

Tramping trips in Arthur's Pass National Park

Arthur's Pass National Park is rugged, mountainous and not as developed as most other national parks in New Zealand. It is not suited to people with little or no tramping experience as most trips require route-finding and river-crossing skills.



Trips for trampers with moderate experience

3–6 hours each day
Basic route-finding skills needed
Suitable for people with low–moderate tramping experience
Some tramps require crossing rivers

NAME (Route Guide number)	TIME ONE WAY/LOOP	DESCRIPTION	ABOVE BUSHLINE	RIVER CROSSING	ROUTE FINDING	AVAILANCHE RISK
Carrington Hut (RG1)	2 days return	Up the braided riverbed of the Waimakariri River to a large hut (4–6 hours).	No	Yes	Yes	No
Edwards Hut (RG8)	2 days return	Riverbed travel and bush tracks lead to Edwards Hut (5 hours)	No	Yes	Yes	No
Hawdon Valley (RG8)	1–2 days return	Tramping up river flats to new hut (2–3 hours).	No	Yes	Yes	No
Casey Saddle – Binser Saddle (RG10)	2 day loop	Tracks through forest and open country, with two low passes. Stay at Casey Hut. Plan for fairly long days.	No	Yes (side streams)	No	No
Bealey Spur	1–2 days return	Gentle climb in forest and subalpine vegetation past alpine tarns to a former musterers' hut (2–3 hours)	No	No	No	No
Cass Saddle – Lagoon Saddle (RG12)	2–3 day loop – shuttle required	Mostly forest tracks in the Craigieburn Forest Park. Two alpine passes rise above the bushline.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Carroll Hut (RG3)	1–2 days return	Climb through West Coast podocarp forest and subalpine vegetation to a hut on Kelly Range (2–3 hours).	Yes	No	No	No



Trips for trampers with moderate–high experience

5–8 hours each day
Suitable for well-equipped people with previous back-country tramping experience
Map-reading and route-finding skills essential
River-crossing skills essential

NAME (Route Guide number)	TIME ONE WAY/LOOP	DESCRIPTION	ABOVE BUSHLINE	RIVER CROSSING	ROUTE FINDING	AVAILANCHE RISK
Avalanche Peak – Crow River (RG5)	2 days shuttle required	Climb over an 1833 m peak, follow a ridge and descend a steep scree slope to Crow Valley. Out via Waimakariri River flats.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mingha – Deception (RG6)	2–3 days shuttle required	Cross the Southern Alps main divide at Goat Pass. Long sections of riverbed travel. Good hut near the pass.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lake Minchin (RG9)	3–4 days	Add onto the Casey Saddle – Binser Saddle tramp. Stay at Casey or Poulter Hut and make a day tramp up to the lake.	No	Yes	Yes	No
Harper Pass (RG11)	4–5 days	Historical east-west route over a Southern Alps pass, involves riverbed travel.	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

Trips suitable for highly experienced trampers only

7–10 hours each day
Suitable for well-equipped and experienced back-country trampers only.
Often difficult country – which may involve rock scrambling, bush bashing or crossing alpine passes with snow.
Many unmarked routes – map-reading and route-finding skills essential.
River-crossing skills essential.



NAME (Route Guide number)	TIME ONE WAY/LOOP	DESCRIPTION	ABOVE BUSHLINE	RIVER CROSSING	ROUTE FINDING	AVAILANCHE RISK
Waimakariri Col (RG2)	2–3 days	High-level Southern Alps crossing requiring ice-axe and crampons, and alpine skills.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Harman Pass – Taipo River (RG3)	3–4 days shuttle required	Southern Alps crossing with long river valleys to east and west. There are many river crossings, and alpine skills are necessary.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Three Passes (RG4)	4–5 days	East-west traverse over the Southern Alps over Harman, Whitehorn and Browning passes, ice-axe and crampons are required.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Temple Col (RG6A)	2 days shuttle required	High-level route from Arthur's Pass to Goat Pass. Finish via either the Mingha or Deception River.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Edwards River – Otehahe River (RG7)	2–3 days shuttle required	Easy tramping up the Edwards; slow tramping on a very rough route in the Otehahe	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Edwards – Hawdon via Tarn Col (RG8)	2–3 days shuttle required	Two alpine passes with tarns, steep creekbed travel.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Minchin Pass – Townsend Creek (RG9)	3–4 days shuttle required	Remote tramping in the east of the National Park, steep creekbed travel.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

- Purchase a route guide at DOC in Arthur's Pass or Christchurch, or download from www.doc.govt.nz
- Talk to a DOC ranger to get the latest information about your proposed tramp
- Do not go alone
- Do not go after heavy snowfalls
- Take a personal locator beacon

Be informed, plan and prepare for the trip before you leave home

Tramp within your level of experience

Know the risks and be responsible for the decisions you make