



# Salisbury to Amesbury via Stonehenge Walk

A walk up the Avon valley with a magical approach to Stonehenge

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**Length**     **25.4 km (15.8 mi)** for the full walk, including Salisbury Cathedral and Old Sarum and with lunch at The Wheatsheaf Inn at Lower Woodford.

There are several options for shortening the walk – see Walk Options below.

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**OS Maps**     Explorer 130 or Landranger 184 (but some paths are not shown on the latter).

Note: The main walk directions are comprehensive but the OS map (or GPS device) is particularly recommended for the short cut option across fields into Amesbury, which has not been fully checked on the ground.

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**Toughness**     6 out of 10; less for the shorter options. It is a long walk but with only gentle inclines.

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**Features**     This superb walk has no major climbs but covers beautiful rolling countryside and farmland with spring flowers in April and May and fields of golden barley and wheat in high summer. You have an evocative and magical approach to Stonehenge across Salisbury Plain. After passing close to the site the route takes you down the original approach used by the Druids–The Avenue–as you set off on the final leg to Amesbury and a bus back to Salisbury city centre.

There is a lot to see on this walk and what you choose to do depends very much on your interests and how far you want to walk or travel.

The ancient city of [Salisbury](#) has a fascinating history and the [Destination Salisbury](#) website provides information about its festivals and events.

If you wish to visit [Salisbury Cathedral](#) this is best done before you start the walk, but you will have a long day ahead of you. If you want to spend time in the city and visit the Cathedral but do not want a long walk to see Stonehenge then you could combine sightseeing with a short walk to visit the [Old Sarum hill fort](#) (£4; English Heritage members free) in the afternoon (for details see Walk Options below).

You get excellent views of [Stonehenge](#) from outside the site. If you wish to visit the site itself you now have to book tickets in advance on-line even if you are a National Trust or English Heritage member. You could walk to the new visitor centre (a three mile round trip to the west of the site) but you may find that there are no more tickets available for the day.

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## Walk options

### Shortening the walk

**Direct Route with lunch in Upper Woodford: 22.6 km (14.1 mi).** This omits any visit to Salisbury Cathedral, no visit to Old Sarum and by-passes Lower Woodford to have lunch in Upper Woodford instead.

(i) Add about 0.7 km for a visit to Old Sarum.

(ii) Add 2.3 km (1.4 mi) for the loop to have lunch in Lower Woodford.

### Shortcut to Amesbury

This route means you only get a long-distance view of Stonehenge.

(i) With lunch in Upper Woodford - **20.0 km (12.5 mi).**

(ii) With lunch at the recommended pub in Lower Woodford **22.2 km (13.8 mi).**

### Extending the walk to include Woodhenge and Durrington Walls (adds 3.5 km, 2.2 mi)

Explore **Woodhenge**, an atmospheric Neolithic site of six concentric rings of timber posts (nowadays imagined by low concrete posts), thought to have once supported a ring-shaped building and **Durrington Walls**, the largest complete henge in Britain, in its nature an enclosed valley.

### Taking a taxi or bus to Old Sarum

You could shorten the walk by up to **5.1 km (3.2 mi)** by starting the walk from Old Sarum. Either take a taxi from the station or catch the X5 or Activ8 bus from Blue Boar Row in the centre of Salisbury to the Old Castle bus stop, a journey of just 10 mins. For the X5 there are 2 buses an hour on Saturdays but hourly on Sundays. The Activ8 also has two buses an hour on Saturdays but just one every 80-90mins on Sundays. To get to Blue Boar Row from the station approach go down Fisherton Street which merges into Bridge Street and then swing sharp left with the road now called Minster Street. Blue Boar Row is then first on your right. You need bus stop N.

### Cathedral visit, city sightseeing and a short walk

If you would rather go sightseeing in Salisbury and not do a walk to Stonehenge then you can walk to Old Sarum from Salisbury **4.3 km (2.7 mi)** and either walk back the same way or catch a bus from Old Sarum. Depending on how much sightseeing and walking you do you can do a short walk of say between 4 and 8 miles.

