

DERBYSHIRE DALES

Great views, great driving

We've done quite a few roadbooks in the Derby Dales, but only a couple of the tracks in this route have ever appeared in *TOR* before. That's a measure of how many rights of way there are around here, and while many are well surfaced, a few are extremely technical. You'll find a bit of both here, along with some glorious scenery, village shops and wayside pubs - making for a great day out for driver, navigator and passengers alike





IS IT SUITABLE?

TYRES	Road tyres a hindrance, especially when wet
WEATHER	Avoid in snow or fog
LOW BOX	Essential
SOFT-ROADERS	Not suitable
SCRATCHING	Occasional risk in summer
DRIVING	Some pretty gnarly terrain
DAMAGE	Sills and bumpers could be hurt

OUR DISCO

The Discovery we used for setting out this roadbook was built in association with Extreme 4x4. The company supplied a variety of its products including longer-travel suspension, heavy-duty bumpers and underbody protection, as well as a winch and snorkel. For more info, go to www.extreme4x4.co.uk or call 01255 411411

ROUTE GUIDE

START	Birchover (SK 237 621)
FINISH	Monsal Head (SK 184 715)
DISTANCE	39.85 miles
TIME	4-5 hours
TERRAIN	Rolling dales, steep at times
HAZARDS	Extreme terrain
	Other users
	Tricky road junctions
OS MAPS	Landranger 119 (Buxton and Matlock)
	Explorer OL24 (Peak District White Peak)

1

0.0

SK 237 621
 Start in Birchover, outside the Red Lion on Main Street. Zero your trip with the pub on your left and set off heading east

5

2.05

2

0.1

UPPERTOWN LANE

6

2.3

3

0.35

SK 234 617

7

3.05

Turn right for Matlock on the A6 then immediately after the traffic lights left for Chesterfield and Two Dales on the B5057

4

1.6

8

3.7

SK 284 632
 As you climb the hill, you'll see a short row of terraced cottages raised up from the road on the left. Your turning is immediately after this – it looks like a driveway to start with

9

3.86

A tricky rock crawl leads into a very serious side slope. Approach with care...

Step 9: This is quite some track. First, there's a deceptive axle-twister that's tightly enclosed between trees. Then comes a rock-crawl the likes of which is rarely seen in Britain. Finally, a major washout creates a long and very steep side slope





10 4.25		
11 4.55		
12 4.8		Follow the road as it swings left up the hill – don't go into the woods on the right
13 5.25		
14 6.0		SK 295 666
15 6.45		

USING OUR ROADBOOKS

Total Off-Road's unique roadbooks guide you through the British countryside on a mixture of surfaced and unsurfaced roads. The tracks we use are public rights of way, either Byways Open to All Traffic or Unclassified County Roads, all of them commonly referred to as green lanes.

NAVIGATION

We've deliberately made it as easy as possible to follow the route, using a mixture of instructions, tulip diagrams and grid references. We normally only include junctions at which you have to make a turning or don't have right of way, so just stay on the main road or take the most straight-ahead option unless we tell you otherwise.

If you're unfamiliar with six-figure grid references, you'll find a guide to using them on the legend of any OS map. Our aim is for you to be able to do the route without maps, but we do recommend having them.

SAFETY

The symbols on the first page of the roadbook advise you of how suitable it is for your vehicle. These are just guidelines, however. We'll warn you of any hazards or difficult sections, but the nature of any green lane can change quickly. Wet weather can make a huge difference to the conditions underfoot, and what's wide open in winter can be tightly enclosed and scratchy in summer. The responsibility is yours!

Our roadbooks are designed to be safe to drive in a solo vehicle, and are largely suitable for standard 4x4s on road tyres. We do recommend travelling in tandem wherever possible, however. The risk of getting stuck can be greater than it appears – and if you break down, having help at hand can make the difference between it being inconvenient and downright dangerous.

