**Be prepared**

Your safety is your responsibility. Before you go, remember these five simple rules:

1. **Plan your trip.** Our tracks are clearly marked but it’s a good idea to check our website for maps and track details.
2. **Tell someone where you’re going.** Leave your trip details with a trusted contact, and use adventuresmart.org.nz
3. **Check the weather.** It can change quickly in Wellington.
4. **Know your limits.**
5. **Take enough food and water.**

**More information**

The free Welly Walks app will help you discover all the best spots and hidden gems in Wellington - nature reserves, forests, farmlands and the rugged south coast; landmarks and historic sites; public art and picturesque views. Visit wellington.govt.nz/wellywalks

For maps of each walk visit wellington.govt.nz/walks
For an up-close and personal experience of Wellington’s wild places, explore some of our best trails.

Wild Wellington

Our city has been shaped by earthquakes, the greywacke hills worn down by wind, and the valleys carved by water. Extreme weather has created a rugged but resilient coastline. Much of the work is done by volunteers. To get involved, find a local group at naturespace.org.nz

Wellington's connection with nature is strong, and there is wide support for ecological restoration and pest control. Our native forests support a thriving ecosystem of birds, lizards and insects. To see the best examples of remnant podocarp/kohekohe-tawa forest in Wellington, visit Khandallah Park and Otari-Wilton's Bush, New Zealand's only botanic garden dedicated to native plants.

Our native bird population is soaring, with tūī and kākā now commonplace. Keep an eye out for rarer species like kērerū, kākāriki and kārearea – these birds are often seen in bush across the city. There are also growing numbers of native skinks and geckos, but they can be tricky to spot! For a guaranteed wildlife experience, visit Zealandia or Wellington Zoo. Native insects including stick insects and butterflies can be found at Otari-Wilton's Bush.

Kaitiakitanga - Take care

- Don't litter.
- Take only photographs.
- Respect wildlife and farm animals.
- Report conservation emergencies to the Department of Conservation. Call 0800 DOC HOT.
- Take injured wildlife to The Nest - Te Kohanga at Wellington Zoo. Phone 04 381 6755.
- Identify and share the living things you find at inaturalist.nz or using the iNaturalist app

Community involvement

Wellington City Council and the Department of Conservation develop and maintain the city’s extensive network of tracks, with support from Wellington Mountain Biking Club, Makara Peak Supporters and other groups.

Wellington's connection with nature is strong, and there is wide support for ecological restoration and pest control. Much of the work is done by volunteers. To get involved, find a local group at naturespace.org.nz

Other wild places to visit

Wellington Walks - Ara Rēhia o Pōneke is your guide to some of the short walks, loop walks and walkways in our city.

Whatever your mood, there’s a walk for you - whether you’re after a relaxing wander through our parks and gardens or keen for a more challenging hike around the coast. They offer unbeatable views, and most are only minutes from the city centre.

Wellington's beaches are great for a short stroll. Some of the best are at Scorching Bay and Oriental Bay - for more see wellington.govt.nz/beaches

Dogs must be on-leash on all our tracks, and are restricted at Makara and Matiu/Somes Island. You can let your dog run free at an off-leash area like Seton Nossiter Park and the eastern end of Lyall Bay. Find more dog exercise areas at wellington.govt.nz/dog-exercise

Many of our tracks are suitable for mountain bikers, from beginners through to experienced riders. Head to Makara Peak Mountain Bike Park for more fun on wheels or visit wellington.govt.nz/mountainbiking

One of Wellington’s native green geckos.
1. Wellington Botanic Garden

Floral displays and themed gardens. Bring a lunch and make a day of it. Wellington Botanic Garden is the largest botanic garden in New Zealand and the only one on the South Coast. It is a popular place for picnics and has a variety of walking trails, including the 1.5 km Loop Track which takes you through the Native Flora section. It is open daily from 8am to 5pm and is free to enter.

2. Otari-Wilton's Bush

Experience life in the tree canopy walkway through native forest. Check out the kōura (crayfish) and visit the bird hide. It is a popular place for bird watching and has many walking tracks to choose from, including the 1.5 km Loop Track. It is open daily from 8am to 5pm and is free to enter. The area is exposed and can be done in stages.

