



How to Hike Happy

Altitude Awareness

Boulder is 5,430 feet above sea level and, as you might imagine, the air is a little thinner up here. To help avoid altitude sickness – typified by headaches, nausea and fatigue – make sure to drink more water than usual, curb your alcohol consumption and protect yourself from the sun.

Sunscreen

Cover yourself with sunscreen and bring a hat. Boulder is a mile closer to the sun than the sandy beaches on the coast, which means it's easier to get a sunburn up here.

Water and Food

Our climate is very dry, and it's easy to get dehydrated. Drink often, even if you don't feel thirsty. Be sure to take plenty of water with you whenever you are hiking. Bring along an energy bar or two in case your energy level drops or you spend more time on the trail than planned!

Care for Colorado

Picking flowers, collecting rocks and picking berries may not seem to be a big deal, but it means others won't have a chance to enjoy them. With millions of people visiting Open Space and Mountain Parks, the less impact we each make, the longer we will enjoy what we have. Learn more at bouldercoloradousa.com/cc.

Stick to the Trail

Traveling on the trail leaves room for wildlife and their homes. Shortcutting trails causes erosion. Be ready to get muddy and step right through puddles. Boots dry overnight; plants take years to recover.

Share Our Trails

We all enjoy the outdoors in different ways. Pay attention, expect to encounter others and be courteous. Yield to all.

Dogs

On most trails, visitors can walk their dogs on leash. If dog guardians wish to walk their dogs off leash, they must be registered in Boulder's Voice and Sight Tag Program. Learn more at voiceandsight.org.



Visit Boulder, The Convention and Visitors Bureau

2440 Pearl St. Boulder, CO 80302

800.444.0447 | 303.442.2911 BoulderColoradoUSA.com

City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks

303.441.3440 • osmp.org

BOULDER HIKING GUIDE



Summer Weekend Hiker Shuttles

Full details at BoulderHikerShuttles.com



Chautauqua Park to Park Shuttle

Ride the free weekend shuttle to get to Chautauqua stress-free and to avoid parking fees. Simply park for free at one of five downtown parking garages, CU Regent lot or New Vista High School, and then hop on the shuttle.

Operates Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day

- FREE pickups every 20 minutes
- Saturdays and Sundays, 8am–8pm (plus holidays)
- Dogs, strollers and gear welcome

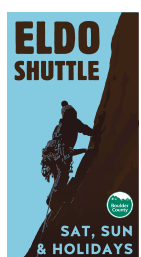


Hessie Trailhead Shuttle

Ride to several popular hiking trails in the Indian Peaks Wilderness where parking is scarce. Take a bus from Boulder to the shuttle: Ride the RTD Bus Route NB from the downtown Boulder station to Nederland High School (free on days the Hessie shuttle operates).

Operates late May to early October.

- FREE pickups every 15 minutes
- Pickup at Nederland High School
- Fridays 6am–6pm, Saturdays 6am–8pm and Sundays 6am–6pm (plus holidays; hours at hessietrailhead.com)
- Leashed dogs welcome
- Bikes are not allowed



Eldo Shuttle

Eldorado Canyon State Park requires timed-entry reservations on summer weekends and holidays. Ride the free shuttle to bypass the reservation system (park pass required). Pick up the shuttle from the CU Regent lot or one of the other stops shown on the map.

Operates Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day

- FREE pickups every 20 minutes
- Saturdays and Sundays, 8am–7pm (plus holidays)
- Bikes (3 per shuttle), climbing gear, leashed dogs and strollers welcome

A valid state parks pass is required for those 16 and older to enter the park. Bring your annual pass, purchase a day pass at cpwshop.com or bring \$4 exact cash.



Bustang to Rocky Mountain National Park

Catch the Bustang at Table Mesa Park-N-Ride and cruise from Boulder to the RMNP Park-N-Ride on Bear Lake

Road. A valid park pass (nps.gov/romo) is required to ride the shuttle into RMNP — but bus riders do not need a timed-entry reservation. Bus tickets are \$5 each way and must be purchased in advance.

Operates late May to early October.

Schedules and info at BoulderHikerShuttles.com.