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**Transport** There are 2 trains an hour from London Waterloo (hourly on Sundays). The return buses X4/X5 or Activ8 run from the A 345 in the centre of Amesbury, twice an hour on Saturdays but only hourly on Sundays. The journey time is from 17 mins with a 10 minute walk to the station. The fare is £4,20 (10/17).

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**Suggested train** To get to the recommended lunch-time pub in Lower Woodford at about 1.30pm then you will need to catch the 9.20am train. Take the 9.50am train if you are not going to visit Old Sarum.

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**Lunch and Tea** The recommended pub is the **Wheatsheaf Inn, Lower Woodford (01722 782 203.)** The pub is 10.7 km (6.7 mi) into the walk and you should reach it by about 1.30pm. The pub serves food all day and offers simple food at affordable prices as well as a more expensive menu.

An alternative pub is the **Bridge Inn, Upper Woodford (01722 782 323)**. This is more of a gastro-pub but only serves food until 2.30pm and the pub closes at 3pm, not re-opening until the evening. It has a lovely garden with tables overlooking the river Avon and if you check with the pub (and buy some drinks) you may be able to use this as a picnic area after they have stopped serving food. If you want to eat here then you will need to by-pass Old Sarum and keep up a steady pace to get there by 1.45-2.00pm. This pub is 13.4 km (8.3 mi) into the walk. Parties of more than 6 should book ahead.

The 17<sup>th</sup> Century **Black Horse Inn, Great Durnford (01722 782 270)**, groups please call ahead) is a walker friendly pub reached a little later in the walk. It stops serving food at 2pm (Sat) / 3pm (Sun), but is open all afternoon for drinks. However it does add about another 500m there and back to your onward route.

**Important Note.** Currently there are no cafe or toilet facilities at the actual Stonehenge site. These have been relocated to the new visitor centre away to the west. There are therefore no places to get a drink or snack after the pubs listed above until you reach Amesbury, so make sure you bring something for the long afternoon leg of the walk.

There are many places for refreshments in the centre of Salisbury. **The Mill** public house is recommended but it is very busy on summer evenings.

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**Help Us!** After the walk, we would love to get your [feedback](#)

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**Photos** Upload your photos to the [SWC Group on Flickr](#), and [videos to YouTube](#). This walk's tags are:



By Car Start: [SP2 7RS](#)

Finish: [Amesbury, Wiltshire](#)

Help National Rail: 03457 48 49 50 • Travelline SE (bus times): 0871 200 2233 (12p/min) • TFL (London) : 0343 222 1234

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## Walk Directions

1. A) Salisbury Station to Old Sarum (5.1 km, 3.2 mi)
2. Turn left out of the station, walk down the station approach road to turn right and go down Fisherton Street on the right hand pavement. Turn right in 150m along a narrow tarmac path, just before crossing over an arm of the River Avon. In 160m turn left along Crane Bridge Road at a T-junction and in 170m cross the main arm of the Avon. In another 130m you reach a four-way junction with High Street where you have a choice. [!]
3. **To visit Salisbury Cathedral:** turn right along the pedestrianised High Street, and in 100m you come to the Cathedral. Retrace your steps to continue the main walk.  
**To continue without a visit to the Cathedral or to catch a bus to Old Sarum:** turn left along High Street and in 130m reach a four-way junction with Fisherton Street.
4. **[To catch a bus to Old Sarum:** Turn right past a Caffé Nero as Fisherton Street becomes Silver Street. This soon swings sharply left and becomes Minster Street. Where Minster Street forks you take the right fork to join Blue Boar Row where you will find the relevant bus stop.] Cross Fisherton Street and continue in the same direction past St. Thomas a Becket church on your right to turn left and follow the riverside path which is also a shared cycleway alongside the Avon River, across several minor roads and under road bridges. After 1.5 km where the path bears sharp left and before it turns into a gravel path, turn right across the river over a wide wooden footbridge with Five Rivers Leisure Centre in front of you.
5. **[!]** Once over the bridge immediately turn left along a well worn footpath with the river now on your left. This is the Avon Valley Nature Reserve. (Do **not** follow the footpath sign to Stratford sub Castle – that path is uninteresting – though you rejoin it later). Follow this path for 1 km ignoring paths off to the right for higher ground, until the path itself swings right and regains the cycleway.
6. Turn left along the cycleway to soon emerge onto Stratford Road where you turn right (The Golden Way). Cross this road as soon as it is safe, passing a thatched stone cottage on your left to take an ancient enclosed trackway ahead of you (The Portway) to Old Sarum.
7. In high summer you may find this pathway overgrown and possibly partially blocked by fallen bushes. You can walk in the large open grassy area beyond the bushes just to your right, keeping the pathway immediately to your left.

