



ACTIVITY GRADINGS AND PARTY SIZES

SBC WALKS GRADING SYSTEM

In January 2014 the SBC adopted the following grading system. This is based on the Bushwalking NSW grading system, with the addition of the **S** (Social) and **Exp** (Exploratory) categories. A separate grading system for SBC cycling activities is listed below.

It is impossible to design a grading system that means the same thing to everyone: one person's easy walk is difficult for someone else. A person accustomed to **M** one-day walks may have difficulty with an **M** overnight walk, due to the heavier load.

Generally, you should not go on an **M**, **M-H** or **H** activity unless you have been on at least one activity in the next-easiest category. If the walk is an overnight walk, you should have been on an overnight walk of the next easiest category.

Grade		Description
S	Social	Social Activity
Grade 1 (E)	Easy	Opportunity for large number of walkers, including those with reduced walking ability to walk on well marked and even tracks. Tracks are man made and may have a few steps. Should not be steep. Suitable for beginners. Distance should not exceed about 10km.
Grade 2 (E-M)	Easy /Medium	Easy walk, mostly on tracks of low gradient. Opportunity to walk easily in natural environments on well marked tracks. Tracks should not be steep. Distance should not exceed about 15km.
Grade 3 (M)	Medium	Medium walk with some hilly sections &/or rougher terrain. Opportunity to walk on defined and distinct tracks with some steep sections requiring a moderate level of fitness. Suitable for fit beginners. Distance should not exceed about 20 km.
Grade 4 (M-H)	Medium / Hard	Steeper, rougher terrain & may have off-track sections (no more than one quarter of the walk) or a longer distance track walk. Opportunity to explore and discover relatively undisturbed natural environments mostly along defined and distinct tracks. Tracks can be steep. There may be short sections of rock scrambling involved. Leaders should have map reading abilities and/or ability to use a compass. Distance depending on circumstances. Not suitable for most beginners.
Grade 5 (H)	Hard	Off-track or difficult terrain. Opportunity for walkers with advanced outdoor knowledge and skills to find their own way along often indistinct tracks or off track in remote locations. May include steep sections of unmodified surfaces. There may be rock scrambling, creek walking & crossing involved. Distance should not exceed 30 km, but may be short & difficult. Not suitable for beginners.
Grade 6 (VH)	Very Hard	Strenuous off-track walk or very long distance. Opportunity for highly experienced walkers to explore remote and challenging natural areas without reliance on managed tracks. Terrain may be steep, uneven and no track. There may be rock scrambling, creek walking & crossing involved. Distance covered is unlimited, but may be short & difficult. Only for experienced walkers and not suitable for beginners.
Exp	Exploratory	The leader is unfamiliar with the route. Navigation difficulties and unexpected obstructions may be encountered.

Some Examples

The following table provides some examples of graded activities:

Grade		Day Walks	Overnight Walks
Grade 1 (E)	Easy	Evans Crown Faulconbridge Point Gooch's Crater Green Gully bushcare Lapstone Zigzag Leura - Amphitheatre/Prince Henry Walk to the 3 Sisters Lockley's Pylon Noble Canyon & the Glow Worm Tunnel Porters Pass/Walls Ledge/Centennial Glen Red Hands Cave circuit	Bouddi National Park Bristol Point car camp Hill End car camp
Grade 2 (E-M)	Easy /Medium	Arethusa Canyon Bruce's Walk – Bullaburra to Wentworth Falls Darke's Cave/Fortress Hill Golden Stairs-Ruined Castle Grand Canyon Lawson – Empire Pass Martins- Lost World Lookouts Medlow Bath Circuit – Squeeze Rock/Colosseum National Pass Victory Track	Breakfast Creek Mt. Airly Car Camp Wollangambe Crater
Grade 3 (M)	Medium	Birrabang Canyon Boars Head abseil Box Creek Falls Cox's River Swingbridge Deep Pass Devil's Hole/Nellie's Glen Du Fours Canyon Glastonbell – The long walk Golden Stairs- Top of Solitary Leura Cascades/Ampitheatre/Leura Forest/Furber Stairs Malaita Point Abseil Nepean River Kayak Perrys - Blue Gum Forest Pisgah Rock- Dadder Cave The Lost World Victoria Brook – the "S" bends Victory Track – Florabella Pass Wolgan Pinnacle	Acacia Flat via Perry's Gardens of Stone – Moffit Pagodas Lockleys Pylon/Grose River/Rocky Point Creek Splendour Rock via fire trail
Grade 4 (M-H)	Medium / Hard	Blue Gum via Lockleys Pylon Donkey Mountain traverse McLean Pass/Stargate Tunnel/Mt. Davidson Mount Solitary via Golden Stairs & the Knife Edge	Splendour Rock via Blackhorse Ridge
Grade 5 (H)	Hard	5 passes on Narrowneck Coin Slot Canyon	Kanangra

SBC CYCLING GRADING SYSTEM

In September 2015 the SBC adopted the following grading system. This is based on the experience of members, and is intended to mirror SBC's general grading system.

