

Trail to Horton Plains from Dayagama (Diyagama) Estate

Trail Difficulty: Easy | Moderate | Strenuous | Tough

Trail Head: Horton Plains National Park boarder, 6th division, Dayagama Estate

Nearest Town: Dayagama

Nearest City: Talawakele

Access to Trail head:

Route to Horton Plains National Park boarder, 6th division, Dayagama Estate

Route1:

Colombo -> Awissawella [58km on A4] -> Hatton [65km on A7] -> Talawakele [16km on A7] -> Lindula [4km on A7] -> Agarapathana [16km on B252] -> Dayagama [5km] -> Estate road to the boarder of 6th Division, Dayagama Estate [10km on Estate road via division 4 and 3]

Total Distance from Colombo 174km

Route 2:

Colombo -> Awissawella [58km on A4] -> Hatton [65km on A7] -> Glenyon Bazzar [19km] -> Agarapathana [2.5km on B252] -> Dayagama [5km] -> Estate road to the boarder of 6th Division, Dayagama Estate [10km on Estate road via division 4 and 3]

Total Distance from Colombo 160km

Roads are paved all the way up to the boarder of Horton Plains. Expect narrow mountainous stretches from Hatton to Glenyon Bazzar (only route 2) and beyond Dayagama (on both routes)

Trail End: Horton Plains Visitor Centre

Total Length: 5.6 km

Elevation Gain: 200m (Elevation at Trail Head: 1926m | Elevation at Trail End: 2126m).

Approximate time: 2-3 hours

Hiking Season: Best months are February to April. July to September is also fairly dry. Avoid monsoon months.

Permit Required: Technically "yes". But there is no ticket office at the trail head. Therefore permit should be obtained from Horton Plains visitor Centre at the trail end.

Agarapatha, Dayagama road to Horton Plains was a motorable access road. Several years back, the stretch of this road which goes through the protected area of Horton

Plains was closed for motor traffic. Therefore at present you can only drive up to the HP boarder of the Dayagama Estate and walk 5.6km from this point to reach the visitor center of Horton Plains.

Most of the road still remains paved but is no longer motorable as there are several sections that have been badly deteriorated. Forest is slowly invading the road where ever the pavement is damaged. Because of the obvious reasons the trail is quite broad and very clearly visible throughout. There is zero possibility of getting lost on this trail and it one of the trails where you can leisurely walk to enjoy the breath-taking beauty of the high altitude forest of Horton Plains.

0 to 800m: The trail head (**waypoint: HD01**) is located at the HP boarder of the 6th Division of the Dayagama estate. You can clearly see the tea plantations coming to an abrupt end and the road moving in to the thick forest of Horton Plains at this place.

Before you venture in to Horton Plains and start your hike, walk about 100m on to your left hand side through tea bushes to take a glimpse of one of the hidden water falls of Agra Oya, a tributary of Mahaweli river, from the distance.

As you walk in to Horton Plains, you will start a mild climb. Thick montane forest can be seen on either side of the road. As you walk about 300m along the road, intensity of ascend will increase significantly (**waypoint: HD02**). After you tackle the intense ascend for 400m you will reach a set of hair-pin bends (**waypoint: HD03**). After passing the bends the road will continue to climb up but with just a moderate ascend until you reach a distinctive "U" turn after which point the road become almost flat with very mild ascend(**waypoint: HD04**).

At **HD04** you will hear a stream from the distance and on to your left hand there is a scenic outlook towards the distant tea estates and hills of dayagama.

800m to 2.6km: After you pass **HD04**, the road becomes more or less flat. Overall elevation gain in this stretch is almost zero, but intermediate short climb ups and downs maintain the sense of walking in the mountains. Still there is hardly any serious ascend or descend.

Throughout this stretch, the road goes through thick forest with immense diversity. On the both sides of the road there are many flowering plants, sometimes creating colorful patches in the forest.

As you walk about 800m from HD04, you will again reach a scenic outlook (**waypoint: HD07**).

About 1.2km from **HD04**, the road gets quite close to the stream (**waypoint: HD09**). The forest it self changes its form all the time with the streams adding life to it.

2.6km from the trail head, at the end of this stretch of the road, there is a concrete bridge over a stream (**waypoint: HD12**). This is an ideal place to take some rest and enjoy the surrounding. From this point onwards, until you reach the Ohiya-Pattipola road, you will have to tackle a section of road with moderate ascends.

2.6km to 5.6km: After crossing the bridge, you will have to tackle four hair-pin bends with some what steep climb for the next 400m. After the bends, ascend again becomes moderate (**waypoint: HD13**).

Except for a brief descend at about 3.6km from the trail head (**waypoint: HD16**), rest of this stretch is a continuous moderate to mild climb. Most intense is the first 400m.

4km from the trail head; you will start to see small patches of savanna on the mountain slopes on either sides of the road (**waypoint: HD18**). As you walk about 400m more, you will enter a thick forest canopy (**waypoint: HD19**). Walking 200m inside the forest, the trail comes out to an area where you can see more plains as opposed to the forest (**waypoint: HD20**). The next 500m is a moderate ascend until you will reach the Ohiya-Pattipola main road (**waypoint: HD21**).

Take the right turn on to the paved road at **HD21** and continue 500m along the road through the grass covered plains to reach the visitor center (**waypoint: HD22**).

Tips, Notes & special remarks:

- You don't have to carry a lot of water, Take a small bottle with you and keep it filled from the streams that you cross during the hike.
- Drinking water from streams is safe.
- You can also do this trail from tail to head, which will make it even easier as you will be climbing down as opposed to climbing up. If you plan to do so, it will be a good idea to arrange a pickup from the boarder at Dayagama estate 6th division as public transport is only available from Dayagama town which is 10km from the boarder at 6th division.
- Be prepared for cold and windy climate.

Way Points

	N: dd° mm.mmm'	E: dd° mm.mmm'	Elevation
HD01 – Horton Plain Boarder	6° 49.624'	80° 46.936'	1926 m
HD02	6° 49.509'	80° 46.947'	1945 m
HD03	6° 49.459'	80° 46.999'	1989 m
HD04	6° 49.422'	80° 47.067'	2001 m
HD05	6° 49.367'	80° 47.067'	2003 m
HD06	6° 49.313'	80° 47.144'	2010 m
HD07	6° 49.324'	80° 47.265'	2015 m
HD08	6° 49.267'	80° 47.339'	2001 m

HD09	6° 49.208'	80° 47.372'	2021 m
HD10	6° 49.159'	80° 47.431'	2009 m
HD11	6° 49.139'	80° 47.506'	1985 m
HD12	6° 49.043'	80° 47.581'	2009 m
HD13	6° 49.001'	80° 47.620'	2038 m
HD14	6° 48.933'	80° 47.697'	2057 m
HD15	6° 48.872'	80° 47.748'	2056 m
HD16	6° 48.820'	80° 47.835'	2057 m
HD17	6° 48.796'	80° 47.877'	2059 m
HD18	6° 48.745'	80° 47.979'	2070 m
HD19	6° 48.621'	80° 48.116'	2095 m
HD20	6° 48.555'	80° 48.185'	2106 m
HD21 – Ohiya – Pattipola Road	6° 48.336'	80° 48.319'	2138 m
HD22 – Visitor center	6° 48.121'	80° 48.447'	2126 m