8. If you stay on the pathway continue straight past the 'William Pitt Stone' which indicates the rotten nature of the borough. Ignore a path to the left to continue for 300m to pass through a gap in the hedge still straight ahead uphill. You ignore another path to the left and go towards the main road ahead of you. About 100m before the main road turn left through a hedge gap and cross a grassy field diagonally uphill to its far corner 90m away, where you turn left along a car wide track (National Cycle Network 45) and in 70m go through a wooden gate.
9. Here you have a choice - visit Old Sarum, or take the direct route avoiding it (section B2).
10. B1) Visit the Old Sarum settlement and continue the walk from there.
11. This adds about 0.7-1.0 km to the walk depending on how much exploring you do.
12. Bear right and in 40m sharp left up the tarmac approach road into the car park of Old Sarum where there are a shop, refreshments/snacks and public toilets. (Those coming by bus from the city centre could meet the group here).
13. There are notice boards with details of the site and its ruins. Walk around either side to visit the old Cathedral ruins before descending to the north west.
14. To the north west of the old Cathedral is a dip in the embankment and a causeway crossing the ramparts. Take this and descend to the outer rampart where you turn right passing through a wooden gate. After approximately 200m turn sharp left and descend the steep grassy bank to a stile onto the road running east - west clearly visible below you.
15. This is a very steep descent and potentially slippery so you could also walk a little further along the outer rampart to find a slightly less steep slope and then walk diagonally back to a second available stile onto the road.
16. At the road turn right and after either one or two hundred metres (depending on which stile you crossed), you meet the Wiltshire Cycleway (NCN 45) and turn left on this track heading northwards. Pick up onward route at point [1] below.
17. B2) Direct route – Old Sarum to Keeper's Cottage (2.2 km, 1.4 mi)
18. If you do not wish to visit the Old Sarum settlement and save some time (and possibly your knees!) do not turn left on the tarmac approach road but instead turn right immediately ignoring a gate on your left leading to an uphill path. Continue down the road and in 50m where it turns sharply right you follow a footpath sign to your left to go through two wooden gates and continue down an enclosed path.
19. Continue on this path where in 400m you reach a road which you cross to go along NCN 45 ahead of you going northwards.
20. **[1] Both B1 and B2 routes continue**
21. You continue ahead on this wide track for the next 1.7 km when after descending for a short stretch you reach the small, thatched **Keeper's Cottage**.
22. Here again you have a choice, the via the recommended lunch pub route, or the direct route (Section C2)
23. C1) The route to the recommended lunch-time pub The Wheatsheaf Inn in Lower Woodford and then to Salterton Farm.
24. This is a very pretty route and The Wheatsheaf serves food all day unlike The Bridge Inn at Upper Woodford:
25. Turn left (south-west) down The Avenue, a wide tree-lined driveway, to pass Little Durnford Manor. Cross a minor road and pass through a white painted gate (operated by a green button) to snake past Home Farm, with a lovely view behind you when crossing the River Avon.
26. Continue on this private road (sometimes there is a single bar metal barrier gate across this driveway). In a further 200m and 10m before a small stone bridge, descend from the road to go through a white painted