3. Matiu/Somes Island

Take the ferry to explore the emerald jewel in Wellington's history. This pest-free island was a strategic outpost of European exploration. The island is a nature reserve and is home to many native birds and plants. It is a 10-minute boat ride from Oriental Bay and is free to enter. The area is exposed and can be done in stages.

4. Wrights Hill Loops

Choose from the many short walks in New Zealand's only predator-free island. There are two main loops, the 1.5 km Loop Track and the 1 km Loop Track. Both are free to enter and are open daily from 8am to 5pm. The area is exposed and can be done in stages.

5. Eastern Walkway and Loop

Travel along Wellington's ridge tops above the Outer Green Belt. This track is also used by mountain bikers and can be challenging. The ridgeline is exposed and weather conditions can be extreme. The route can be completed in stages and it's easy to include the spectacular Matairangi Mount Victoria lookout. Allow 1 hour to return by bus or train.

6. Te Ara o Ngā Tūpuna

Step back in time and follow the footsteps of the first people to live in Wellington. Walk from Pipitea Pā to Te Aro Pā and discover the first meeting place of the Ngāti Toa and Ngāti Rangiwewehi tribes. It is a 2-hour walk, 3.5km (one way) and is open daily. The area is exposed and can be done in stages.

7. Te Araroa

Get on top of Wellington's central city at Te Ahumairangi. Travel through regenerating native bush and historic pine forest. Meet the seals in winter just beyond Red Rocks (Pariwhero) and take in spectacular 360° views of the city, harbour, mountain ranges and sea. Discover abandoned tunnels and the city's oldest reserve. Steep in places, and can be done in stages. Allow 1 hour to return by bus or train.

8. Brooklyn Wind Turbine Route

Travel through regenerating native bush and historic pine forest. Go from Bolton Street Cemetery to Shorland Park on Trelissick Park. From Wind Turbine car park follow marked trails: Initially 3-4hr, 11.7km (one way) and take in arguably the best views of Wellington Harbour on this walk along the Harbour Escarpment from Waihinahina Park, Newlands. Allow 30 minutes to return by bus. The area is exposed and can be done in stages.

9. Mount Victoria Lookout Loop

Get the best views of the city from Wellington Harbour to the south coast. Walk from Oriental Parade to Island Bay. This track can be completed in stages and it's easy to include the spectacular Matairangi Mount Victoria lookout. Allow 30 minutes to return by bus or train.

10. Red Rocks Coastal Walk

Visit the WWII military fortress, spot rare birds and get spectacular views over Wellington and the Cook Strait. To complete the entire walk in one day you will need a good level of fitness. It can also be done in stages. Allow 30 minutes to return by bus or train.

11. Breaker Bay Coastal Walk

Experience the wildest part of Wellington's rugged south coast. Coastal track from Owhiro Bay passes historic baches built at Sinclair Head – but don't get too close! The easy grade coastal walk takes 2–3hr, 8km (return) and is open daily. The area is exposed and can be done in stages.

12. Makara Walkway

Walk on Wellington's wild western coastline for fabulous views of Mana, Kapiti Island and the South Island. Check out the massive wind turbine, historic on site and the gun emplacements. The area is exposed, and the track is steep in places. Best accessed at low tide.

13. Southern Walkway

Get the best views of the city from Wellington Harbour to the south coast. Walk from Oriental Parade to Island Bay. This track can be completed in stages and it's easy to include the spectacular Matairangi Mount Victoria lookout. Allow 30 minutes to return by bus in places.

14. Northern Walkway

Walk from Raroa Station to the Wellington Botanic Garden to take in spectacular 360° views of the city, harbour, mountain ranges and sea. Discover abandoned tunnels and the city's oldest reserve. Steep in places, and can be done in stages. Allow 1 hour to return by bus or train.

15. Skyline Walkway

Travel along Wellington's ridge tops above the Outer Green Belt from Makara Saddle to Johnsonville via Mount Kaukau. This track is also used by mountain bikers and can be challenging. The ridgeline is exposed and weather conditions can be extreme. The route can be completed in stages. Allow 1 hour to return by bus or train.

16. City to Sea Walkway

Go from Bolton Street Cemetery to Shorland Park on the south coast in Island Bay. Visit the Wellington Botanic Garden, explore Central Park in the Town Belt and get spectacular views over Wellington and the Cook Strait. To complete the entire walk in one day you will need a good level of fitness. It can also be done in stages. Allow 30 minutes to return by bus.