RESPONSIBILITY

Irresponsible driving is a massive problem on green lanes. In particular, you must always stay on the right of way. Never drive off it to play on the verges or surrounding land, even if you can see that someone else has; doing so is illegal and can be tremendously damaging, both to the land and to 4x4 drivers' reputation.

The fact that you can see where it's happened shows how much harm it does. It's no excuse to say you're just following where another driver has already been. Most green laners have taken to videoing anyone they see behaving like this and passing the evidence to the police, which shows how much anger there is towards the criminal element.

Elsewhere, simple common sense and courtesy should be your watchword. The do-and-don't list below should always be in your mind, but keep your speed down, be ready to pull over for others and make it your aim to show the world that 4x4 drivers aren't the hooligans they think we are.

ANTIS

Anti-4x4 bigotry does exist, but it's less common than you'd think. By and large, it's limited to organisations who just want to get the countryside all to themselves.

These organisations are beyond being reasoned with, but it's rare to encounter real hostility even from their rank-and-file members. If you're friendly towards the people with whom you share the countryside, the vast majority will respond in kind. There are always bad apples, but no more so than anywhere else.

Likewise, most local residents will accept your presence if you're driving sensibly. What suspicion you do encounter is likely to be from people worried that you're there to steal from them, so be ready to offer a word of reassurance. Once satisfied that you're not after their quad bikes, their mood will lighten.

It only takes one vandal to tarnish a person's view of all 4x4 drivers, and once the damage is done it tends to be permanent. But if enough of us resolve to be ambassadors, it might make a difference to the way we're perceived by society in general.

DO'S & DON'TS

- Keep your speed right down
- Pull over to let walkers, bikers and horse riders pass
- Don't travel in large convoys: split into smaller groups to avoid hassling others
- Leave gates as you found them
- Don't drop litter
- Don't go back to drive the fun bits, such as mud or fords, again
- Scrupulously obey all closure and voluntary restraint notices
- Don't cause a noise nuisance, particularly after dark
- Ensure you have a right to be there. We research the routes on our roadbooks very carefully, but the status of any route can change without notice
- Be prepared to turn back if the route is blocked, even illegally
- If you find an illegal obstruction, notify the local authority
- If someone challenges you, be firm but polite. Stay calm and don't get into a slagging match
- Stick absolutely scrupulously to the right of way
- You have as much of a right to be there as everyone else. Which of course means they have as much right as you



Step 20: After passing through the Chatsworth Estate, an unlikely looking left turn takes you through Edensor village

16 7.2		SK 287 680
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17 7.55		The track ahead is gated
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18 8.45		Slow past the farm as the track gives way to tarmac
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19 8.9		Shortly after this you'll be on the main road through Chatsworth Estate. Caution the whole way
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20 10.4		SK 251 700 This is still in the estate, a little way after the turning for Chatsworth House itself. When you see the village and church on your left, get ready to turn left over a cattle grid next to a very imposing gatehouse. Dead slow the whole way up here
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21 10.8		
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22 11.5		
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23 12.3		SK 225 697
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24 12.5		
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25 12.6		ZERO TRIP
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26 0.25		Hathersage B6001 Hassop Calver
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27 1.0		
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28 3.3		SK 236 735 Caution - the turning is on a crest, and traffic behind you won't know what you're doing. Lose your speed well in advance, and indicate early
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29 3.65		Turn right through the gate towards a black corrugated iron shed	33 2.1		SK 212 750
30 4.45		Caution – this is a main road ZERO TRIP	34 2.75		
31 0.25		There's a fuel station to the right at the crossroads (and another kind of fuel station on the left just before it, if you've got a sweet tooth...) 	35 3.05		
32 0.9		Turn left up the hill by the Moon Inn 	36 3.55		

Step 29-30: After turning right and passing a black corrugated iron shed, follow the track as it winds back and forth on the way down a long hillside with what looks like the whole of Derbyshire laid out in front of you





