

Mt. Hood, OR

Vicinity Location:

The trailhead is about 49 miles southeast of Portland, Oregon in the Mt. Hood National Forest.

Directions:

From Portland take I-84 East to the Wood Village, exit (16A). Head south and turn left onto NE Burnside Rd. Heading East, Burnside will merge into Highway 26. Follow Hwy 26 to Government Camp. Turn left onto the road to Timberline Lodge.

In winter, it is required to carry chains or have traction devices. The road to Timberline requires chains during much of the winter.

A wilderness permit is not required within the Timberline ski and recreation area. There is a free self-registration for a climbing permit at the Wy'East Day Lodge on the lower level.

Bathrooms are available at the Wy'East Day Lodge or at Timberline Lodge.

Permits are required to park here seasonally. No parking permit is needed during the summer. An Oregon

Sno-Park permit is required to park in the winter (Nov. 1st -thru- Apr. 30th). You can use California and Idaho Sno-Park permits in Oregon. You can use Oregon Sno-Park permits in California and Idaho. You CANNOT use a Washington Sno-Park permit.

You can see avalanche forecasts here: Northwest Avalanche Center

National Weather Service Snow Level forecast: Northern Oregon Cascades

Length and Elevation:

6 miles roundtrip, Elevation gain and loss totals 7,000 Feet

Trail:

None, with connections to the Timberline Trail #600, and overlapping with the Pacific Crest Trail #2000

Trail Maps:

Topo Map

History:

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Mount Hood (called Wy'east by the Multnomah tribe), is a stratovolcano. The last major eruption was 1781-1782 and a more recent episode ending shortly before the arrival of Lewis and Clark in 1805. The most recent minor eruptive event occurred in August 1907. The mountain was given its present name on by Lt. William Broughton, a member of Captain George Vancouver's discovery expedition. Lt. Broughton named the mountain after a British admiral, Samuel Hood.

The Multnomah name for Mount Hood is Wy'east. Legend says the name Wy'east comes from a chief of the Multnomah tribe. The chief competed for the attention of a woman who was also loved by the chief of the Klickitat tribe. The anger that the competition generated led to their transformations into volcanoes, with Wy'east becoming Mt. Hood, the Klickitat chief becoming nearby Mount Adams, and the target of their affection becoming Mount St. Helens. Their battle was said to have destroyed the Bridge of the Gods and thus created the Great Cascades of the Columbia River.

Safety Advice:

This review is not meant for climbing Mt. Hood. It is meant for day-hiking in good weather to the top of the Palmer chair lift at 8,500' and up to 9,600'. White out conditions can rapidly create zero visibility from blowing snow or surface level clouds and snow can fall any day of the year. Complete disorientation can follow and it is easy to walk the wrong way, or over a dropoff. Be sure to have a working compass. The compass bearing back to Timberline Lodge from Illumination Rock is about 183 degrees from true north, 166 degrees from magnetic north. From the saddle at N45°21.945' W121°42.051' it is 193 degrees true north, 175 degrees magnetic north. Know the weather forecast for the day before you leave and look to the south, west, and north to check for incoming weather every 15 minutes or so.

Logistics:

Mt. Hood is a technical climb. There are no trails leading to the summit. Only climbers in good physical condition who have received technical training and with complete mountaineering gear should attempt this climb. Summer rockfall and avalanches greatly increase above 9,600'. If you later decide to climb Mt. Hood, it is best climbed between May and July. This avoids avalanche dangers early in the season and rockfall and the Bergschrund in the summer and fall.

Review: March 22nd, 2008

At 11,239 ft (3426 m) high, Mt Hood is the highest mountain in Oregon and it is the 4th highest volcano in the Cascade mountain range. It's visibility and beauty make Mt. Hood a very popular destination. This can lead to traffic jams on the Highway 26. When the ski resorts are at their peak, traffic back to Portland on Highway 26 can come to a near standstill between 4 and 5pm. A vehicle crash can shutdown the highway at any time.

Plan to arrive fairly early in the busy weekends of summer and winter. From the parking lot, pick a route and start walking uphill. I like the views from the southern side of the slope. On a clear day you have uninterrupted views of Mt. Jefferson and the Three Sisters. The Silcox Hut is about 900 feet above the parking lot. This hut was built for climbers of Mt. Hood but now it can be rented out for parties. Off to the south are views of White River and the Highway 35 bridge across White River. This river made the news in 2006 when a glacial outburst washed thousands of cubic yards of sand, silt, and rocks filling the river channel and burying Highway 35.

Remember to keep an eye on the weather and descend if you see clouds rolling in. Further up the mountain you will want to head north to get a good view of Illumination Rock, a jutting spire of rock. You can walk to the saddle of illumination rock for great views to the north. From there, walk south to another saddle at just under 9,600' in elevation. Take a break and enjoy the view of the Steel Cliffs directly east of the saddle. You will certainly see climbers going up or coming down from the summit or the skiers schussing down the mountain. In summer, skiers are on the slopes of the Palmer Icefield until about 1 in the afternoon.

Head down to one of the lodges for a well deserved snack. If you have enough energy, walk around in the lobby of Timberline Lodge and admire the workmanship of the handcrafted items.

Enjoy the photos!!

Gallery Pics

Switchback Steve