The grades described below are for good weather conditions – not too hot or wet, no strong headwind. Higher grades require higher fitness and more relevant experience, as well as a better equipped bike. A particular ride may be upgraded by the leader to achieve a faster pace, or downgraded for a slower pace. Unexpected conditions such as adverse weather, road or track damage may increase the grading of a ride.

Grade		Description
Grade 1 (E)	Easy	For novices and riders with lower fitness seeking a more leisurely pace. Riding on minor roads, sealed cycleways or good fine gravel tracks, substantially flat or with low hills. Frequent stops and assistance with gear and riding techniques. Distances up to about 30 km. Bikes must be in good condition with reasonable selection of gears.
Grade 2 (E-M)	Easy /Medium	For people with some experience appropriate to the riding surface, and reasonable fitness. Appropriate road, mountain bike or hybrid with suitable tyres for the riding surfaces. On sealed and good gravel roads: Able to maintain speeds of about 15-20 km/h for periods up to about 20 min between stops. Some medium hills (requiring mid-range gears) and some short steep hills requiring lower or lowest gears. Total distances up to 50 km. Off road on tracks and trails: Mixed surfaces with some patches of coarser gravel and sand, maintain speeds of about 10-15 km/h on more level sections, stops about every 20 min, total distances of 20-30 km.
Grade 3 (M)	Medium	For experienced and fit riders with appropriate well-gearred bikes and equipment. On sealed and good gravel roads: Able to maintain speeds of 20-25 km/h on mainly level roads for periods of up to 30 min between stops. Medium and some steep hills requiring climbs over 10 – 15 minutes. Total distances of 50- 80 km. Or brisker speeds for shorter distances. Off road on tracks and trails: Mixed surfaces with ability to negotiate loose gravel and sandy patches, maintain speeds of about 15-20 km/h on flat sections, stops about every 30 min, moderate and some steep hills some of which may have to be walked. Mountain bike with suspension and wide tyres. Total distances of 30-40 km.
Grade 4 (M-H)	Medium / Hard	For more experienced and very fit riders. On sealed and good gravel roads: Maintain speeds on substantially level roads of around 25-30 km/h for periods up to 30 min. Possible longer hill climbs lasting 15-20 min. Total distance in day 60-100 km. Off road on tracks and trails: Mixed surfaces with some steeper loose and washed-out tracks often requiring walking. Possibly more loose sand and mud. Total distance may exceed 40 km. May be more remote and require higher level of self-sufficiency.
Grade 5 (H)	Hard	For more experienced cyclists of above average ability. Distances may exceed 100 km per day and/or be over difficult terrain. Conditions to be specified in the ride description.
Grade Traffic	More exposed	Riding on busier roads close to fast and continuous traffic. Roadway should have a wide cycle lane in good condition but may be adjacent to the traffic lane.

Some Examples:

The grades described below are for good weather conditions – not too hot or wet, no strong headwind.

Higher grades require higher fitness and more relevant experience, as well as a better equipped bike.

A particular ride may be upgraded by the leader to achieve a faster pace, or downgraded for a slower pace.

Unexpected conditions such as adverse weather, road or track damage may increase the grading of a ride.

Ride time quoted excludes longer stops.

Grade	Ride	Distance (km) return	Approx. Ride Time (h)	Description & Comments
Grade 1 (E)	Circle Nepean River between M4 bridge and Victoria Bridge	6.5	1	A flat ride through parkland and on shared bike paths along river, shared path crossing of M4 bridge, walk over Victoria Bridge. <i>Riding a lot on paths shared with pedestrians. Learning appropriate safety and courtesy skills</i>
Grade 1 (E)	Nepean Lakes – around rowing course and possibly up Old Castlereagh Rd and along to the Whitewater Stadium and return.	14	2	Mostly flat and on sealed tracks and road. Gentle rise up Old Castlereagh Rd with little traffic. A short ride along New Castlereagh Rd within a bike lane. Time for frequent stops, a coffee break at Stadium. <i>Suitable for novices and most bikes. A good opportunity to induct new cyclists into road and group riding rules, essential equipment</i>
Grade 1 (E)	Faulconbridge – Faulconbridge Point	15	2	Mostly gravel fire trail, some steep and loose sections. Frequent stops and walking of more difficult sections. <i>Not suitable for novices, requires a mountain bike, but pace suitable for slower riders</i>
Grade 2 (E-M)	Faulconbridge – Faulconbridge Point	15	1	Mostly gravel fire trail, some steep and loose sections. A faster pace than Easy grade given above. <i>Looseness and steepness not for novices. Requires mountain bike</i>
Grade 2 (E-M)	Glenbrook NP gate – Euroka – Bennetts Ridge Fire Trail – old section of Single Track and return twice across Glenbrook Creek	18	1.5	Steep but short crossings on Glenbrook Creek on bitumen, gravel fire trails in and out of Euroka, optional return on gravel road or down “Singles track”. Two 10 min stops. <i>First timers may find climb out of Glenbrook Creek too steep for them, but only short distance to walk</i>
Grade 2 (E-M)	Mt Victoria - Hartley – Berghofers Pass – Mt York	30	2	Bitumen road Darling Causeway & down to Hartley Vale, gravel roads and gravel Berghofers Pass with moderate gradient. <i>No steep hills, short distance along GWH at Hartley on wide cycle/ breakdown lane</i>
Grade 2 (E-M)	Prospect – Homebush Bay	40	2.5	All bitumen cycleways and minor roads. <i>No hills, but good pace</i>

