

Route(s)	Arrochar Alps
Elevation(s) (ft/m)	<b>Beinn Narnain</b> (ft/ 926m) <b>Beinn Ime</b> (ft/ 1011m) <b>Ben Vane</b> (ft/ 916m) <b>Ben Vorlich</b> (ft/ 943m)
Date(s)	August 1 2020
Partner(s)	Single and solo! <i>And doing just fine!</i>
Elevation gain/loss (ft/m)	+/- 8,372ft / 2552m
Distance (miles/km)	14.3 miles/ 23.01km
Total time (hours/mins)	9h 9m
Equipment	Light pack, some layers, 4.5L of water, lightweight poles.
Weather Forecast	Partially cloudy and sunny. Winds of up to 20/25km per hour on Mountain Weather Forecast but BBC said possible rain.
Weather Actuality	Short bout of rain but enough to put on waterproofs briefly! <i>Let's be real... it's Scotland!</i>
Flora/Fauna	N/A
Wildlife	Lots of people!!
Starting Point/Trailhead	Succoth parking off A83
Trail Conditions	The initial start from Succouth is a little brushy and wet down lower but once out of the trees it improves a little. Not really boggy so that is good! A little bit of steep rocky section up higher, that I thoroughly enjoyed, just before the summit of Beinn Narnain. From Narnain to Ime there is a decently clear path down to the bealach and from there a solid path up to the summit of Ime. Walking off Ime towards Vane started with a path that gradually became fainter and then disappeared into wet grassland. Essentially no path between Ime and Vane. From Vane there is a path off the east side where it intersects with a road and that road leads up to the path up Vorlich which is very defined and not too muddy.
Objective Hazards	Maybe some rocky bits but, honestly, I don't think I'd really count those. That being said, I slipped in the mud a couple times! <i>So, anything could be a hazard if you're a bumble!</i>
Grade/Rating	Walking
Accommodations	N/A
Tourist Attractions	N/A
Motto for the day	N/A <i>Haha nothing I can share! But my inner monologue is a mean drill sergeant of a bitch!</i>

<b>Day 1</b>	
<b>Daily 1 Distance</b>	+/- 8,372ft / 2552m
<b>Daily 1 Elevation</b>	14.3 miles/ 23.01km
<b>Day 1 Daily Time</b>	9h 9m
Rise and Shine	6.00am
Depart Home	6.45am
Depart Car	8.11am
Beinn Narnain	9.49am
Beinn Ime	10.55am
Ben Vane	12.59pm
Ben Vorlich	3.39pm
A82 pickup (S of Inveruglas)	5.20pm
<b>The Story</b>	



*Starting totem!*

Honestly, for a lot of these walks there just isn't that much to tell! Aside from my crazy inner monologue which would be too hard to fully encapsulate in words, and probably not wise to put in writing...they have been fairly tame of late.

I've been trying to get fitter, and after the Glenshee run was feeling a bit better and wanting to keep up the momentum, so I figured I'd go over to Arrochar on a fairly decent weekend and give their Munros a go. It seems most people do the four Munros in pairs or in single shots. But I looked at the Steven Fallon webpage which discusses linking up the four in the area and figured I'd give it a go. His website says if you are running them you can do it in 3.5 hours but walking takes about 10 hours (for about 15 miles and 8,000ft of gain... *umm that does not sounds like your standard walker!*). Taking that with a massive grain of salt I told Kyle as we drove out there to expect 10-12 hours, but I'd keep him updated with texts as I went. We arrived at the Succouth parking lot just after 8.00am and there were already almost no parking spots. Luckily, Kyle was just dropping me off, so we pulled in, I threw my boots on, turned on the GPS, got everything sorted and took-off without much fanfare. I was in that state of looking forward to being out in the hills but also not fully embracing the amount of effort it would take. Happily, I'd tried this before! A few months prior I'd attempted this same route and made it a decent way up before encountering snow and a solid wind that made me retreat. *Live to fight another day and all that.* So, with that prior knowledge I generally knew where to find the path and got going without any issues. I felt like I was moving at a decent pace. I surely was sweating enough to suggest that!

As I ascended, I had an ipod shuffle Kyle had dug up the night before to keep me company. I had no idea what to expect music wise, but it was fun to have. I briefly paused near another gent who was also on his way up and we exchanged a few words about the path. I told him not to follow me as it was essentially my first time past this point, and he said he'd never been either. I waved and headed off. I later saw him pause at a point where I'd

taken a slightly different and lower path (*wrong move! It was the boggier way!*) and I hoped he took my advice seriously and didn't go the same way I did! The last bit up to the summit was rocky and I was pleasantly surprised to have it mixed up and made a little more interesting! There was a rock outcropping with a cairn that I made my way over to (it is not the true summit) but an excellent place to take in the views. You can see a good way down the way the path took. When I walked over to the summit cairn I noted the time as 9.49am. I was pleasantly surprised that it took about an hour and a half. Wanting to roll with the momentum I began to walk off but decided it was breezy enough, combined with my sweat drenched clothing, to warrant a jacket. So, I filled up my shoulder water bottle, grabbed a protein bar and my jacket before skipping off down towards the bealach between Narnain and Ime. I had a real good upbeat, techno song mix going on and it made it fun to skip along.

