

Chowder Bay to Middle Head return via Chowder Bay Rd



2 hrs 30 mins

Moderate track

3

5.1 km Circuit

▲ 215m

The walk from Chowder Bay to Middle Head is an interesting one, passing Georges Head Lookout and its views over South Head, and then going up to the WW1 hospital. The track continues with an exploration of the whole of Middle Head, including forts, a nudist beach (a sidetrip option) and stunning views over the harbour. The walk returns via Chowder Bay Rd which offers a few fortifications hidden in the bush.

14m

79m

Sydney Harbour National Park

Georges Heights

Georges Heights is a gun emplacement with a commanding 180degree view over the entrance to the harbour. The old gun emplacements are still in position, with their arcs of fire explained in the signs nearby. The view from this lookout is magnificent.

WW1 Hospital

This military hospital was in use from 1916 to 1923, and could treat up to 420 troops at any one time. Sydney Harbour Trust completed restoration of the buildings mid-2005. These buildings are New South Wales' only surviving military hospital buildings from WW1.

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.

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.](#)

Obelisk Bay

Obelisk Bay is named after the white stone obelisk on the shore, also known as Onion Point. The beach has a southerly aspect across Sydney Harbour, with very little surf. Clothing is optional on this beach, as it is a designated nudist beach. Views from the beach include Watsons Bay and Vaucluse.

Chowder Bay

Chowder Bay looks over Sydney Harbour, to Vaucluse and Rose Bay. The bay is named after the food of the American whalers stationed at Clifton Gardens, 'clam chowder'. Chowder Bay then became a Submarine Mining Depot in 1889. Today, Chowder Bay still has great views from the remaining military buildings on the hillside. One of the newer buildings houses a cafe, and other buildings stand as monuments to their former use. Chowder Bay offers great views with easy access to Clifton Gardens for a swim.

Before You walk

Bushwalking is fun and a wonderful way to enjoy our natural places. Sometimes things go bad, with a bit of planning you can increase your chance of having an enjoyable and safer walk. Before setting off on your walk check

- 1) Weather Forecast ([BOM Metropolitan District](#))
- 2) Fire Dangers ([Greater Sydney Region](#))
- 3) Park Alerts ([Sydney Harbour National Park](#))
- 4) Research the walk to check your party has the skills, fitness and equipment required
- 5) Agree to stay as a group and not leave anyone to walk solo

Think before you TREK

The 'Think before you TREK' program developed by NSW Police & NPWS promotes the benefits of planning ahead for your bushwalking trip by using an easy to remember acronym:

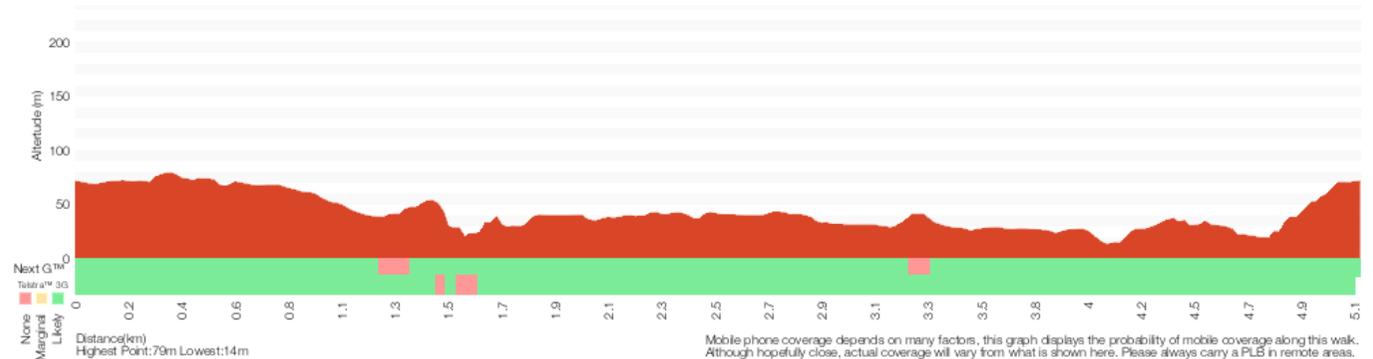
- T** Take adequate supplies of food, water, navigation and first aid equipment.
- R** Register your planned route and tell friends and family when you expect to return.
- E** Emergency beacon (PLB's) should be carried on walks with significant gaps in mobile coverage (check terrain profile).
- K** Keep to your planned route and follow the map and walking trails.

