



House Mountain - Lexington, Virginia

Length	Difficulty	Streams	Views	Solitude	Camping
9.4 mls	★	N/A	★	★	★
Hiking Time: 5.5 hours plus a half hour for lunch Elev. Gain: 3,050 ft Parking: The parking area on Saddle Ridge Rd/VA643 is located where the paved section and state maintenance ends on the left. Note: The 0.5 miles to the trail head is accessed on private road Trail Head Ln, and no vehicle traffic of any kind is allowed on the that portion of the road. Please respect private property.					

The House Mountain hike near Lexington Virginia is really two out-and-back hikes in one. Big House Mountain, with great views to the south and of Little House Mountain, and Little House Mountain, with its punishing direct climb to the ridge, and spectacular views of the Shenandoah Valley to the northeast.

Little House and Big House Mountains appear to tower out of the plains as they stand by themselves, separate from any other mountain range. The 950 acre House Mountain Preserve was purchased in 1989 through the efforts of the Rockbridge Area Conservation Council, the Virginia Outdoor Foundation, and many local residents, including Bill Stubbs a leader in conservation causes in the Rockbridge area for many years. The area is now owned by the Virginia Outdoor Foundation.

The saddle between Big House and Little House Mountains was originally a homestead, and more recently a orchard and pasture. With camping space for multiple tents, as well as a seasonal spring just past the [shelter](#) on Big House Mountain, this is a perfect place to take an overnight backpack.

From the parking area continue up unpaved private road Trail Head Ln. and in 50 yards stay right uphill (private drive is left), pass the last house in 0.2 miles. Continue up Trail Head Ln for another 0.3 miles (please respect private property) to the closed gate and trailhead.

From the trailhead and closed gate, start up the unblazed House Mountain Trail. The trail passes private property on the left for the first 0.5 miles. The remaining 1.1 miles to the saddle becomes steeper and more rutted.

Big House Mountain

Out/Back - 2.7mls - 1,100ft gain - Moderate

Continue to the west uphill on the unblazed Big House Mountain trail and in 100 yards pass a shelter and privy on the right. Just past the shelter the trail will split, remain right uphill as it becomes steeper then makes a hairpin turn to the right in 0.5 miles. In 100 yards after the turn pass a [good vista](#) to the south. Continue steeply uphill before the trail begins to level out at the ridge, and arrive at a concrete shelter at the summit.

Continue now descending along the ridge for 0.4 miles for vistas to the north, and views of Little House Mountain to the east. Return to the saddle by retracing your route.

Little House Mountain

Out/Back - 2.4mls - 940ft gain - Strenuous

Although the Little House Mountain out/back is shorter with less vertical gain than Big House Mountain, it's significantly more strenuous because the blue blazed Little House Mountain Trail heads directly uphill to the ridge without any switchbacks.

From the saddle pass into the meadow where the road splits. Turn right uphill before leaving the meadow and head into the treeline. Once in the treeline look for the blue blazes.

At this point the trail is almost indiscernible. Follow the blue blazes as the trail starts uphill towards the ridge and in 0.2 miles pass through a rockslide. From this point to the ridge the Mountain Laurel and Rhododendron becomes more dense.

At the ridge follow the trail through a thick section of Mountain Laurel before turning left back to the north. In 0.2 miles the trail passes to the left of the main summit before beginning its descent to the overlook in another 0.7 miles.

Once passing around the main summit, the trail descends passing through a rock scree, then shortly afterward reach a small campsite. The blue blazed trail continues downwards and ends at the panoramic Little House Mountain overlook. Return to the saddle by retracing your route.