and outdoor eating can be much less comfortable without protection.

Fix: carry effective midge repellent from day one. For fewer midges and less pressure on accommodation, consider April-June or September-October rather than the height of summer.

Taking the Glen Quaich variant too casually

The optional Ardtalnaig to Aberfeldy variant via Glen Almond, Glen Quaich and Amulree adds roughly 26-27 km and at least one extra day. It is remote, requires strong navigation and has very limited accommodation.

The Amulree Hotel, historically used by walkers on this alternative, has closed. Planning this variant from old information can leave a serious accommodation gap.

Fix: only choose the Glen Quaich option after confirming current accommodation and transport. This should be checked before travelling, and it should not be used as an improvised last-minute alternative to the standard route.

Final Advice

Who the Rob Roy Way is best for

The Rob Roy Way suits fit walkers who want a quieter Scottish long-distance trail without committing to a technical mountain route. Most of the walking is on good tracks, old railway paths, forest roads, cycleway and minor roads, so the challenge is mainly distance, weather, logistics and one exposed moorland day rather than difficult terrain.

It is a good choice for walkers with some multi-day experience, and a realistic first long-distance route for confident hikers who are comfortable planning accommodation, carrying wet-weather kit and following a GPX or map. It is less suitable for anyone looking for dramatic ridge walking, high summits or a constant wilderness feel.

The route is strongest for hikers who value quiet places, Rob Roy history, disused railway engineering, lochs, river valleys and the gradual shift from the Trossachs into Highland Perthshire.

The main thing to plan carefully

Accommodation around Ardtalnaig is the key constraint. Beds are very limited in the remote middle of the route, particularly between Killin and Aberfeldy, so this section should be booked before fixing the rest of the itinerary.

The Killin to Ardtalnaig stage also deserves special attention. It crosses the high, exposed moorland near Craig Gharbh, reaching roughly 565 m after the climb past the Lochan Breaclauch hydro dam, with boggy ground possible and fewer easy escape options than on the lower stages.

Carry current navigation. The route changed significantly in 2023–2025, so old GPX files may not match the present line; use an up-to-date GPX, map or guidebook before setting off.

The most rewarding sections

The Glen Ogle railway section between Strathyre and Lochearnhead is one of the trail's standout stretches, with the disused railway alignment and viaduct giving big views without a major mountain climb. The detour to Rob Roy's grave at Balquhidder is also worth building in if the day's timing allows.

Killin is a natural mid-route highlight, with the Falls of Dochart and the last substantial services before the wilder central section. From there, the crossing to Ardtalnaig is the hardest day but often the most satisfying because it feels genuinely remote compared with the rest of the Way.

The Perthshire finish from Aberfeldy to Pitlochry is an excellent final act: the Birks of Aberfeldy, the Falls of Moness, riverside Tay scenery, forest tracks and a proper Highland Perthshire finish in Pitlochry.

Thru-hike or section hike?

The Rob Roy Way works best as a south-to-north thru-hike from Drymen to Pitlochry. That direction gives the most natural landscape progression, starts with the shared West Highland Way miles, and finishes conveniently in Pitlochry on the Highland Main Line.

Section hiking is possible on some parts, especially where towns such as Aberfoyle, Callander, Strathyre, Killin, Aberfeldy and Pitlochry make access easier. However, public transport can be infrequent and awkward to link, and between Killin and Aberfeldy a taxi or arranged shuttle may be needed.

For most walkers, a 7-day itinerary is the best balance. A 6-day crossing is possible for stronger hikers, but the middle of the route should not be rushed; an 8-day plan gives more margin for weather, short daylight or a detour to Balquhidder.

Final recommendations

Book Killin, Ardtalnaig and the following night as early as possible. This is the part of the route most likely to force changes to the whole schedule.

Avoid winter unless experienced in Scottish hill conditions. Short daylight, harsher weather, possible snow on the moorland high section and seasonal accommodation closures make the route much more serious.

April to June and September to October are generally better planning windows than July and August, when midges, higher accommodation demand and peak-season prices are more likely to affect the trip.

Carry enough food and water for the Killin–Ardtalnaig and Ardtalnaig–Aberfeldy stages, and check the weather before committing to the moorland crossing. The Rob Roy Way is moderate overall, but that central high section should not be underestimated.