Topo Maps

The maps provided on wildwalks are helpful, but there are times where you may need maps covering a broader area. Maps that cover this walk include;

1:25 000 Map Series:91302N SYDNEY HEADS

1:100 000 Map Series:9130 SYDNEY



Grade

This walk has been graded using the AS 2156.1-2001. The overall grade of the walk is determined by the highest classification along the whole track.



Grade 3/6
Moderate track

Length	5.1 km Circuit
Time	2 hrs 30 mins
Quality of track	Formed track, with some branches and other obstacles (3/6)
Signs	Directional signs along the way (3/6)
Experience Required	No experience required (1/6)
Weather	Weather generally has little impact on safety (1/6)
Infrastructure	Limited facilities, not all cliffs are fenced (3/6)

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 Int. Chowder Bay Trk and Georges Heights Rd (gps: -33.8365, 151.2582) 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/cbthmrvchr>

0 | Int. Chowder Bay Trk and Georges Heights Rd

(70 m 1 mins) From the intersection, this walk follows the sign to Georges Head Lookout, down the hill to the circular paved lookout above the fortifications.

0.07 | Georges Heights

Georges Heights is a gun emplacement with a commanding 180degree view over the entrance to the harbour. The old gun emplacements are still in position, with their arcs of fire explained in the signs nearby. The view from this lookout is magnificent.

0.07 | Georges Head Lookout

(450 m 8 mins) Turn around: From the circular lookout of Georges Head Lookout, this walk follows the sandstone pavement back to the road at the signposted intersection.

Turn right: From the intersection, this walk follows the signs to 'Balmoral Beach' up the hill for a short while. The track opens out to a clearing on the left which has some old structures in it. This is the World War 1 hospital.

0.52 | WW1 Hospital

This military hospital was in use from 1916 to 1923, and could treat up to 420 troops at any one time. Sydney Harbour Trust completed restoration of the buildings mid-2005. These buildings are New South Wales' only surviving military hospital buildings from WW1.

0.52 | Int. WW1 Hospital and Chowder Bay Trk

(810 m 16 mins) Veer right: From the intersection, this walk heads up and across the hill, leaving the WW1 hospital behind on the left. The path continues up the hill, passing a sculpture (a bit overgrown on the right), then bending left (passing through a gate that is locked overnight at 6pm) up to Middle Head Rd. The walk crosses the road to the signposted intersection on the other side.

Turn right: 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.

1.34 | Int. Middle Head Rd and Chowder Bay Rd

(170 m 5 mins) Turn left: From the intersection, this walk heads away from the road to the gate which opens to the oval, next to the baseball nets.

Veer right: From the gate, this walk heads away from the baseball nets to the far side of the oval, where there is another gate.

1.51 | Alternate Route Middle Head Oval NE Gate to Behind

(350 m 8 mins) Veer left: From the gate, this walk follows the track along the outside of white fence (oval to the left), in the opposite direction to the

'Middle Head' arrow on the sign. The track then turns right, heading steeply down the hill for a short time to come out onto a flat grass area behind Cobblers Beach.

Veer right: From the intersection behind the beach, the walk follows the management trail up the hill, keeping the sea to the left. The track winds up the hill to a point just below the old Officers Quarters house (with a white picket fence). Now Turn left to rejoin the main walk .

1.51 | 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.

1.51 | Middle Head Oval NE Gate

(510 m 13 mins) Turn right: From the gate, this walk follows the 'Middle Head' sign along the line of the cyclone fence, keeping the sea to the left of the track. The walk continues along this line for approximately 150m to the signposted intersection at the corner of the fence.

Veer left: From the intersection, this walk heads down the management trail towards the house roof that can be seen on the right. The track comes to an intersection just below the old house with the white picket fence, the Officers Quarters.

Turn right: From the intersection, this walk heads up the hill towards the white picket fence of the old Officers Quarters. The track follows the fence up and around to the right, keeping the house on the right of the track, as it comes to the signposted intersection with the 'Inner Middle Head Forts' track. Turn left : From the intersection, this walk follows the 'Inner Middle Head Forts' sign for approximately 120m winding a little to an intersection which is just before a concrete fort.

