



Sea Stack Climbing

- **Old Man of Stoer**
- **Old Man of Stoer, Am Buachaille & The Old Man of Hoy**



Pitch 1 on the Old Man of Stoer

OVERVIEW

Our great Sea Stacks: The Old Man of Stoer, Am Buachaille and The Old Man of Hoy offer some of the most spectacular climbing in Britain. If you are confident seconding climbs of VS (Stoer) or HVS (others), then this climbing expedition will provide an achievable challenge in the wild and remote areas of Sutherland and Orkney. In six days we climb them all and perhaps a few other routes as a bonus!

Participation Statement

Adventure Walks/Peaks recognises that climbing, hill walking and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement.

Adventure Travel – Accuracy of Itinerary

Although it is our intention to operate this itinerary as printed, it may be necessary to make some changes as a result of climatic conditions, limitations of transport or other operational factors. As a consequence, the location and duration of the days may vary from those outlined. You should be aware that some events are beyond our control and we would ask for your patience.

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Old Man of Stoer



Old Man of Stoer with belays marked

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

For the Stoer section of the sea stacks program you should have experience of VS climbing and be confident in abseiling

OUTLINE ITINERARY

An exact programme is difficult to confirm as we operate according to the weather, conditions and the progress of the group, but typically we would aim to do:

Day 1: Travel to Old Man of Stoer. Depart Ambleside 7am or meet at 1pm, see below. Possible late afternoon/evening ascent if the weather is good.

Day 2: Ascent of Stoer. Alternative climb if previously ascended e.g. AøChioch in Applecross.

Day 3: Reserve day for ascent or further climbing. Start return journey to Lakes 2pm arriving around 8pm.

Please note if we have four clients, the climb will be done twice by our leader which would affect the amount of additional climbing undertaken, normally you would expect at least two days climbing, three is a bonus.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The **Old Man of Stoer** VS 5a is separated from the mainland by an 8m channel which will normally need to be swum by one member of the team. A Tyrolean traverse is usually used to bring across the rest of the party and protect the descent.

1. 20m 5a Following twin horizontal cracks from 4 m up onto SW face, then up to a big ledge on the arete.
2. 20m 4b A steep slab to above the ledge to a fringe of overhangs, passed by a crack up to some ledges on the left, continuing for 10m to a cave above a large chockstone.
3. 10m 4b A traverse round the edge on the right to the landward face, then trending up and right to reach a small ledge
4. 15m Ascending the V-chimney above to easier ground, then finishing up a corner crack to the summit block and an amazing summit.

The descent is by one long abseil directly back to the Tyrolean ledge.



Tyrolean traverse on the Old Man of Stoer

Old Man of Stoer, Am Buachaille & The Old Man of Hoy



Old Man of Hoy with belays marked

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

You should be very confident to HVS, with plenty of abseiling experience and a good head for heights.

OUTLINE ITINERARY

An exact programme is difficult to confirm as we operate according to the weather, conditions and the progress of the group, but typically we would aim to do:

Day 1: As per the Old Man of Stoer program.

Day 2: Climb the Old Man of Stoer. Take ferry to Orkney.

Day 3: Morning ferry to Hoy. Walk or Taxi to Racwick Bay.

Day 4: Climb Old Man of Hoy.

Day 5: Return to the mainland.

Day 6: Climb Am Buachaille.

Day 7: Travel back to Cumbria.

ROUTE DESCRIPTIONS

The **Old Man of Hoy** E1 5b is situated among some of Scotland's most spectacular coastal scenery. Its base is non tidal giving easy access & no swimming this time.

1. 25m 4b A shattered pillar leads to the Gallery
2. 30m 5b Traversing down and right brings you to the obvious Great Crack. This is climbed passed 2 roofs (crux). The difficulty can be reduced slightly to 5a by pulling on gear at the second overhang.
3. 20m A wandering line up easy ledges brings you back to the crack which is followed to a large ledge.
4. 40m 4b The original line goes right then left to a chimney from where it is traditional to wriggle right along a horizontal ledge. East ground now leads to grass terraces below the final crack.
5. 20m 4c The final stunning corner crack is the highlight of the route.

Descent is by a single 60m abseil back down the line of ascent.

Am Buachaille HVS 5a is located at the southern end of the beautiful Sandwood Bay. It is also approached by an 8m swim at low tide and can be protected by a Tyrolean traverse.

1. 15m 4a An overhanging start leads up to a prow. Steep rock leads to a leftwards traverse to a large ledge.
2. 25m 5a Traverse back rightwards to a steep crack. Climb this, trend left and continue up a deep overhanging crack.
3. 10m 4c Easier climbing now leads to the summit.