17. Te Ara Paparārangi

Take in arguably the best views of Wellington Harbour on this walk along the Harbour Escarpment from Waihinahina Park, Newlands. Allow 30 minutes return via streets.

For more information, maps and buggy walks go to wellington.govt.nz/walks.
1. Wellington Botanic Garden
10min–2hr, various lengths
Views and surprises are around every turn. Microclimates in Wellington Botanic Garden host exotic forest, native bush, floral displays and themed gardens. Bring a lunch and make it an outing, or escape from the office for a quick break.

2. Otari-Wilton’s Bush
10min–2.5hr, various lengths
Choose from the many short walks in New Zealand’s only public botanic garden dedicated solely to our native plants. Experience life in the tree canopy walkway through native bush. The 4.5km Skyline Loop Walk is suitable for those with good fitness – it is steep and challenging in places.

3. Matiu/Somes Island
10min–1hr, various lengths
Take the ferry to explore the emerald jewel in Wellington’s harbour (after a biosecurity check!). This pest-free island is being ecologically restored and is now home to many threatened native species. Good quality tracks give you access to most parts of the island. Open daily.

4. Wrights Hill Loops
Loop One 1.5hr, 2.4km; Loop Two 45min, 1km
Check out the WWII military fortress, spot rare birds and take in the views. Mostly sheltered but exposed in some places.

5. Eastern Walkway and Loop
2hr, 2.5km
Wide views of Wellington Harbour and Barrett Reef. Visit Ataturk Memorial above Tarakena Bay and follow the coast to Oruaiti to see the historic pā and military structures at Fort Dorset. Steep and exposed in places. Breaker Bay is popular with naturists.

6. Te Ahumairangi Loops
Stellin Loop 1.5hr, 1.4km; Elephant Loop 2hr, 2.4km
Get on top of Wellington’s central city at Te Ahumairangi. Travel through regenerating native bush and historic pine plantations for breathtaking views. Steep in places.

7. Te Ara o Ngā Tūpuna
2hr, 3.5km (one way)
Step back in time and follow the footsteps of the first people to live in Wellington. Walk from Pipitea Pā to Te Aro Pā and Waitangi Park to discover what life was like for the first Wellingtonians hundreds of years ago.

8. Brooklyn Wind Turbine Route
2hr, 7.8km (one way)
Explore regenerating bush in Polhill Reserve and take in the best views of the city. This route is popular with mountain bikers, runners – and native birds from the nearby sanctuary. From the top of Aro Street follow Transient, Sawmill, Fenceline and Windmill tracks.

9. Mount Victoria Lookout Loop
1.5hr, 4km
Only minutes from the city. Walk through historic pine forests and enjoy unbeatable views of the harbour and city.

10. Red Rocks Coastal Walk
2–3hr, 8km (return)
Experience the wildest part of Wellington’s rugged south coast. Meet the seals in winter just beyond Red Rocks (Pariwhero) at Sinclair Head – but don’t get too close! The easy grade coastal track from Owhiro Bay passes historic baches built in the early 1900s. The 4WD track is closed to vehicles every Sunday. Exposed during southerly winds.

11. Khandallah Park Loop (Mt Kaukau)
3hr, 4.2km
Climb to the top of Mount Kaukau through some of Wellington's original native forest. Check out the kōura (freshwater crayfish) in the stream and keep an eye out for native birds. Steep in places.

12. Makara Walkway
3–4hr, 11.7km (one way)
From Windmill car park follow marked trails: Initially Windmill until you meet Carparts Ext then right onto Barking Emu, then follow Red Rocks Track along ridges until you get down to the coast. Return to Owhiro Bay via Red Rocks Coastal Walk (10). Exposed.

13. Southern Walkway
1hr, 2.5km
Explore old growth tawa and podocarp forest on this interesting trail. From Braenose Place walk through the towering forest and across Peterhouse Street to find some impressive matai and rata before heading back via Oriel Avenue or return the way you came.

14. Northern Walkway
1hr, 2km
From the top of Hatton Street in Karori, follow the track up through the regenerating podocarp/tawa and kohekohe forest. Head to the summit for panoramic views, then complete the loop track to the car park.

Map key

Managed by Wellington City Council
Walking track
Wheelchair accessible
Beware of seals
Mountain biking
Points of interest

For more information, maps and buggy walks go to wellington.govt.nz/walks