2.03 | Optional sidetrip to Disappearing Gun Pit North

(20 m 1 mins) Continue straight: 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 Veer left.

2.03 | Int. Inner Forts and Lower Barracks Trks

(360 m 7 mins) Turn right: From the intersection, this walk heads away from the fort near the sea cliff, instead heading towards the gun pit surrounded by bush. The track winds left from the intersection to the large fort.

Continue straight: From the fort, this walk heads away from the fort, keeping the sea to the left of the track as it slightly winds for approximately 200m, to come out into a clearing. The walk crosses the clearing to the footpath next to the forts.

Turn left: From the intersection, this walk heads along the overgrown management trail to the tallest of the forts. From here, walkers can explore the fortifications.

2.38 | 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.](#)

2.38 | 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.

2.49 | Int. Lower Barracks Trk and Old Fort Rd

(190 m 3 mins) Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk heads up the road, away from the forts and into the bush. The walk passes a gate and a radio tower on the left. This walk continues to the fork of Old Fort and Govenors Rds.

2.68 | Int. Old Fort and Govenors Rds

(600 m 12 mins) Turn left: From the intersection, this walk leaves the road and crosses the stone wall closest to the fenceline. The walk follows the fenceline which soon turns right. The track follows the fence for a short time to a gate in the fence. Note that if the gate is closed, visitors can walk around the left side fence, which soon ends.

Veer right: From the gate, this walk heads up the grassy hill following the fenceline, on the right. The walk follows the fenceline for a short time to then turn right and continue through the car park to the intersection of Chowder Bay and Middle Head Rds.

3.28 | Int. Middle Head Rd and Chowder Bay Rd

(150 m 3 mins) Turn sharp left: From the intersection, this walk heads down Chowder Bay Rd, away from the sports field, for a short time to the intersection and 'Obelisk Beach' signpost.

3.42 | Optional sidetrip to Obelisk Beach

(90 m 2 mins) Turn left: From the intersection, this walk follows the 'Obelisk Beach' sign down the hill. The track winds down across the hill to the right, then tends left down onto a rock platform above the beach. At the end of this side trip, retrace your steps back to the main walk then Turn left .

3.42 | Obelisk Bay

Obelisk Bay is named after the white stone obelisk on the shore, also known as Onion Point. The beach has a southerly aspect across Sydney Harbour, with very little surf. Clothing is optional on this beach, as it is a designated nudist beach. Views from the beach include Watsons Bay and Vaucluse.

3.42 | Int. Chowder Bay Rd and Obelisk Beach Trk

(1.4 km 27 mins) Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk heads along the road with the harbour to the left. After a while, the walk comes to a large black cement fortification to the left of the road.

Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk heads along the road, keeping the water below on the left. The walk soon passes buildings to the left and right, continuing past the Bacino Bar to the roundabout at the end of the road.

4.79 | Chowder Bay

Chowder Bay looks over Sydney Harbour, to Vaucluse and Rose Bay. The bay is named after the food of the American whalers stationed at Clifton Gardens, 'clam chowder'. Chowder Bay then became a Submarine Mining Depot in 1889. Today, Chowder Bay still has great views from the remaining military buildings on the hillside. One of the newer buildings houses a cafe, and other buildings stand as monuments to their former use. Chowder Bay offers great views with easy access to Clifton Gardens for a swim.

4.79 | Roundabout at end of Chowder Bay Road

(20 m 1 mins) Turn right: From the road, this walk heads north away from the harbour to the base of the stone steps on the left hand side of Bacino Bar.

4.81 | Bacino Cafe

The Bacino Bar is in Building No.2 at Chowder Bay, with great views across Sydney Harbour. The bar sells pastas, panini, arancini, tramezzini, stuffed eggplant and biscotti, along with homemade sandwiches and treats. The Bacino Bar prices are reasonable, ranging between \$5-12 for the delicacies,

and their coffee is made of their own blend. The bar is open every day from 7am- 4pm except for Christmas. A public toilet is available at the Eastern end of the building. [More info.](#)

4.81 | Int. Bacino Bar back deck and Chowder Bay Trk

(270 m 7 mins) Continue straight: From the intersection behind Bacino Bar, the walk heads up the steep stone steps, away from the cafe. The track then tends right, across the hill for a short time climbing the uneven stairs to meet the road and signposted intersection.

