

Phulchoki Day Hike: the Highest Hill of the Kathmandu Valley

Before you go · last checked on 15 October 2026

At a glance

Days	1 day, about 7 hours on foot
Highest point	2,782 m (Phulchoki)
Grade	Challenging
Starts	Kathmandu (Godawari)
Ends	Kathmandu
Best season	Autumn, winter and spring
Sleeping	None (day hike)

Is this walk for you?

It suits you if:

- You are fit and want a hard day close to the city.
- You love birds or flowers.
- You want to train for a trek.
- You can walk 7 hours.

Think twice if:

- You want a gentle walk: try Champadevi or Nagarkot instead.
- You have knee problems: the descent is long.
- You want a quiet summit: there are radio masts and a road to the top.

The honest downsides

- A long, steep climb and descent.
- A road also reaches the top, and there are radio masts.
- The view is often hazy from April to September.
- The forest paths split and are easy to lose.

When to walk it

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Best	Good	Best	Best	Good	Wet	Wet	Wet	Wet	Best	Best	Best

In winter there can be frost or a little snow at the top. In the monsoon the trail is slippery and full of leeches.

Permits and papers

No trekking permit is needed. The botanical garden at Godawari has its own entrance fee if we visit it.

- ☐ Passport, valid for at least six months, and a copy
- ☐ Your Nepal visa
- ☐ Passport photos for the permits
- ☐ Travel insurance that covers trekking at this altitude and helicopter rescue

For your budget

My guide fee for this walk is about \$ 35 a day, the same for 1 to 5 people.

A porter, if you hire one: about the same as a guide's day rate. Permits, transport, rooms and meals are paid separately, at cost.

What	Paid to	About	Note
Guide (me)	Rujan Neupane	My day rate for one day	One rate for 1 to 5 people
Car to Godawari and back	The driver	Agreed before the day	Paid at cost
Botanical garden entry, if we visit	The garden	Official price	Paid at cost
Lunch and tea	Tea shops and small restaurants on the way	What they charge	You pay them directly

What to pack

Challenging Trek Packing List

CHALLENGING GRADE TREKKING PACKING LIST

General

- ☐ Duffel bag: 75L–90L heavy-duty waterproof PVC duffel
- ☐ Daypack: 30L–40L technical pack with rain cover
- ☐ Sleeping bag: 4-Season down bag (rated to -15°C to -20°C)
- ☐ Trekking poles: Heavy-duty collapsible poles with mud/snow baskets
- ☐ Headlamp: 300+ lumen headlamp with red-light mode
- ☐ Water gear: 2x 1L Nalgene wide-mouth bottles + insulated jackets
- ☐ Water purification: Chlorine dioxide tablets & Steripen UV backup

Head & Face

- ☐ Sun hat & Warm beanie: Wide-brim cap & high-loft wool beanie
- ☐ Glacier glasses: Category 3 or 4 UV400 eyewear with side shields
- ☐ Buffs: 2x Neck gaiters (1 thermal fleece, 1 lightweight)
- ☐ Sun care: High-altitude SPF 50+ sunscreen & SPF 30+ lip balm

Upper Body

- ☐ Base layers: 3x Heavyweight Merino wool long-sleeve thermals
- ☐ Mid-layer: Technical grid fleece or hybrid jacket
- ☐ Down jacket: Heavyweight 800+ fill-power insulated down parka
- ☐ Hard shell: Gore-Tex 3-layer fully waterproof jacket

Hand & Lower Body

- ☐ Gloves: 1x Liner gloves + 1x Heavy waterproof mountaineering gloves
- ☐ Base layer bottoms: 2x Thermal merino tights
- ☐ Trekking trousers: 2x Technical softshell pants
- ☐ Shell pants: Waterproof hard shell pants with side zips

Footwear & Technical

- ☐ Boots: High-ankle waterproof mountain trekking boots
- ☐ Traction: Microspikes / 12-spike crampons for glacier ice
- ☐ Camp shoes: Insulated slip-ons or lightweight camp shoes
- ☐ Socks & Gaiters: 5x Heavy merino socks, liner socks, & ankle gaiters

Backpack, Electronics & Care

- ☐ Docs & Cash: Waterproof pouch for permits, insurance, & local cash
- ☐ Electronics: 20,000+ mAh power bank & universal adapters
- ☐ Toiletries: Biodegradable wet wipes, toilet paper, & hand sanitizer
- ☐ Medical: Altitude meds (Diamox), comprehensive first aid, & blister kit