

A beautiful trail set in picturesque scenery – one to do to set your imagination free!  
Windermere is the largest of the Lake District lakes, very popular, and very busy, often all year round.

## Key Info

### Start & Finish:

Waterhead Car Park, Ambleside  
LA22 0ES

Distance: 6 miles

Time: 1.5 - 3 hours

Locks/Portages: None

OS Map: Explorer 7 South Eastern Lakes



Scan or visit  
[bit.ly/windermere-ambleside-trail](http://bit.ly/windermere-ambleside-trail)  
to find the map in Mapometer and  
download the GPX file



**1** This route is circular and can be done in either direction depending on wind. It is described here clockwise. Put on the water and turn left.

**2** Unlike other water, Windermere is a highway, and has special navigation rules from the Lake District National Park. The lake steamers have right of way over every craft, powered or unpowered, and canoes give way to everything.

**3** Once past the jetties and Ambleside Youth Hostel, thread your way through moored craft on the east side of the lake to Holme Crag Field. This is National Trust property and sticks out as a noticeable promontory. It is fine to land here and is a great place for a picnic.

**4** Continuing along you will spot Low Wood Hotel, water sports centre and a cannon!

**5** Carry on paddling along the lake, keeping a keen eye out for ferries and other craft. At just over 1.5 miles the woods around Brockhole will come into view. There is a public jetty and small beach area here, where it is possible to land.

**6** Back on your route you will pass White Cross Bay and Parkhill Wood before seeing Trout Beck entering the lake. You can also see the imposing facade of Calgarth Hall. This is your turning point.

**7** Check carefully for other craft and head across the lake towards the opposite shore. Enjoy your 360° views of the stunning peaks of the Lake District.

**8** Head past Pinstones Wood before Green Tuft island comes into view around the corner from the Wray Castle Jetty.

**9** Wray Castle is just visible above oak trees. It's a modern folly, and in possession of the National Trust, as is the land behind Green Tuft Island, used as NT Low Wray campsite. Toilets and landing is possible, although there are likely to be many anglers here.

Find more  
paddling trails at:  
[gopaddling.info](http://gopaddling.info)

Continued...



- 11** Moving on, you can spot a small island; Seamew Crag. A Gull colony with dwarf battered trees. Watch out for underwater reefs extending out from the shore to Seamew Crag.
- 12** You are now curving around back to your start point at Ambleside. The park land on shore from Pull Wyke to Brathay River mouth is privately owned, including Brathay Bay shore and Brathay's natural harbour, one of three natural harbours on lake.
- 13** Check for ferries as you return to shore.

## Discover More

Be aware: The wind can get up very quickly in this area, causing large waves on the lake. It is essential to watch, or listen to, a full weather forecast, so that winds might be predicted.

Windermere can be paddled further south but the area nearer to Bowness is even busier, with one of the largest concentrations of power boats in the U.K.

Ambleside is a bustling place, with many hotels, guest houses and restaurants, and the one of the other main towns in the Lakes, Keswick, is only 14 miles to the north. Many hill walks commence in the area.

Further useful information can be found on the following websites:

[www.visitnorthwest.com/lakes/waterhead.htm](http://www.visitnorthwest.com/lakes/waterhead.htm)

<http://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/visiting/placestogo/explorwindermere/uniquelywindermere/windermereislands>

[www.amblesideonline.co.uk](http://www.amblesideonline.co.uk)

## Safety and Licenses

*We want you to enjoy a safe trip, so here are a few tips for staying safe and paddling responsibly.*

### Paddle Safe:

Be prepared and take the right kit:

- Wear a correctly sized buoyancy aid
- Mobile phone – in a waterproof case
- Whistle – to attract attention in case of emergency
- Map and / or route description
- Appropriate clothing for the weather conditions + spares in a dry bag
- Food, drink & suncream!

### Paddle Responsibly:

Respect the natural environment and other users:

- Respect other waterway users #sharethespace
- Be environmentally aware, minimise your impact
- Ensure you have the correct licence if required
- Observe navigational rules – keep right and give other users space
- Check, Clean, Dry after every trip!

Licences: The waterways on this trail don't require you to have a licence to paddle on them. However if you paddle regularly you should consider becoming a member of British Canoeing. A British Canoeing membership gives you a whole range of benefits including a licence to paddle on 4500km of Britain's waterways and Civil Liability Insurance, worth up to £10 million.

Not only will membership help save you money, it will give you peace of mind when out on the waterways. For more information on British Canoeing membership please [click here](#).

Visit our website  
[britishcanoeing.org.uk](http://britishcanoeing.org.uk)  
for more information