- wooden swing gate on your right hand side into a field beside a stream on a permissive path.
27. Continue in a north, north west direction, crossing the stream by a footbridge and several stiles until you meet a minor road. Go half right here and walk for 1 km along this road (beware of potentially fast traffic) to reach The Wheatsheaf Inn.
  28. **[To avoid the road walking** (this adds 140m, more if you go to The Wheatsheaf Inn): cross the road a little to the right and walk through a hedge gap with a footpath signpost into an arable field, where you turn right along its boundary. In 140m walk through a boundary gap into the next field and veer left along a usually well-cleared path through it towards the corner of a wood (20 deg). In 170m cross a grassy car wide track and continue in the same direction through a smaller field. In 70m leave it through remnants of tree trunks and continue along the left hand wood boundary and with fenced paddocks on the left. Continue in the same direction for 570m, through a couple of gates and electric fences, to a four-way footpath junction by a large farm on your left. Turn right down along a tarmac lane and in 260m turn right at a road T-junction. In 30m turn left to cross the road and continue over a cattle grid and along a gravel driveway in front of a large house and then across the River Avon by several footbridges (The Wheatsheaf is a further 300m along the road).]
  29. After lunch turn left out of the pub taking the road northwards for 0.3 km until you reach a footpath sign on your right, pass over a cattle grid and along a gravel driveway in front of a large house and then across the River Avon by several footbridges. At the end of the track which gradually ascends to a road, turn left and after 30m take the farm track half right past Salterton Farm buildings. (Here you pick up at [Section D] below.)
  30. C2) The Direct Route - Keeper's Cottage to Salterton Farm (1.3 km. 0.8 mi)
  31. This cuts about 2.5 km from the walk. At Keeper's Cottage, continue straight on gently uphill on a wide track through open fields for 800m. [!] The path then sharply narrows to go through a wooded area where you soon meet the Monarchs Way running east-west. (There is also a path across the fields ahead of you).
  32. You turn left here (west) to traverse the hillside on a narrow path with a fence to your left all the way down to Salterton Farm.
  33. D) Salterton Farm to The Bridge Inn, Upper Woodford (1.9 km, 1.2 mi)
  34. **Both C1 and C2 routes continue.**
  35. At Salterton Farm, take the farm track right up the hill past the farm buildings on your right and where the track swings sharp right at Eddie's Bench "A seat for you to sit and ponder..." you take the footpath to your left. Keep the field edge on your left and you soon reach a tubular steel gate to then traverse the hill down through woods. (Take care here as the path can be a little tricky in places especially when it's wet).
  36. Eventually you reach a minor road, where you turn right, to progress through the hamlet of Netton. You ignore three turnings off to the right and pass a number of thatched cottages to eventually reach a T-junction after 1.3 km at Woodford Bridge. Turn right at the T-junction to reach The Bridge Inn, an alternative if a little pricey lunch stop and with restricted opening times.
  37. E) The Bridge Inn to the start of the short cut to Amesbury (5.6 km, 3.5 mi)
  38. Continue past The Bridge Inn to go along the road for 200m. Ignore a footpath to your left and in a further few metres turn right with a footpath sign down a gravel drive past Shepherd's Close House. Follow the track round past horse paddocks. Ignore all tracks off to private houses.
  39. Eventually the track turns into a muddy lane and a grassy path heading north east. After 1.5 km ignore a footpath to your left to then drop sharply with the path down to the river where there is a wooden bridge across to the village of Great Durnford and the Black Horse pub.

