



Thames Path: Putney to Richmond walk

Tree lined Thames Path past Hammersmith and Kew with many riverside pubs.



Length 9.3 miles (15.0 km) over all weather paths with no ascent. About 3.5 hours walking time. The north bank is 2km longer due to river curves and inland diversions

Map OS Explorer 161 - London South (or Google Maps)

Toughness 1 / 10 (flat, hard, all weather surfaces)

Features This walk follows a pretty section of the Thames Path as it winds through west London. It passes 10 bridges, 8 of which you can cross. You can choose between north bank (wealthy suburbs with riverside pubs) and south bank (more rural) paths between each bridge.

The walk can be done in either direction, both Putney and Richmond have a nice selection of riverside pubs and cafes. There are also many along the way, especially on the north bank.

You can cross 8 of the bridge you come to, just going to the middle for the view, or alternating from side to side if you wish. Only 2 of the 'sides' need be avoided due to inland detours around missing sections of riverside path - see directions below. The 2 you cannot cross (marked in the directions) are Richmond and Kew Railway Bridges.

The south bank path in particular is wide and easy walking - you'll make good time. The north bank path has a better selection of pubs.

This makes a fine winter walk - best to do it without stopping to make the most of the winter sunlight, and eat at the end.

Walk [SWC.261](#) follows the north bank from Barnes Bridge to Putney, and visits Chiswick Park which is about 500m 'inland' from the river.

Travel

Putney Bridge (tube) is on the District Line. Putney (rail) has regular trains to Waterloo

Richmond is on the District Line, and has regular trains to Waterloo

The walk passes several tube and train stations, and many bus stops.

Drivers should note that most areas are in 'CPZ'. Check online first using Google Maps Streetview to look at parking signs. Weekends should be OK, south bank and west better than north bank and east (except around Richmond). Weekdays would be very difficult to find parking. There are regular direct trains from Putney (rail) station to Richmond to return to your car.

Eat

Far too many riverside pubs and cafes to mention them all. Mainly on the north bank, with a gap from Kew Bridge to Richmond. A few are mentioned in the text.

Near Putney Bridge

- [Putney Pantry](#) (church cafe), and behind it, The Rocket (Wetherspoons, cheap, riverside terrace), both by Putney Bridge (south bank)
- Bishop's Palace has a garden cafe (north bank)

Near Richmond Bridge

- [The White Cross](#) - pub with riverside terrace in Richmond

Attractions

By Putney Bridge

- St Mary's Church, Putney, and All Saints Church, Fulham, at either end of Putney Bridge. Free.
- [Fulham Palace](#) - former residence of the Bishop of London. Nice gardens and garden cafe. Free. Pretty Building. Interior less so.

Between Hammersmith and Barnes Rail Bridge (north bank)

- [Emery Walker Trust](#) - museum in the home of a friend of William Morris and nearby [William Morris Society](#) - a small, free museum in his home. North Bank, after Hammersmith Bridge.

Near Kew Bridge

- [Water and Steam Museum](#) - Victorian water and sewage pumping engines, north bank, near Kew Bridge. Recommended if you like industrial heritage.
- [Kew Gardens](#) - large well known botanic gardens (entrance near Kew Bridge, south bank), recommended, 2 for 1 entry with (paper) train ticket
- [Syon Park](#) - riverside stately home with gardens, HHA, recommended (north / west bank)

Bridges

- Putney Bridge is a grade II listed 1886 stone / granite arch bridge, widened in the 1930's. It is unusual in having a church at either end (both worth visiting)
- [Hammersmith Bridge](#) is an elegant 1884 grade II listed suspension bridge. Its currently open to pedestrians only due to structural problems.
- Barnes Railway Bridge was built of cast iron in 1849. It was replaced by a wrought iron bridge in the 1890's, with a pedestrian walkway. This was due the collapse of a cast iron rail bridge ([the Dee bridge disaster](#)). The original bridge is still there but unused, but there are plans to reopen it as a 'greenway'.
- Chiswick Bridge is a concrete arch bridge faced with Portland stone
- Kew Railway Bridge is an 1863 grade II listed wrought iron lattice girder bridge. No pedestrian access
- Kew Bridge is 1903 grade II listed stone bridge with long low arches.
- [Richmond Lock Footbridge](#) is an elegant grade II listed 1994 bridge. It can be crossed in daylight. It is closed at night
- Twickenham Bridge is a concrete bridge, with art deco touches.
- Richmond Railway Bridge is a 1848 cast iron (later rebuilt in steel) grade II listed truss arch bridge. No pedestrian access.
- [Richmond Bridge](#) is a grade I listed 18thC stone arch bridge, and London's oldest surviving Thames bridge. In the early 20thC it was widened, with the original stones being numbered and replaced.

Thames Path

This walk is part of the Thames Path [\[wikipedia\]](#) [\[National Trails\]](#) - a 184 mile national long distance path - that follows the Thames from its source in Kemble to the Thames Barrier at Charlton in SE London. There is an unofficial 10 mile south bank extension on to Crayford Ness.

It follows the river's historic towpath where possible. In a few places, nearby paths are used instead as towpath sections do not match up where

former "horse ferry" crossing have been lost. Through London, and on to the sea, there are north and south bank paths.