The descent involves a single abseil down the landward face.



WHAT IS INCLUDED

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- ✚ Transport from Ambleside or Glasgow/ Inverness Airport (petrol costs shared)
- ✚ Ferry to Orkney
- ✚ B&B Guest House accommodation and/or camping
- ✚ Ropes and all technical equipment
- ✚ Instruction

WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED

- ✚ Ferry to Hoy
- ✚ Optional taxi to Racwick
- ✚ All meals
- ✚ Personal climbing equipment, although this can be hired.

INSTRUCTORS

The majority of our leaders are qualified Mountaineering Instructors many of whom are members of AMI (Association of Mountaineering Instructors). www.ami.org.uk



ALTERNATIVE DATES

We are happy to run courses on any dates for groups of 2 or more people. Please contact the office for details.

WEATHER CONDITIONS

Weather conditions can change by the hour; it is certainly an exciting and surprising place to be! We aim to make the very best of the conditions. In poor conditions it may be that we will be restricted to scrambling or an alternative easier climb but we will choose the best areas according to the weather each day. This means our plans will be quite flexible, but we always find somewhere for a day's adventure.

EQUIPMENT

- ✚ **Climbing Helmet
- ✚ **Climbing Harness
- ✚ Walking Boots (3 season)
- ✚ Rock Shoes
- ✚ Waterproof jacket & trousers
- ✚ Warm clothes
- ✚ Hat & Gloves
- ✚ 50L Rucksack
- ✚ Water bottle
- ✚ Headtorch
- ✚ Swimming Gear
- ✚ Midge repellent (not bad but worthwhile)
- ✚ **2 slings & Screwgates
- ✚ **Prussic loops
- ✚ **Ascender / Jumar
- ✚ **Abseil device/belay plate
- ✚ **Camping gear

** These items can be hired from us. Please let us know at the time of booking. All other technical equipment is provided.

A 15% discount is available on all equipment and clothing from the Adventure Peaks shop from the time of booking to one month after your course.

www.adventurepeaks.com/shop

ACCOMMODATION

To maintain our flexibility we will use a combination of B&Bs, hostels and camping.

MEALS

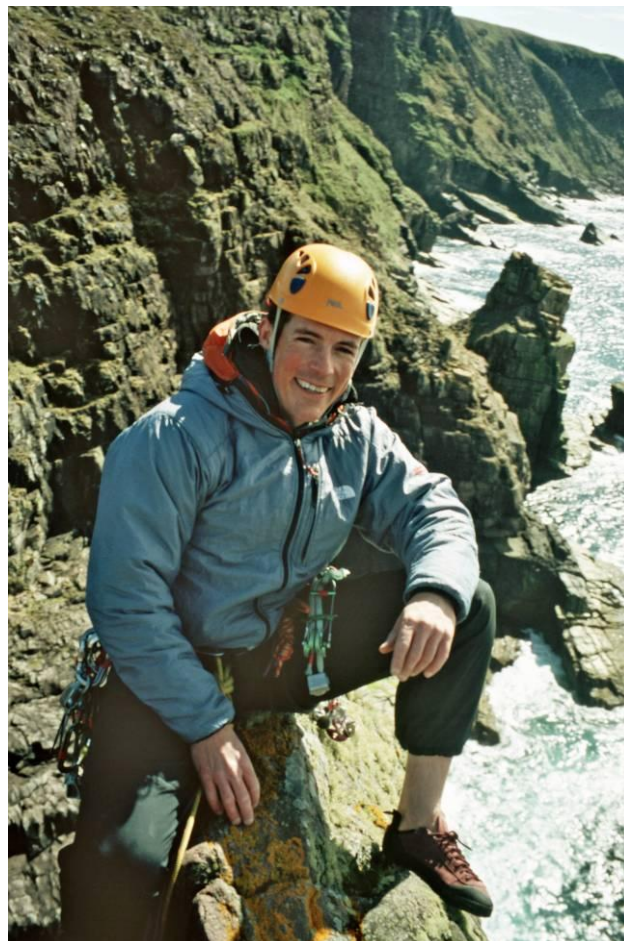
Food is not included in the cost of the course. Shops are limited and opening times varied. To avoid unnecessary time constraints please come organised with sufficient food to avoid the need to visit shops.

INSURANCE

We recommend you have travel insurance to cover cancellation/curtailment. Search & rescue cover is not required as Scotland has a dedicated voluntary Mountain Rescue Service. We can provide specialist insurance to cover you for all your courses and expeditions with Adventure Peaks.

BOOKS & MAPS

Scottish Rock Climbs published by the SMC



On top of the Old Man of Stoer