The path down to the main trail was pretty clear and in good repair. Once down to the bealach there is a much larger, very well-maintained path that goes up Ime. I stopped there to take off my jacket (prepping to let the body breath off the imminent heat and sweat!). Between Narnain and Ime it took me just over an hour. But as I finished the last part up to Ime the clouds rolled in and I was walking in almost a mist. It had that feeling of deja-vu. It had that look of so many other Munro paths I'd followed on misty, cloudy days. It honestly could have been any of them. When I topped out, I tagged the summit – I usually try to mark it with my GPS – and then sat down to have a bit of my sandwich. The few bits of dry protein bar I had previously just weren't quite hitting the spot at the moment. I briefly spoke with a few other people, but all said and done, I don't think I was there for more than ten or fifteen minutes. As I was getting ready to pack up and move on so was another couple. I heard the guy mention his hands were cold and turning white. I looked over and they did look fairly white. I told them I thought I had my spare pair and considering the pair I was wearing were thin, unraveling ones I'd be happy to just give them to him for the walk out. As soon as I said it the girl with him turned and said "Oh no! He needs to learn his lesson!". *Damn girl!!* But that was their deal! I was still feeling generally put together, so it was time to get going. *Just keep moving! Roll when the momentum is there!* I followed a faint path off the far side of Ime, but it petered out lower down. No point in faffing about, I just headed off in the direction of Vane. My GPS had a "path" marked, but it wasn't actually there. I hadn't really expected it to be. I encountered more people than I thought in the space between, which made it a bit surprising there was no path. It was middle tier bog. I wasn't sinking in bad, but it was enough to get your boots wet with a couple hops across a river. I just accepted my feet were probably going to get wet and got on with it.



*To be clear - the GPS said I was standing right on the path/trail. Let me know when you find it!*

As I started the ascent up Vane the weather started getting darker and windier. The slopes were grassy and wet in sections. And just in case there wasn't enough moisture around, it started to rain. The rain alone wouldn't have been much of a bother, but with the wind blowing it quickly into my person, I knew it'd take way less time to become sopping wet. I weighed my options a) press on and hope for the best and worst case scenario I could put on my spare warm leg layer and waterproofs or b) be responsible and take a little time to put on the waterproofs now. I opted to be responsible. I ended up making a couple stops on the way up for various reasons. Another point I had my pack off and was focused on that when all of the sudden out of nowhere a

woman was standing about five meters from me. I jumped and made some squeaking sounds! Honestly, I had no idea where she came from! Its not like there are any trees or anything to obscure visibility! We briefly exchanged words on the route then she took off towards Ime. Apparently, I was the only one doing the route counterclockwise. *Figures*. This ascent, without a path felt more tiring. And the ipod shuffle died on the descent off of Ime so no more music to motivate!

The rain didn't last and by the time I made the summit it had started to blow over. *But for a moment there it had begun to feel a bit like a choose-your-own-aquatic-adventure! Was going to get wet from the sweat, the bogs, the rivers or the rain! Destiny!* I stopped to have a bit and fill up my chest strap bottle. I sent a message to Kyle to let him know I'd made the third summit and asking what he was up to. I started off the top and enjoyed the little bit of rocky moves. Partway down I had to stop and take off my waterproofs because I was just way too hot. The descent was chock-a-block full of people. I felt like it took me a while to make it down, but all said and done it was about an hour from the summit down to the road. As I neared the road, I messaged Kyle and had a brief call with him. He said he was just tee-ing off. Ugh. I'd been waffling on whether or not I wanted to do Vorlich. I was pretty sure I could do it, but the lazy part of me wasn't so enthused. My inner monologue coming off of Vane was in a real drill sergeant bitch mode because I knew I was considering not doing Vorlich. Some of the things rolling through my mind were along the lines of "What a princess! Just do it!" And "You think you're hungry, earn your food bitch!". *Honestly, real motivational speaker material.* But once I heard that Kyle was just starting golfing, I knew I wanted him to finish his game and not be rushed. So, I told him I'd probably go for Vorlich but if I got really lazy, I'd just meet him in Inveruglas. But really, there was only one thing for it so, I turned my feet towards Vorlich.



I stopped a couple on their way out and asked them what the path was like going up Vorlich. At first, I hadn't been able to pick it out from Vane but on the descent, I was able to locate it and it looked descent and well-travelled, but that doesn't always mean anything. The gal gave me a sympathetic look and told me it was good but not that muddy. I thought it was sweet or her to mention that as if I didn't look like I was a complete mess already. I just wanted to know if it was easy to follow or if it was a choose your own wet grassy slope type of deal. Turns out, it starts with paver steps and it is well defined. There were some muddy parts but compared to almost every other Munro it wouldn't be considered boggy in the least. I made slow but steady progress upwards. Most people seemed to be on the descent. Figured, the day was getting on. I exchanged words and jokes with a few people and one guy yelled at me "The force is with you!" and it made me chuckle! *Well okay. All set then!* I really started sucking down the water on this last ascent but topped out at 3.39pm. I briefly took in the views, restocked my food and water situation, and dropped Kyle a message to let him know where I was. I told him I thought it'd take me two hours (ish) to get down to Inveruglas and then turned and burned. I kept thinking of what I was going to have for dinner. I

had different meal options dancing around in my brain. It took me about an hour to get from the summit back down to the dam road. And about forty minutes from there to get back to the A82 road. I was pleasantly surprised to find Kyle waiting at the pull off! I thought I would have to find my way into Inveruglas to the visitor centre he said he'd be at. But no! Clever lad found the walk out point and was waiting for me there. I made quick work of stripping off my layers and putting on my courtesy-change outfit. As I pulled my boots off, I noticed my water-logged feet were looking a bit nasty and Kyle just laughed at me. I hadn't even really noticed. Fairly typical I suppose. And because he spoils me something fierce, he had a bag of crisps and a drink waiting or me too! And that folks concludes a nice day out in the hills!