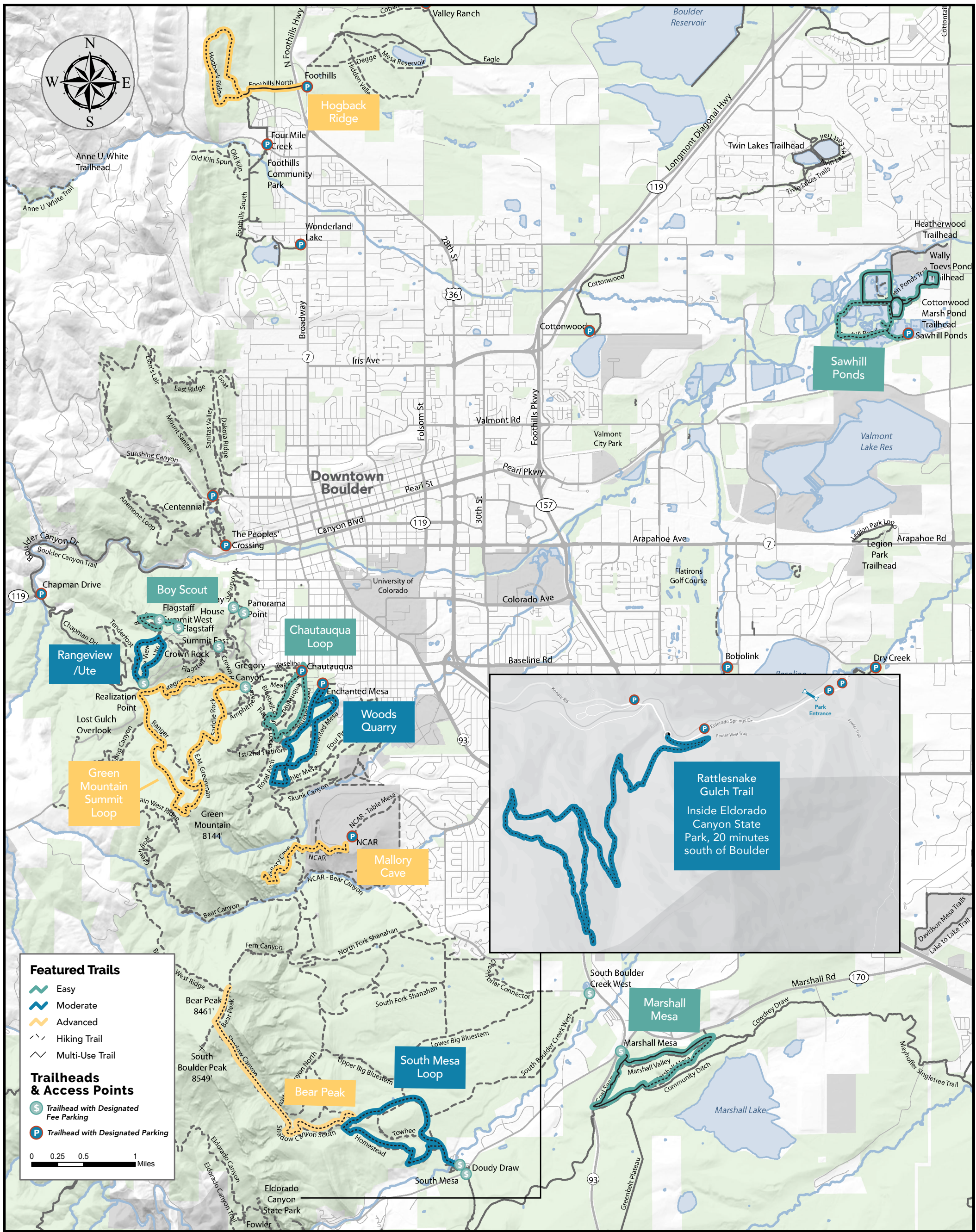
BOULDER HIKER SHUTTLES

CHAUTAUQUA PARK
PARK TO PARK SHUTTLE

ELDORADO CANYON STATE PARK
AND SELECT SOUTH BOULDER TRAILHEADS

HESSIE TRAILHEAD

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK
BUSTANG



How to Find Accessible Trails

Boulder's outdoor beauty is available to all. Find 30 trails suitable for people experiencing disabilities and personalized hand-cycle tours available at AccessibleOSMP.org.

