

Guide to walk grading

This guide to walk gradings was introduced some years ago to give participants more idea of what to expect on a particular walk.

1. Distance per day	-Short	Under 10km per day	-Medium	10-15km per day	-Long
2. Terrain	1-3	Graded track or open terrain. No scrub creek, rock-hopping, scrambling	8-10**	Bush. Minor scrub, scunge, rainforest, rock, creek, rockhopping, scrambling.	3. Scrambling using
3. Fitness	1-3	Easy. Suitable for beginners	4-7	Medium. Reasonable fitness required	8.
4. Activity	Base Camp, Weekend Day Walk, Through Walk, MIScellaneous Terrain	1-3	Graded track or open terrain. No scrub.	If it is a graded walking track, it cannot be more than 3. If the track is flat over most of its length and well maintained, with few tripping hazards, it would be grade 1. If there are numerous tripping hazards, or it is uneven or steep, it would be 3. Similarly walking across grassy paddocks would be in the range 1 to 3, depending on the steepness and roughness underfoot.	Terrain 4-7
					Bush. Minor scrub, scunge, rainforest, rock, creek, rockhopping, scrambling. Grade 4 could be for a walk partly on track and partly off track, or all off track when the going is relatively easy, i.e. you can see where you are going and the undergrowth is relatively thin such as in a mature forest with only a smattering of undergrowth and the forest floor is covered with leaf litter. Grade 4 could also include easy rock hopping. Grade 7, on the other hand, would be relatively hard going, such as forcing yourself through undergrowth where you cannot see far ahead. It could also be rock hopping where you are clambering around large boulders or scrambling over, up or down rocky surfaces which are relatively steep but with good hand holds and no ropes are required. If ropes are used, they are not used extensively or used as a precaution rather than being essential.
					Terrain 8-10
					Bush. As above and thick scrub, major rock, scrambling using hands, technical climbing. This is anything harder than described above and is not attempted by NPAQ as explained above. Examples might be many kilometres of nearly impossible thick scrub, rock climbing with ropes, and technical work such as abseiling, e.g. Mt Crookneck or the harder routes on Mt Barney.
					Fitness 1-3
					Easy. Suitable for beginners. These walks are so easy they would be suitable for members with little or no walking experience or for those who lack stamina or endurance.
					Fitness 4-7
					Medium. Reasonable fitness required. Most average fit people should fall into this category. It could include a long walk on easy grades or a short walk on steep grades or very uneven surfaces. Many NPAQ walks would fall into this category.
					Fitness 8-10
					Hard. Strenuous, fit walkers only. Rarely, if ever, would NPAQ walks fall into this category. However it is included for those rare occasions when it would be justified. It is a grading for very fit people indeed, i.e. those who are super fit, with extensive experience and an extremely advanced athletic prowess. Again we are talking about those who can tackle places like Mt Lindesay or the harder routes on Mt Barney and the like. Example – M45DW would suggest a Day Walk with a length between 10 and 15 kilometres in terrain designated as Bush but not too difficult because of the rating 4 being at the lower end of the scale and requiring a Medium level of fitness but with the rating of 5 tending towards just below average.