

Guidance/Crib sheet for Caterpillar walk descriptions

To be used primarily by Walk organisers and leaders but also useful to all members as a guide to what to expect on walks and what information should be available from walk organisers

Walk Categories

Category	Example Characteristics
Easy/Leisurely	<p>Likely to be less than 6 miles but may be longer if terrain very straightforward, e.g in a level urban environment</p> <p>No more than 3 hours walking. Walk will be at a relaxed pace, with time to rest and at places of interest. The distance is relatively short and gradients generally easy.</p>
Moderate	<p>Up to 10 miles depending on precise characteristics. Some challenge in ascent/descent but not throughout walk. Terrain may require walking boots and sticks to ensure full comfort and safety. Some physical challenge in the form of stiles, narrow paths and slopes which may require additional care.</p> <p>Whole route manageable within 5 hours.</p> <p>Likely to involve a mixture of surfaces including woodland paths, fields and footpaths as well as areas of mud or slippery surfaces (particularly after rain) but all likely to be along defined routes with established access.</p>
Challenging	<p>Expect at least 10 miles with frequent stops. Although expected to be on defined and accessible routes there will be some challenging terrain and/or physical obstacles, and/or rough paths. The pace of the walk likely to be brisk in order to complete the planned distance. Participants will be reasonably fit and used to regularly walking over 10 miles and for 5-8 hours in a day.</p>

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Characteristics to be taken into account and Information provided when planning and describing walks

Characteristics - all don't necessarily apply - nor exhaustive	Include also, where relevant, in walk description
Distance in miles/kilometres	Contact number of leader - for communication beforehand and on the day
Likely ascent/descent in metres/feet and frequency of ascent/descent	Travel options to the walk including Public Transport and Car Parking. Encourage car sharing and meet ups on public transport. Include Postcodes and Grid references and more specific details for journey and access where helpful.
Terrain - urban, rural, pastoral or wild, hills/mountains, bogs or marsh, fields, tracks, footpaths, surfaced roads, any scrambling or uneven surfaces, likelihood of mud or other wet areas covered.	Expected pace of walk - given conditions, time of year, terrain, distance and time available. Expected likely timings for slowest expected on walk.
Consider whether Terrain and walking challenge impacted by the weather immediately before or on the day.	Refreshment options. To bring? What is likely to be available during the walk and at end of walk. What pre-arrangements or plans have been made for refreshments and stops on the walk? Likely availability of toilet facilities
Any likely physical obstacles - number and difficulty of stiles, any stepping stones	Transport options at beginning, during (to break walk) and at end of walk.
Likely exposure of the walk, is it likely to be on open ground high up with little shelter, for example.	"If in any doubt about suitability contact walk organiser beforehand"
Clothing , Footwear and pole assistance requirements	Provide at least a summary of the route - precise start point (or start options and joining up arrangements), key locations on the route and a precise end point.
Contact Information	Ask Caterpillars to notify the walk leader beforehand if they intend to come on the walk. This is to ensure that contact can be made to relevant Caterpillars in the event that there is a change of plan for the walk or it is cancelled (e.g due to bad weather). The leader may also want to advise on particular transport issues that may apply (e.g. train engineering works). The leader should provide appropriate contact info to Caterpillars for contact with the leader on the the day, e.g. a mobile phone number.
Safety responsibilities	All Caterpillars attending walks are expected to carry appropriate ID and emergency contact details. Whilst the Caterpillar club does have contact information of members this cannot be relied upon in an emergency as it is unlikely to be complete or up to date. Caterpillars are always responsible for their own safety whilst on walks, and have a general responsibility of care to other members and the environment around them. However, leaders do need to ensure that they manage potential safety risks for any walking group and ensure that the walking group is aware of potential dangers and advise the group on appropriate actions, e.g. directing the group collectively and with safety when crossing or following busy or otherwise dangerous roads, or crossing farmland with animals.