Go for a Winter Hike

Enjoy fewer hikers, bright-blue skies and the occasional quiet blanket of snow. Snow cleats recommended.



BOULDER

HIKING GUIDE

Before you hike, check for trail closures at boulder.colorado.gov/services/osmp-closures.

KEY

Dogs allowed (on leash)



Wheelchair Accessible



Parking Fee



Also Open to Bikes



Restroom



Fishing†



Great for Winter Hiking



Served by Park to Park Bus

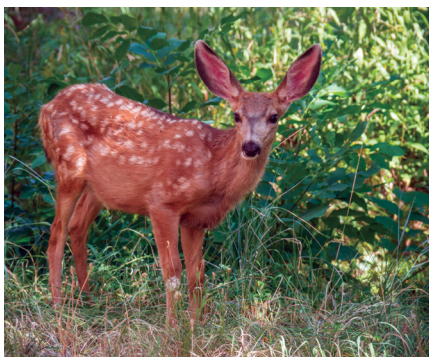


Served by Eldo Shuttle



The Chautauqua Trailhead and Eldorado Canyon State Park are very popular areas. On summer weekends and holidays, you can avoid the congestion, and Eldo's reservation requirements, by taking a free shuttle to these locations. See more information on reverse.

† Must have a valid Colorado fishing license. Learn more at cpw.state.co.us.



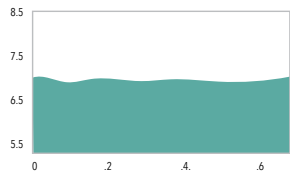
Boulder's Outdoor-Loving Legacy

From its earliest days, Boulder has been a city that's appreciated its beautiful natural surroundings. In 1896, the Boulder-Colorado Sanitarium, considered something of a health sanctuary and spa, opened at the base of Boulder's mountains with trails outside its back door. It drew guests who retreated into the piney hills for exercise, fresh air and sunshine. In 1898, the Colorado Chautauqua was built at the foot of the red rock formations known as the Flatirons. It was a family retreat created in the tradition of national Chautauquas of the time, focusing on culture, music and nature. In 1967, Boulder became the first city in the U.S. to tax itself to acquire funds to be used specifically for the acquisition, management and maintenance of open space.

Boulder continues to passionately protect some 45,000 acres of unspoiled open space, which visitors can access via 300 miles of hiking and biking trails. We welcome you to this outdoor playground.

EASY

Boy Scout Trail



This easy-to-moderate, family-friendly hike has forest-framed views and boulder-strewn terrain with a breathtaking lookout at May's Point. It becomes a fantastic kingdom of rock castles and trees for kids to scramble over, climb on and hide

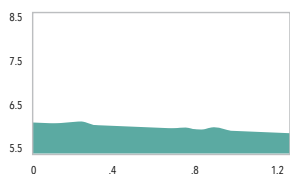
behind. Take a brief detour on the Sensory Trail, where signage will instruct you to smell the bark of a ponderosa pine, listen for birds of prey or take a seat to "rest and remember family and friends." The trail entrance is located across from the Flagstaff Nature Center, great for children and typically open June–Sept., Fri–Sun, 10:30am–4pm (subject to volunteer staff availability).

Directions: Use Google Maps for navigation to parking at "Flagstaff Nature Center." The trail starts directly across the street from here.

Cars not registered in Boulder County must pay a \$5 parking fee at the parking lot.



Sawhill Ponds

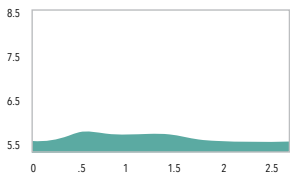


Sometimes you need a bit of distance from the mountains to fully take in their grandeur. This peaceful spot east of town is perfect for that purpose, with unfettered vistas of the Flatirons and the massive peaks beyond – all reflected in a collection of 18 ponds. This area was a gravel mine in the 1960s and 70s. The ponds are now protected wetlands and a bird-watching hot spot (especially in March when waterfowl migrate through). The trails are flat, easy, wheelchair accessible and replete with wildlife in every season.

Directions: Use Google Maps for navigation to parking at "Sawhill Ponds Trailhead."



