

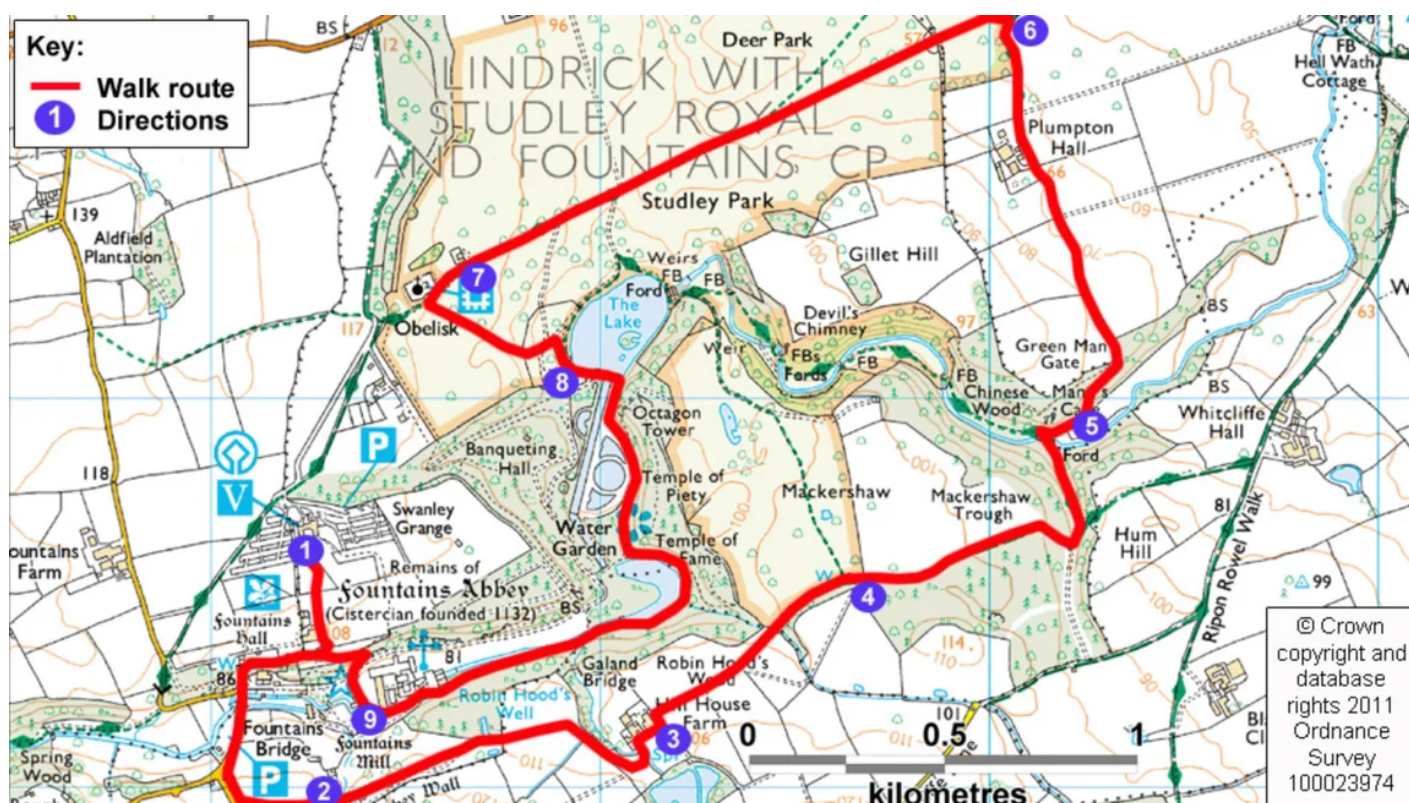
YORKSHIRE

Fountains Abbey Estate Boundary walk

This route will take you around the estate boundary of Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal, giving some of the best views of the estate to enjoy. After taking in the sights of the hall and deer park, walk through the 18th-century water garden and past the Abbey.

Planning your walk

The route enters the grounds of Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal Water Garden – please note opening times and remember your membership card or payment for tickets. Bring sturdy shoes or boots, as the ground can be muddy and slippery in some places.



Information

Address: Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal Water Garden, Ripon, HG4 3DY

OS map: Explorer 299

Activity: Walking

Moderate: Fairly easy walking, with a few moderate hills. For further details, please see Terrain section.

Dog friendly: Dogs very welcome on short leads. Water bowls and dog waste bins are available across the site.

Full trail: Miles: 5 (km: 8)

Access: Challenging

Duration: 2 hours 30 mins

Terrain

The terrain is fairly easy walking, although there are a few moderate hills. Strong shoes or boots are recommended as the ground can be muddy and slippery in places.

Total steps: 9

Start point: Fountains Abbey visitor centre, grid ref: SE272687

1. Leave the visitor centre on the main (right-hand) access path to the Abbey. Pass Swanley Grange, following signs to Fountains Hall. Pass the hall on the right and go through the West Gate exit, turning left onto the road to Harrogate. Follow the road uphill for 437yd (400m), turning left at a gate by a bridleway sign.
2. Go through the gate and follow the clear path ahead – initially with a hedge on the right and then the Abbey wall. On reaching the end of the wall, go through a gate and cross a field, by a fenced path. Take the last gate on the right to follow a clear farm track to Hill House Farm.
3. Initially turn right past farm buildings – watch out for waymarkers, taking you first left and then right past the final farm buildings and through a gate into a field. Take care: the farmyard and tracks can be muddy and slippery. Continue ahead on a clear track until the hedge on your right ends. Then veer slightly left and go through a gate into the corner of the wood ahead of you.
4. Follow the well-marked path ahead, along the left-hand edge of the wood, passing the impressive estate gate, ruined Mackershaw lodges and Mackershaw Deer Park beyond. Continue along the woodland path with a wall to your left, eventually bearing right downhill to a junction of paths. Take the left-hand path, continuing downhill to reach the River Skell.
5. Ignore the ford and take the footbridge river-crossing to your left. Turn right at the end of the footbridge and follow a clear track uphill, to emerge from the woodland through a gate at the top. Continue to follow the clear track ahead, with a hedge on the

left. Take in the views to your right over Ripon and in the distance the edge of the North York Moors, Sutton Bank and the White Horse.

6. Pass the medieval Plumpton Hall Farmhouse on your left and continue until you reach the Studley Royal driveway. Walk up the driveway, through the impressive East Gateway and lodges, towards St Mary's Church spire ahead of you. Just before you reach the church, turn round and take in the sweeping view down the tree-lined driveway to Ripon Cathedral and the North York Moors beyond.
7. From the church, turn left off the driveway and take the grass path downhill, past a rustic seat, to the Lakeside car park. Continue downhill to the lake itself, and the impressive lakeside gateway to the formal water garden and Fountains Abbey.
8. Go through the gate and take the first left turn, which takes you over the canal by the cascade waterfall. Follow the clear path, passing the Moon Pond and the Temple of Piety. Continue along the path, turning left at the next junction to pass the Half Moon Pond and along the left bank of the River Skell. Revel in the views of the Abbey ruins ahead.
9. Continue along the path to eventually reach the Abbey. Take time to explore the ruins and then return to the visitor centre, via the clearly waymarked path uphill from the Abbey.

End point: Fountains Abbey visitor centre, grid ref: SE272687
