

Trail Name: Overlook Trail

Gilford, NH

Trail Description: Southern New Hampshire Trail Guide. 3rd Edition. 2010. Compiled and Edited by Gene Daniell and Steven D. Smith. Appalachian Mountain Club Books. Boston, MA.

Overlook Trail - Description

The Overlook Trail (blazed orange) connects the main parking lot at the Gunstock Mountain Resort with the col between Belknap Mtn. and Gunstock Mtn., providing a convenient route to either peak and offering a fine viewpoint along the way. It is also the easiest and most convenient route for ascending either mountain in winter (when the Belknap Carriage Rd. is not open), since it has easier grades than the Brook Trail and does not cross any downhill ski trails. It was opened in November 1998, carefully located to avoid as much as possible steep areas that are vulnerable to damage by erosion. It leaves the main parking area by following the Round Pond Trail (and blazed both red and orange), with which it coincides to the first (northern) junction with the Oak Trail (#7) at 0.9 mi. (Note: In winter and if the trail has x/c track please stay to one side and not destroy the track) Here it turns right onto the Oak Trail (#7) and follows it. At 1.1 mi. a logging road enters on the left; the Overlook Trail bears right onto this road and soon approaches a hairpin turn to the left. Just past the hairpin turn the Overlook Trail diverges right (Sign), immediately descends across a branch of Poorfarm Brook, and begins to climb. Constantly winding about to avoid any steep grades, it ascends to the upper edge of a steep slope and, at 1.7 mi. from the parking area, reaches open ledges covered with low juniper bushes where there is a fine outlook to the east across the valley. The trail re-enters the woods, descends through a dip, and resumes the climb. At 2.1 mi. it crosses a small brook that falls in tiny needles of water over a five-foot vertical ledge to the left. After crossing more small brooks the grade becomes easier, then steeper again as the trail enters the main ravine below the ridgecrest. At 2.9 mi. it reaches the col between Belknap Mtn. and Gunstock Mtn. For Gunstock Mtn. turn right on the white-blazed Saddle Trail to the yellow-blazed Brook Trail. For Belknap Mtn. turn left on the blue-blazed Blue Trail. Straight ahead is the Blue Trail to the upper end of the Belknap Carriage. Rd.

Distances and hiking times from Gunstock Mountain Resort parking area (930 ft.):

- to Oak Trail (#7) junction (1100 ft.): 0.9 mi. (1.45 km.), 200 ft., 35 min.
- to divergence from Oak Trail (1150 ft.): 1.2 mi. (1.9 km.), 250 ft., 45 min.
- to overlook (1560 ft): 1.7 mi. (2.7 km.) , 650 ft., 1 hr. 10 min.
- to Belknap Mtn.- Gunstock Mtn. col (2000 ft.): 2.9 mi. (4.7 km.), 1100 ft. , 2 hr.
- to Belknap Mtn. summit (2382 ft.) via Blue Trail: 3.4 mi. (5 .5 km.), 1500 ft., 2 hr. 25 min.
- to Gunstock Mtn. summit (2250 ft.) via Saddle Trail and Brook Trail: 3.3 mi. (5 .3 km.), 1350 ft. , 2 hr. 20 min.