Help Us! After the walk, please leave a [comment](#), it really helps. Thanks!

You can also upload photos to the [●● SWC Group on Flickr](#) ([upload your photos](#)) and [videos to](#) [YouTube](#). This walk's tags are:

By Car **Start** SW6 3UH **Finish** Richmond

Help National Rail: 03457 48 49 50 • Traveline (bus times): 0871 200 22 33
(12p/min) • TFL (London) : 0343 222 1234

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Walk Directions

#0 Putney Railway Bridge to Putney Bridge - 0.3km

South Bank (recommended - an extra bridge and riverside pubs)

From **Putney Bridge tube station (District Line)** : turn left outside the entrance and take a narrow path alongside the tracks down to the river. Cross the river on the railway bridge path, then turn right, soon passing a Wetherspoons and a church, towards Putney Bridge.

North Bank (recommended)

From **Putney Bridge tube station (District Line)** : go straight on towards Putney Bridge

#1 Putney Bridge to Hammersmith Bridge - 2.5km

From **Putney train station** (to/from Waterloo) : turn right, and walk along the main road, past shops and cafes, to the bridge.

South Bank (recommended - more rural)

- St Mary's church is by the bridge. A couple of pubs with riverside seating are behind it.
- Pass the Start and Garter pub.

- Follow the riverside path, past a nice suburb, then rural (passing the London Wetlands Centre), then another wealthy suburb

North Bank (recommended - Bishop's Palace and Park)

- All Saints church is by the bridge.
- Pass Bishop's Palace (former home of the Bishop of London). Free entry. Nice grounds and garden tea room.
- Pass Bishop's park, an urban park, with toilets and a park cafe (The Tea House at Bishop's Park)
- Pass Craven Cottage, Fulham's football ground (short inland detour to be replaced summer'21 by a riverside path)
- Follow the wide pedestrian embankment
- Just before Hammersmith Bridge are the Blue Boat (pub) and Riverside Studios (art complex, probably with a pub/cafe to come)

#2 Hammersmith Bridge to Barnes Railway Bridge - 2.5 km

South Bank (recommended - more rural)

- A mostly rural tree lines section

North Bank (recommended - elegant suburbs and riverside pubs)

- A paved riverside path past expensive houses, with some short sections with no river view.
- The Blue Anchor and Rutland Arms are busy pubs right by the bridge
- Pass Furnivall Gardens (urban park), The Dove (pub), and the William Morris Society (museum)
- Pass the Old Ship (pub) and Upper Mall (park)
- Pass Emery Walker Trust (museum) on a short stretch with no river view
- Pass Chiswick Eyot (island) and the Griffin Brewery (pub)
- Pass Dukes Meadows (a park)

#3 Barnes Railway Bridge to Chiswick Bridge - 1.2 km

There are actually 2 bridges. The original one (unused, it was replaced after a bridge of similar design failed, but there are plans to make it a "green way"), and the current one which has a pedestrian footbridge.

In 2023, a new section of path opened on the North Bank - a bridge over the river but under the railway bridge. This saves a 500m out-and back diversion inland on the north

bank towpath.

South Bank (recommended)

- A quiet wealthy suburb, passing the White Hart (a well known jazz music pub)

North Bank (recommended, rural apart from short inland detour at finish)

- There is a short inland detour at the start, but a riverside walkway is currently (2021) under construction to avoid it
- A rural path alongside Dukes Meadow, with a short inland detour at the end

#4 Chiswick Bridge to Kew Bridge - 1.7 km

This section passes Kew Railway Bridge with **no pedestrian path.**

South Bank (recommended)

- A pleasant semi-rural section

North Bank (not recommended - streetwalking with no views)

- 2 sections, first 100m then a longer 800m section of pavement walking along a busy road with no river view - about half the total

#5 Kew Bridge to Richmond Lock - 3.4 km

There's an entrance to Kew Gardens near Kew Bridge

South Bank (recommended)

- A pleasant rural section passing Kew Gardens and Old Deer Park (golf course), but you can't see either because of trees.

North Bank (avoid - interesting at first, then a long inland detour)

- After a riverside stretch, there is a detour along following the start of the Grand Union Canal. Check for recent path improvements as the result of new buildings.
- Then there is a long 1km inland detour on a quiet road around the perimeter of Syon House, a large country house (worth visiting, its in the Historic Houses Association).
- The end of it, through Isleworth, has lovely river views - its on the 'outside' of a long curved section with far reaching views over Isleworth Ait (island). There's another short inland detour.
- Its actually worth doing the south bank path, then walking back from Richmond Lock towards Isleworth for the view

#6 Richmond Lock to A316 Bridge - 0.4 km

This is a short stretch, either side is fine

#7 A316 Bridge to Richmond Bridge - 0.6km

Avoid crossing the A316 Bridge, although safe (pavement), its a busy trunk road

This section passes Richmond Railway Bridge, which has **no pedestrian access**

South Bank (recommended)

- Pretty with riverside bars. This section sometimes floods for a short while at very high tides

North Bank (OK)

- Inland, with restricted river views

Richmond

Richmond is an upmarket suburb with fine houses and expensive cafes, pubs and restaurants.

From the Bridge, turn left, follow the road past the shopping area to the station. There are quieter streets and a green to your left.

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