Marshall Mesa Loop



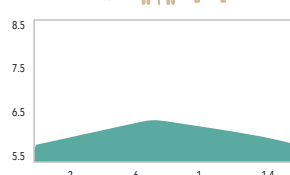
Traverse a wide-open landscape south of town that's as rich in coal mining history (explained by excellent interpretive signs) as it is with Flatirons views. The land preserves a rare remnant of dry tall-grass prairie where wildflowers bloom through spring, summer and fall. The geology of this area is particularly special, with rippled rocks showing evidence of ancient seas and visible fractures resulting from the upthrust of the Rocky Mountains.

Directions: Use Google Maps for navigation to parking at "Marshall Mesa Trailhead." This trail is served by the Eldo Shuttle on weekends Memorial Day–Labor Day. See reverse for information.

Cars not registered in Boulder County must pay a \$5 parking fee at the parking lot.



Chautauqua Loop



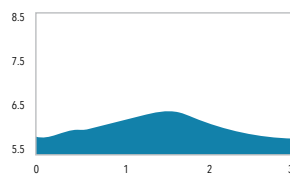
It's easy to see why this is Boulder's signature hiking area: Snap a photo in front of the iconic Flatirons and then hike right up to these spectacular, slanting slabs of sandstone (say that five times fast!). As you start out on the Chautauqua Trail, you'll find that the hike is steeper than it appears, so take your time. The trails wind in and out of pine forests and grassy meadows. Stop to smell a fragrant ponderosa pine trunk, have a seat on a sun-warmed boulder and admire the city views below.

Directions: Use Google Maps for navigation to parking at "Chautauqua Trailhead." See reverse for information on the Park to Park shuttle, available weekends Memorial Day–Labor Day.



MODERATE

South Mesa Loop



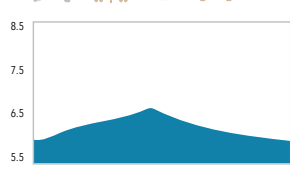
This hiking area is known for its historic homestead vestiges and a landscape that's a pleasing mix of rolling meadows and hilly pine forests, loaded with wildflowers and birds. The adventure starts right away, as you cross two bridges over the clear, babbling South Boulder Creek. In the springtime, keep your eyes peeled for domestic irises, planted by homesteaders over 100 years ago.

Directions: Use Google Maps for navigation to parking at "South Mesa Trailhead." This trail is served by the Eldo Shuttle on weekends Memorial Day–Labor Day. See reverse for information.

Cars not registered in Boulder County must pay a \$5 parking fee at the parking lot.



Woods Quarry Trail

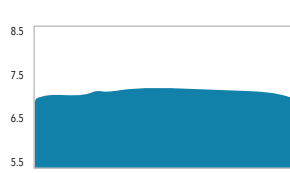


Discover an old stone quarry where large sandstone slabs have been rearranged into an outdoor living room by a few creative folks. Bring a picnic to fully enjoy this unique spot. Start on Bluebell Road, then take the Mesa Trail to a fork, then go right on Woods Quarry. After enjoying the scenic viewpoint, head back down on the loop to pass by a mysterious, old stone cabin.

Directions: Use Google Maps for navigation to parking at "Chautauqua Trailhead." See reverse for information on the Park to Park shuttle, available weekends Memorial Day–Labor Day.



Range View/Ute Trails



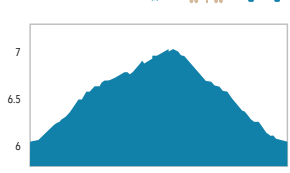
On the hunt for a cool and shady hike? Range View Trail is just the ticket, looping through quiet stands of Douglas fir, ponderosa pines and junipers. The moderate terrain and incredible views westward to the snowcapped Indian Peaks Wilderness, and some of the tallest peaks in Colorado, make this a lovely hike for all seasons. You can return the way you came, or make it a loop on the Ute Trail.

Directions: Use Google Maps for navigation to parking at "Realization Point."

Cars not registered in Boulder County must pay a \$5 parking fee at the parking lot.



Rattlesnake Gulch Trail



The dramatic, striated walls of Eldorado Canyon State Park are just 20 minutes south of Boulder. Rattlesnake Gulch is one of the park's signature trails that will take you past spectacular views of the canyon and Colorado's eastern plains in the distance. You'll also pass the remnants of the historic Crags Hotel, which was built in 1908 but burned down in 1913. Continue on to the Continental Divide Overlook, and have your camera ready. This is a lollipop trail with unique features to capture your imagination.