5.08 | Int. Gunners' Barracks drive way and Chowder Bay T

(60 m 1 mins) Turn right: From the intersection, this walk heads across the road to head up the bush track on the hill for approximately 50m, to the signposted intersection behind 'Georges Head Lookout'.





WildWalks

Carrington Avenue

Wyong Road

Ourimbah Road

Belmont Road

Spencer Road

Holt Avenue

Royalist Road

Reid Park

Sirius Park

Ashton Park

Shadforth Street

Raglan Street

Mistral Avenue

Sirius Cove Road

Prince Albert Street

Ruby Street

Bradleys Head Road

Middle Head Road

Lawry Plunkett Reserve

Balmoral Park

Rawson Park

Chowder Head

WW1 Hospital

Coblens Beach

Obelisk Bay

Middle Head Forts

Wargies Heights

Start

Chowder Bay

Gap Bluff Top Road

Gap Park

Bottles and Glass Point

Sydney Harbour

Grotto Point

Middle Harbour Creek

Inner North Head

The Old Mans Hat

Canna Point

Sydney Harbour National Park

337000

338000

339000

340000

341000

342000

6257000

6256000

6255000

6254000

6253000

6252000

6251000

6250000

6249000

6248000

6247000

6246000

6245000

6244000

6243000

6242000

6241000

6240000

6239000

6238000

6237000

6236000

6235000

6234000

6233000

6232000

6231000

6230000

6229000

6228000

6227000

6226000

6225000

6224000

6223000

6222000

6221000

6220000

6219000

6218000

6217000

6216000

6215000

6214000

6213000

6212000

6211000

6210000

6209000

6208000

6207000

6206000

6205000

6204000

6203000

6202000

6201000

6200000

6199000

6198000

6197000

6196000

6195000

6194000

6193000

6192000

6191000

6190000

6189000

6188000

6187000

6186000

6185000

6184000

6183000

6182000

6181000

6180000

6179000

6178000

6177000

6176000

6175000

6174000

6173000

6172000

6171000

6170000

6169000

6168000

6167000

6166000

6165000

6164000

6163000

6162000

6161000

6160000

6159000

6158000

6157000

6156000

6155000

6154000

6153000

6152000

6151000

6150000

6149000

6148000

6147000

6146000

6145000

6144000

6143000

6142000

6141000

6140000

6139000

6138000

6137000

6136000

6135000

6134000

6133000

6132000

6131000

6130000

6129000

6128000

6127000

6126000

6125000

6124000

6123000

6122000

6121000

6120000

6119000

6118000

6117000

6116000

6115000

6114000

6113000

6112000

6111000

6110000

6109000

6108000

6107000

6106000

6105000

6104000

6103000

6102000

6101000

6100000

6099000

6098000

6097000

6096000

6095000

6094000

6093000

6092000

6091000

6090000

6089000

6088000

6087000

6086000

6085000

6084000

6083000

6082000

6081000

6080000

6079000

6078000

6077000

6076000

6075000

6074000

6073000

6072000

6071000

6070000

6069000

6068000

6067000

6066000

6065000

6064000

6063000

6062000

6061000

6060000

6059000

6058000

6057000

6056000

6055000

6054000

6053000

6052000

6051000

6050000

6049000

6048000

6047000

6046000

6045000

6044000

6043000

6042000

6041000

6040000

6039000

6038000

6037000

6036000

6035000

6034000

6033000

6032000

6031000

6030000

6029000

6028000

6027000

6026000

6025000

6024000

6023000

6022000

6021000

6020000

6019000

6018000

6017000

6016000

6015000

6014000

6013000

6012000

6011000

6010000

6009000

6008000

6007000

6006000

6005000

6004000

6003000

6002000

6001000

6000000

5999000

5998000

5997000

5996000

5995000</

Summary navigation sheet for the Chowder Bay to Middle Head return via Chowder Bay Rd