Steps 42-43 & 45: There's a tangible sense of history in Eyam. On the way up the hill afterwards, there's a tangible sense of it being steep



37

3.75

38

3.95

43

6.55

HAWKHILL ROAD

39

4.7

Chesterfield

A623 (A619)

Stoney

Middleton

Calver

44

6.7

SK 216 768

40

5.0

SK 195 761

Turn left for Foolow then immediately right on the track

45

6.8

41

6.2

46

7.1

42

6.4

47

7.6

SK 209 777

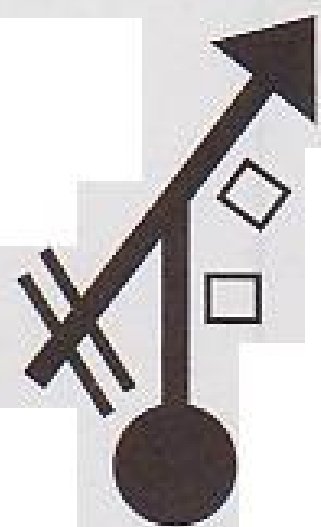
Don't take the track on the right at the 90-degree left-hander, even though it's signed as a byway. Instead, slip out on another byway a few yards later

48 7.75			56 2.75		SK 144 769
49 8.05			57 3.45		
50 8.4			58 3.65		SK 133 764 Turn left then right on the track signed Pennine Bridleway
51 9.45			59 4.05		
52 10.9		ZERO TRIP	60 4.4		SK 137 752 Follow the track ahead signed Limestone Way
53 0.05			61 5.75		
54 1.2					
55 1.8		<p>Coming through the centre of Tideswell, you'll see a kind of village square on the right with the Co-Op next to it. Just after this, the road bends right at the Nat West then left again. As it does so, turn right – proper right, almost over your shoulder, where there's an ancient sign to Manchester that you'll not see until you've turned</p>			



62

6.4



Caution – visibility over your left shoulder is absolutely terrible

Step 71 (above): Follow the well surfaced track up the hill; where it splits in two, fork left around the tree to follow the edge of the field ahead, following the wooden sign for Upper Dale

Step 72 (below): The descent is long, rocky and deceptively steep, and if the surface is wet it'll be very slippery. You're likely to encounter walkers on the way down here, too

63

6.95



SK 134 731

Keep it slow on the way up the hill – you won't see the track until you're on it. There's no sign, but it's the only track off to the left on this section of road so you won't miss it so long as you're taking it easy. It's semi-surfaced the whole way to the next junction



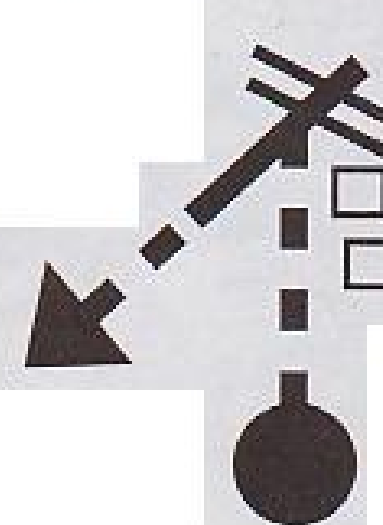
64

7.2



65

8.0



Brushfield

67

9.4



66

8.4



68

9.5



69 9.65		Dead slow through the farmyard
70 9.7		The road turns into a track as you go through the double gates by the last house
71 10.2		Where the track splits, go to the left of the tree then follow ahead along the edge of the field, following the sign for Upper Dale
72 10.8		Get into low box nice and early for the descent, which is quite steep and rocky enough to have many 4x4s breaking traction at times
73 11.0		
74 11.1		After the gate, follow round the corner and into a steep descent
75 11.15		
76 11.15		
77 11.3		<div> Mondal Head Car Park Toilets ½ mile </div>
78 11.9		Pull in to the Monsal Head car park for the end of the route