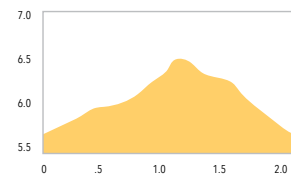
Please note, state park entry fees are required. Check for trail closures at cpw.state.co.us before you go.

Directions: Use Google Maps for navigation to Eldorado Canyon State Park. The park is very busy and has limited parking on weekends. When parking is full, cars are turned away. See reverse for information on the Eldo Shuttle, available on weekends Memorial Day–Labor Day.



ADVANCED

Hogback Ridge Trail

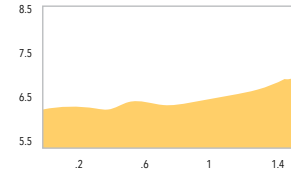


You'll begin on the Foothills North Trail and head west for about a half mile before joining with Hogback Ridge, a challenging but rewarding loop trail in less-trafficked north Boulder. Pass through fields of swaying tall grass and delicate wildflowers in summer, as you soak up views to the east and south. You'll pass some intermittent springs, stands of fragrant ponderosa pine, and the remnants of the 1990 Olde Stage Fire as you huff and puff your way through nearly 800 feet of elevation gain. There is very little shade on this trail, so be sure to wear a hat and sunscreen.

Directions: Use Google Maps for navigation to "Foothills Trailhead."



Mallory Cave Trail

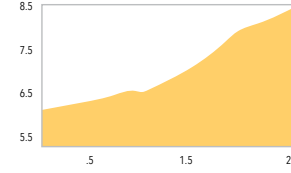


Mallory Cave Trail is one of several in a network that leaves from the parking lot of the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR). You'll start off on the Walter Orr Roberts Weather Trail, where interpretive signage will illuminate weather and climate facts about this part of Colorado. After dipping through a valley, the terrain becomes more demanding as you head up the mountainside, encountering spectacular views and red sandstone formations. The last section to the cave is only open Oct.–March – and it's a serious scramble. The cave is guarded from human entry with a rather artfully designed iron gate, which helps protect a rare colony of bats from the risk of fungal infection.

Directions: Use Google Maps for navigation to parking at "NCAR."



Bear Peak

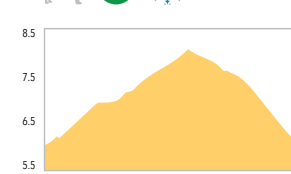


With an 8,461-foot summit and views of Longs Peak from its summit, Bear Peak is a legitimate mountain climb (so prepare accordingly), yet it is conveniently accessed right within Boulder's city limits. There are several access options. This shorter (yet steeper) South Mesa Trailhead option starts off on Mesa Trail and connects with Shadow Canyon South, which is cool, shady and tucked down in a canyon. The final stretch is a scramble to the exposed summit at 8,461 feet. Peak baggers can pop over to the adjacent South Boulder Peak (at 8,549 feet) to get a two-for-one.

Directions: Use Google Maps for navigation to parking at "South Mesa Trailhead."



Green Mountain Summit Loop



At 8,144 feet, Green Mountain is the third-tallest peak in Boulder's mountain backdrop. You will leave from the Gregory Canyon Trailhead and take your loop in the direction of either Gregory Canyon or Saddle Rock. Both are strenuous climbs up the cool and shady north side of the mountain through lush forests and beside seasonal trickling streams. After the final lung-busting stretch, you'll be rewarded by 360-degree views and, in summer, swarms of butterflies. This mountain climb is a serious endeavor, so prepare accordingly.

Directions: Use Google Maps for navigation to parking at "Gregory Canyon Trailhead."

Cars not registered in Boulder County must pay a \$5 parking fee at the parking lot.



Photos, left to right: Rich Grant, Wendy Marie Stuart, City of Boulder, NOAA ESRL, Nina B/Shutterstock.com, Jonathan B. Auerbach, Emiliano Lake-Herrera, Dave Sutherland, Phillip Yates, Ann G. Duncan, Ann G. Duncan, Dave Sutherland, Gwen Gray, Emma Zilber (emmazphotography.com), Erin Byrne, Tracy Schaeffer, Andrew Magill-Flick Creative Commons, Rich Grant