km	From	Up/Dwn	Length	Initial directions (Use full tracknotes and maps for more detail)
Start	Int. Chowder Bay Trk and Georges Heights Rd -33.8365,151.2582 (GR Sydney Heads, 388546)	0 -2	70 m 1 mins	From the intersection, this walk follows the sign to Georges Head Lookout, down the hill to the circular paved lookout above the fortifications.
0.07	Georges Head Lookout -33.8366,151.2589 (GR Sydney Heads, 389546)	15 -11	450 m 8 mins	Turn around: From the circular lookout of Georges Head Lookout, this walk follows the sandstone pavement back to the road at the signposted intersection.
0.52	Int. WW1 Hospital and Chowder Bay Trk -33.8333,151.2585 (GR Sydney Heads, 389550)	8 -41	810 m 16 mins	Veer right: From the intersection, this walk heads up and across the hill, leaving the WW1 hospital behind on the left.
1.34	Int. Middle Head Rd and Chowder Bay Rd -33.8278,151.2615 (GR Sydney Heads, 391556)	12 -25	170 m 5 mins	Turn left: From the intersection, this walk heads away from the road to the gate which opens to the oval, next to the baseball nets.
1.51	Middle Head Oval NE Gate -33.8267,151.2627 (GR Sydney Heads, 392557)	33 -31	350 m 8 mins	Alternate Route Middle Head Oval NE Gate. Veer left: From the gate, this walk follows the track along the outside of white fence (oval to the left), in the opposite direction to the 'Middle Head' arrow on the sign.
1.51	Middle Head Oval NE Gate -33.8267,151.2627 (GR Sydney Heads, 392557)	42 -35	510 m 13 mins	Turn right: From the gate, this walk follows the 'Middle Head' sign along the line of the cyclone fence, keeping the sea to the left of the track.
2.03	Int. Inner Forts and Lower Barracks Trks -33.8247,151.2667 (GR Sydney Heads, 396559)	0 -9	20 m 1 mins	Optional sidetrip to Disappearing Gun Pit North. Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk heads towards the concrete gun pit and the sea, approximately 20m away.
2.03	Int. Inner Forts and Lower Barracks Trks -33.8247,151.2667 (GR Sydney Heads, 396559)	11 -11	360 m 7 mins	Turn right: From the intersection, this walk heads away from the fort near the sea cliff, instead heading towards the gun pit surrounded by bush.
2.38	Tallest Fort -33.8271,151.2681 (GR Sydney Heads, 397557)	6 -2	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.
2.49	Int. Lower Barracks Trk and Old Fort Rd -33.8269,151.267 (GR Sydney Heads, 396557)	4 -1	190 m 3 mins	Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk heads up the road, away from the forts and into the bush.
2.68	Int. Old Fort and Govenors Rds -33.8267,151.265 (GR Sydney Heads, 394557)	19 -21	600 m 12 mins	Turn left: From the intersection, this walk leaves the road and crosses the stone wall closest to the fenceline.
3.28	Int. Middle Head Rd and Chowder Bay Rd -33.8278,151.2615 (GR Sydney Heads, 391556)	1 -14	150 m 3 mins	Turn sharp left: From the intersection, this walk heads down Chowder Bay Rd, away from the sports field, for a short time to the intersection and 'Obelisk Beach' signpost.
3.42	Int. Chowder Bay Rd and Obelisk Beach Trk -33.8289,151.2607 (GR Sydney Heads, 391555)	0 -18	90 m 2 mins	Optional sidetrip to Obelisk Beach. Turn left: From the intersection, this walk follows the 'Obelisk Beach' sign down the hill.
3.42	Int. Chowder Bay Rd and Obelisk Beach Trk -33.8289,151.2607 (GR Sydney Heads, 391555)	42 -50	1.4 km 27 mins	Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk heads along the road with the harbour to the left.
4.79	Roundabout at end of Chowder Bay Road -33.8384,151.2561 (GR Sydney Heads, 386544)	6 0	20 m 1 mins	Turn right: From the road, this walk heads north away from the harbour to the base of the stone steps on the left hand side of Bacino Bar.
4.81	Int. Bacino Bar back deck and Chowder Bay Trk -33.8383,151.256 (GR Sydney Heads, 386544)	47 -2	270 m 7 mins	Continue straight: From the intersection behind Bacino Bar, the walk heads up the steep stone steps, away from the cafe.
5.08	Int. Gunners' Barracks drive way and Chowder Bay Trk -33.8368,151.2577 (GR Sydney Heads, 388546)	2 -1	60 m 1 mins	Turn right: From the intersection, this walk heads across the road to head up the bush track on the hill for approximately 50m, to the signposted intersection behind 'Georges Head Lookout'.