40. **Possible detour to the Black Horse pub.** Although the pub closes in the afternoon it is worth a short detour to see the mill, gardens and some pretty cottages in the village. The Black Horse is a small, quirky country pub 100m along the road to the left in Great Durnford. Retrace your steps across the weir to rejoin the main route.
41. The onward route does not cross the river. It continues gradually uphill in a northerly direction, crossing a tarmac driveway, and reaching a minor road after 800m. To your right this road drops down into the village of Lake, but you cross the road half-left to a two-armed footpath sign, and head due west along the top of the field on a path alongside a beautiful wooded hillside This is the beginning of the bronze age landscape, a special part of the walk. (A more modern phenomenon is Sting's country mansion and remnant of a large man-made lake away to your right.)
42. The path traverses the wooded hillside which used to house a bronze age village settlement. The path turns right down to the road alongside a wire fence. At Lake Bottom, the name of the area, turn left along the track past the ruins of a small well house where the path turns gently right. Follow this very wide byway for 1.5 km all the way to Springbottom Farm.
43. With Springbottom Farm buildings in front of you take the path to the left, immediately passing a barn on your right. After 150m bear right along a very broad grassy track with horse paddocks either side. You are heading northwards.
44. After about 1.5 km on this track in a beautiful open landscape, Stonehenge appears magically on the horizon. Here there are information boards about the area. Just beyond these you go through a wooden farm gate where you have a choice: to get closer to Stonehenge and then the long route back to Amesbury or take a short cut to Amesbury (see [F2] below).
45. F1) Getting closer to Stonehenge and then the long route back to Amesbury (6.6 km, 4.1 mi)
46. The recommended route to get closer to Stonehenge is to turn left (west) through a wooden kissing gate to continue along a permissive path. In 400m you walk through another wooden kissing gate to reach a T-junction where you turn right on a byway. In 600m you reach a very busy main road (the A303) which you need to cross with great care (and patience!).
47. After negotiating the main road you continue ahead along the wide byway where in 700m you cross the former access road to the Stonehenge site, now around 150m to your right.
48. Cross the former access road and continue ahead along the dirt track. In 60m you ignore a wooden gate on the right (a fenced English Heritage permissive path that has no exit into the Open Access Land through which our route continues) and rightcontinue down the track. In another 60m you turn right through another wooden gate into Open Access Land and follow a fence on the right.
49. Behind the fence and beyond the tarmacked drop-off area for the shuttle buses, Stonehenge and crowds of people are visible just 100m away to your right.
50. [!] In 130m you veer right towards Stonehenge and head for a single standing stone 150m away and with Stonehenge a further 25m beyond this. At the stone (which is just beyond the fenced permissive path) you turn sharp left directly away from the standing stone and Stonehenge to go down a faint wide track in a shallow depression heading East North East. This is The Avenue – the original route of the Druids.
51. You are going gently downhill across a vast field with trees in the far distance ahead of you. In 600m you reach a cross paths with a clear grassy track (an 18<sup>th</sup> century road) crossing from east to west. You continue ahead with a field boundary fence now in view 200m ahead and away to your right.
52. In 150m the faint track starts to swing right (by an information board on your left) and you follow this towards a field gate 80m ahead of you. Go through the gate with a footpath arrow on it. Keeping to the direction of the arrow you continue ahead gently uphill on no clear path. Your onward route is to head for the middle of a

