



Big Devils Stairs - SNP, Virginia

Length	Difficulty	Streams	Views	Solitude	Camping
5.5 mls	2	1	4	2	1
Hiking Time:	3.0 hours plus a half hour for lunch				
Elev. Gain:	1,055 ft				
Parking:	Park at the Gravel Springs Gap parking area.				

The Big Devils Stairs hike is one of the more overlooked scenic gorge hikes in the Shenandoah National Park. With two nice overlooks of the gorge and valley below, this 5.5 mile out and back hike is a nice alternative to the more crowded hikes in the central section of the SNP.

From the parking area at Gravel Springs Gap, pass the chain gate and follow the wide yellow blazed fire road as it heads downhill. The white blazed Appalachian Trail will follow the fire road on the right for the first 200 yards. The fire road will begin to descend more steeply before making a hairpin turn to the right at the first intersection.

Turn left following the narrower yellow blazed horse trail towards Big Devils Stairs (the fire road will now become blue blazed as it heads towards Gravel Springs Shelter). Follow the yellow blazed horse trail for 0.1 miles to the next intersection. Turn left remaining on the yellow blazed trail (again the blue blazed trail to the right goes to the shelter). In 200 yards the yellow blazed trail arrives at the intersection of the yellow blazed Bluff Trail.

Turn left on the yellow blazed Bluff trail towards Big Devils Stairs, as it heads north around the mountain for 1.4 miles to the intersection of the blue blazed Big Devils Stairs trail.

Turn right downhill on the blue blazed Big Devils Stairs Trail initially passing through an area of Mountain Laurel. In 150 yards there is one camp site on either side of the trail. The trail will then make several switchbacks in the next 0.4 miles to the first small overlook. Steeply descend rock steps and reach the first of the two main overlooks of the gorge and valley.

Continue down the trail for another 120 yards to the second overlook. Be cautions to watch your footing as the trail is narrow and passes close to the ledge in this section. The second overlook is the turn around point. From here the trail continues down to the stream and park boundary. There is no public access from the lower section of the trail.