

Balmoral to Middle Head Forts



2 hrs

Hard track

4.1 km Circuit

199m



This walk to the Middle Head fortifications is a great way to break up your day at the beach. There are plenty of places to explore, and the forts are quite interesting and historically significant. The track is well marked and has some information signs. The views of Sydney Harbour are great and it is well worth carrying a picnic lunch to allow more time to enjoy North Head.



Sydney Harbour National Park

Are you ready to have fun?

Please ensure you and your group are well prepared and equipped for all possible hazards and delays. Check park closures, weather information and Fire Danger Rating before setting out. Optional side trips and alternate routes noted are not included in this walk's overall grade, length or time estimate. Please allow extra time for resting and exploring areas of interest. The authors, staff and owners of wildwalks take care in preparing this information but will not accept responsibility for any inconvenience, loss or injury you may experience. Please take care, have fun - Happy Walking.

Getting there You can get to Balmoral Park car park (gps: -33.8291, 151.2557) by car or bus. Car: There is free parking available.

This is a circuit, so you will finish back at the start.

Find up to date and more information including; travel directions, weather, park closures and walker feedback at <http://wild.tl/bmhbf>

0 | Balmoral Park car park

(570 m 15 mins) From the intersection, this walk heads away from the car park and beach to pass '1st Balmoral Sea Scouts' and a childcare centre, on the left. The walk then continues along the footpath outside of the oval to a signposted intersection.

Turn left: From the intersection, this walk heads away from the oval, across a bridge. The walk then climbs a few flights of stairs to enter a fenced area with many signs. This walk continues for some time up stairs to turn right, through the fence and continues up stairs to the intersection with Middle Head Rd.

0.57 | Int. Middle Head Rd and Chowder Bay Trk

(540 m 10 mins) Turn left: From the intersection, this walk heads down the road towards the fence, away from the houses. The road tends right as it comes into HMAS Penguin. The walk continues along Middle Head Rd to the intersection with Chowder Bay Rd, opposite the oval.

1.1 | Int. Middle Head Rd and Chowder Bay Rd

(600 m 12 mins) Turn right: From the intersection of Chowder Bay and Middle Head Rd, this walk heads down through the car park to the far end, where there are signs. The walk heads along the fenceline passing the Sydney Harbour NP sign. The fenceline is followed as it tends right, coming to a gate. Veer left: From the intersection, this walk heads through the gate, keeping the view of the water to the right of the track. Note that if the gate is closed, visitors can walk around the right-hand side of the fence. The walk then follows the fenceline, (on the left of the track), to then continue up a small hill along the fenceline and to a short stone wall. The walk continues over the stone wall to the fork in the road.

1.7 | Int. Old Fort and Govenors Rds

(190 m 3 mins) Turn right: From the intersection, this walk heads up 'Old Fort Rd', keeping the unfenced cottage on the right of the road. The walk soon passes a radio tower on the right, and continues past a gate to the intersection, opposite a sign in the clearing on the left.

1.89 | Int. Lower Barracks Trk and Old Fort Rd

(110 m 2 mins) Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk heads along the overgrown management trail to the tallest of the forts. From here, walkers can explore the fortifications.

1.99 | Middle Head Forts

The forts of Middle Head consist of a rabbit warren of concrete tunnels, winding some 300m around the end of the headland. The fortifications and gun emplacements are varied in size and state, with some closed to protect heritage and the bats. Nearly all the forts overlook the harbour, with views out past the heads and to sea. This is a great area for a little adventure with so

many tunnels to explore. For information on tours, click the link. [More info.](#)

1.99 | Tallest Fort

(110 m 2 mins) Turn around: From the tallest fort, this walk heads away from the sea and the forts, along an overgrown management trail. The walk comes to an intersection opposite a sign, on the far side of the clearing.

2.1 | Int. Lower Barracks Trk and Old Fort Rd

(250 m 5 mins) Turn right: From the intersection, this walk heads away from the built-up forts and road, to cross the clearing to the signposted 'Inner Middle Head Forts'. The track follows the arrow on this sign for approximately 200m through the bush to a sunken concrete fort on the right. Continue straight: From the southern fort (surrounded by bush), this walk winds right, away from the fort keeping the sea on the right of the track. The track quickly leads to an intersection near the fort at the sea cliff.

2.35 | Optional sidetrip to Disappearing Gun Pit North

(20 m 1 mins) Veer right: From the intersection, this walk heads towards the concrete gun pit and the sea, approximately 20m away. At the end of this side trip, retrace your steps back to the main walk then Continue straight.

2.35 | Int. Inner Forts and Lower Barracks Trks

(270 m 5 mins) Turn left: From the intersection, this walk heads away from the sea view and the concrete fort, keeping a sunken concrete feature to the left of the track. The track winds a little for approximately 120m, to the signposted intersection with Govenors Rd.

Turn right: From the intersection, this walk heads down the grass hill beside the old house, keeping the house on the left. The track then turns left and down the hill with the fence, to continue along the fenceline. Near the end of the fence, the track turns right, down the hill and comes to a management trail.

2.62 | Alternate Route Behind Officers Quarters to Middle

(350 m 8 mins) Turn right: From the intersection, the walk follows the management trail down the hill towards the sea. The trail continues down the hill to onto the beach.

Veer left: From the middle of Cobblers Beach, the walk follows the track up the hill, with the beach on the right of the track. The track steeply climbs up the hill to the white picket fence of Middle Head Oval. The track turns left, following the fence to the gate and 'Middle Head' sign. Now Veer right to rejoin the main walk .

2.62 | Cobblers Beach

Cobblers Beach is most probably named after the cobble shaped stones on its shore. This beach has a northerly aspect, with very little surf. Clothing is optional on this beach, and it is a designated nudist beach. Views from the beach include Grotto Point across the harbour and Balmoral Beach to the west.

2.62 | Behind Officers Quarters

(110 m 3 mins) Turn left: From the intersection, this walk heads up the hill, with the houses above to the left of the track. The track soon meets a clearing, continuing through to the 'Sydney Harbour National Park' sign.

2.72 | Cobblers Beach Trail Top

(140 m 5 mins) Veer right: From the intersection, this walk heads along the line of the cyclone fence, on the left, for approximately 150m to the gate in the white picket fence of Middle Head Oval, near the 'Middle Head' sign.

2.87 | Middle Head Oval NE Gate

(140 m 4 mins) Turn left: From the gate, this walk heads across the oval to the far side, next to the baseball nets.

3.01 | Middle Head Oval SW Gate

(30 m 1 mins) Veer left: From the gate, this walk heads to the intersection of Middle Head Road and Chowder Bay Road.

3.04 | Int. Middle Head Rd and Chowder Bay Rd

(540 m 10 mins) Turn right: From the intersection, this walk heads up the hill of Middle Head Rd. The walk continues up the road for some time to a signposted intersection near speed bumps and rock sculptures to the left.

3.58 | Int. Middle Head Rd and Chowder Bay Trk

(570 m 15 mins) Turn right: From the intersection, this walk follows the sign to 'Balmoral Beach' downhill away from the road. The walk heads down many flights of stairs and turns right, through a fence. The track then turns left to continue down more stairs, which lead the walk across a bridge and next to an oval with a signposted intersection.

Turn right: From the intersection, this walk heads toward the sea, keeping the oval to your left. The walk passes '1st Balmoral Sea Scouts' on the right before coming to the car park.