- gap between two clumps of trees some distance ahead of you. (To further help position yourself later on you should see a cattle trough and feeding station in the field 50m away to your right.)
53. After 400m as you near the top of the long gentle incline you should see a field fence and a gate ahead of you in the middle of a gap between two clumps of trees. Head for this gate and when you reach it look back and enjoy the superb views of Stonehenge and the ancient landscape around you. On the other side of the fence there is also an information board.
  54. Go through the gate and turn left down a grassy path (or first have a look at another information board 90m on your right, for the King Barrows Ridge). In 350m turn right and in 180m reach a T-junction. **For an Extension to Woodhenge and Durrington Walls** turn left and pick up the directions at the end of this text in section [H]. Else turn right and follow the signposted route to Amesbury. For the next 1.7 km follow the stony farm track, ignoring all ways off, to a main road. On your way information boards describe how someone in the recent past has planted clumps of trees to illustrate the formation of ships in the Battle of the Nile.
  55. You exit onto the main road alongside a five bar wooden field gate. Turn right (south) to follow the road into Amesbury town centre. (There is a bus stop here for the X4/X5 services which would take you through Amesbury and on to Salisbury, but it is better to continue into Amesbury where there is an additional bus service, the Activ8).
  56. Use the pedestrian underpass to cross the very busy A303. After a short uphill stretch you descend quickly into Amesbury. Continue in the same direction at a four-way junction with London Road on the left (the bus stop there again is not served by all relevant lines) and with High Street on your right (if you have time, you'll find The George pub down along it). In 200m on your left you have a bus stop for all services for your journey back to Salisbury. Continue at [G].
  57. F2) Shortcut to Amesbury to the East (4 km, 2.5 mi)
  58. At the permissive path turn right (east) and continue along the field boundaries. You start by going slightly downhill but then the path gently climbs. In about 1.5 km you pass the Coneybury Hill Plantation on your left and a little way further on you come to a tarmac road. (This road may have quite a bit of traffic).
  59. At the road turn left to soon pass Coneybury House on your left and then other buildings and houses again on your left. The road eventually swings sharply to the left and a little further on you reach a T-junction where you turn right. Continue down this road (Stonehenge Road) with a wooded area to your left and houses to your right.
  60. You continue on the road as it swings left to cross the River Avon - the road is now called Church Street. 180m after crossing the River Avon you turn right into Salisbury Street. Continue to the end of Salisbury Street to turn left at the roundabout onto the busy A345 and then in a few metres past a second roundabout you find a bus stop for your journey back to Salisbury on the right hand side. See [section G]
  61. G) Amesbury to Salibury
  62. Catch either bus No. X4/X5 or bus Activ8 back to Salisbury. On a Sunday they run at approx. hourly intervals.
  63. In Salisbury alight at Blue Boar Row/Market Square, then cross to Minster Street and follow the signposts to the railway station. On the way you will pass a Wagamama and then The Mill public house set back from the river. Allow yourself 10 minutes to walk to the station.
  64. H) Extension to Woodhenge and Durrington Walls (adds 3.5 km, 2.2 mi)
  65. Turn left along the car wide gravel track. In 390m (at a four-way junction of tracks by a couple of field gates, and with another information board for the Cursus Long Barrow 40m to the left), turn right along a fenced path. In 550m the path veers left to continue in the same direction, now on the course of a dismantled

military railway from Amesbury to Larkhill. In 350m turn up left through an earth bank to a wooden gate 10m away. Walk through the gate (with a National Trust sign) into a large grassy area and cross it diagonally on a clear path (55 deg). In 560m leave the grassy area by an information board and a fenced area on the right, through a wooden gate onto a road and turn right along it. In 50m turn right through a wooden gate into The Woodhenge site.

66. Re-trace your steps to the tarmac lane and turn right along it to a car park and some more information boards 70m away. From the car park turn around and turn right along a tarmac lane (i.e.: away from Woodhenge) and in 25m fork left up a clear path through grass and in 25m walk through a wooden gate into a large grassy area, the National Trust-owned Durrington Walls site. Continue towards the middle of the walled area about 200m away and there curve left to leave the area through a gap in the higher lying bank. Pass another information panel and continue in the same direction along a clear path through a grassy field, close to a wood on the right.
67. In 170m leave the field through a wooden gate to cross a road and enter another grassy field through a wooden gate. Continue in the same direction, in 135m pass the Cuckoo Stone (one of very few in the area made from Sarsen, most local rock is chalk or flint), and in 250m leave the field through the wooden gate taken earlier. Descend to the dismantled railway and turn left along its course. In 700m veer right onto a car wide track and continue in the previous direction along it. You are back on the Main Walk. Pick up the directions at point 55.

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