Grade 2 (E-M)	Hills district from Toongabbie – a convoluted tour	40	3	All on bitumen roads and cycleways. Some low hills. Reasonable pace @ 20 km/h but frequent stops at intersections, road crossings. <i>Need to keep up, risk of getting lost</i>
Grade 2 (E-M)	Glenbrook – Regatta Centre – Whitewater Stadium – Lewers Gallery – return via Zig Zag cuttings	50	3	Mostly on bitumen roads and cycle tracks, main hill back up to Glenbrook using old cuttings on return. Cycle around rowing course. Moderate pace. Regroup at intersections, pace on flat about 15 km/h, lunch at Lewers, E-M on account of distance
Grade 3 (M)	Glenbrook – Euroka – Nepean Lookout	35	3	Mostly gravel road with some sandy and corrugated sections. Bitumen across Creek causeway. <i>Two steep hills, less steep but gradual hills out of Euroka and up to The Oaks</i>
Grade 3 (M)	Woodford Fire Trail – Glenbrook via Nepean Lookout	45	3.5	Gravel fire trail and road, loose and steep sections. <i>One or two hills best walked by many riders.</i>
Grade 3 (M)	Strathfield – Botany Bay – Sans Souci via Cooks River cycleway	45	3.5	All on bitumen cycleways and minor roads, many twists and turns, reasonable pace to allow time for lunch and possible swim. <i>Need to keep up, especially at road crossings; aware of other cycleway users</i>
Grade 4 (M-H)	Wentworth Falls – Tablelands Rd – Andersons & Woodford Fire Trails - Glenbrook	63	4	Some bitumen, mostly gravel roads and fire trails. Steep decent and ascent at Bedford Creek, larger loose gravel sections require skill & caution. <i>Some sections may be washed out, need walking. Quite a few steep climbs</i>
Grade 4 (M-H)	Canowindra – Woodstock – Cowra circuit (on 2009 Big Ride)	100	5	Mostly bitumen roads, some gradual and long hills. <i>Under normal conditions</i>
Grade 5 (H)	Canowindra – Woodstock – Cowra circuit (on 2009 Big Ride)	100	6.5	Above ride. <i>Under adverse conditions- hot, headwinds, bike troubles</i>
Grade Traffic	Great Western Highway, Hawkesbury Road			Only sections with good wide shoulder for cycles or breakdown should be used.

SBC PARTY SIZE LIMITS

The SBC has set a requirement for a minimum of three club members for any *activity*.

The SBC has adopted party size upper limits based on quality of experience objectives, party management considerations, and NPWS regulations. These limits are set out below.

A leader is at liberty to adopt a lower limit for reasons of party management or practical considerations. However, the Club Committee would not approve the adoption of a lower limit if it were really designed to make the activity 'exclusive' and preclude a broader membership from attending.

Type of activity	Examples	Limit
Day-walks on constructed tracks	Six Foot Track Grand Canyon	20
Cycle trips on quieter roads and formed cycle paths	Sydney Olympic Park	20
Cycle trips mostly on busier roads with continuous traffic	Great Western Highway	8
Cycle trips on roads and fire trails in National Parks (Cycling off-road is prohibited)	Woodford Fire Trail	15
Walks off constructed tracks, other than in wilderness (providing the walk is not 'Exploratory')	Blue Labyrinth Shoalhaven River Wheenie Gap	15
Bush camping (walk to site), other than in wilderness	Mount Solitary Shoalhaven River Acacia Flat	15
Lilo and other water related activities, other than in wilderness	Wollangambe Rocky Creek Shoalhaven	12
Canyons involving abseiling	Most canyons	8
Activities in wilderness areas (The club has applied for blanket approval for numbers of up to 12 for activities using existing track in wilderness areas)	Wollemi Wilderness Kanangra Boyd W. Grose Wilderness	8
'Exploratory' walks (in which the leader is unfamiliar with the route)		8