

Upper Dolpo Trek

Route sheet · last checked on 10 October 2026

At a glance

Days	23 days, Kathmandu to Kathmandu
Highest point	5,360 m (Kang La)
Grade	Strenuous
Starts	Kathmandu
Ends	Kathmandu
Best season	Late spring, summer and autumn
Sleeping	Camping, with some simple lodges and homestays

Permits: Three permits are needed: the Upper Dolpo Restricted Area Permit, the Lower Dolpo Restricted Area Permit for the Tarap valley on the way out, and the Shey Phoksundo National Park permit.

Dolpo is a restricted area. The permits are issued only through a registered trekking company, and you must walk with a licensed guide. Since March 2026 one trekker alone can get them. I arrange them with you through the registered company I work with, at the official price.

The permits are made in Kathmandu before we leave. Bring your passport and passport photos. They are checked at Dunai, at the park entrance and in the villages.

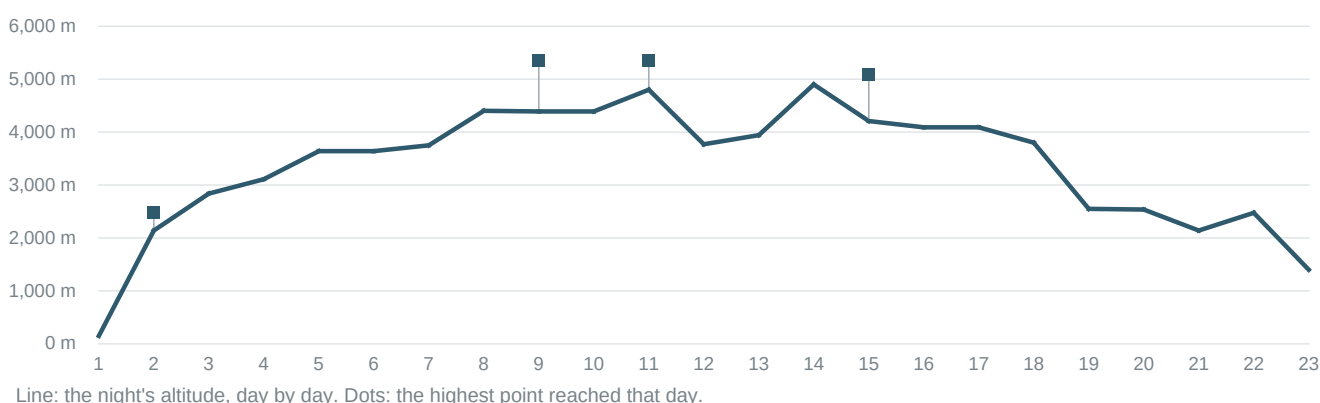
The route as I walk it

This is how I usually walk it, slowly. It is an example, not a fixed package: we plan the days together, around you, the season and the weather.

Day	Where	Night	Highest	On foot
1	Kathmandu to Nepalgunj by air	150 m		
2	Nepalgunj to Juphal by air, walk to Dunai	2,140 m	2,475 m	3 hours
3	Dunai to Chhepka	2,838 m		6 hours
4	Chhepka to Rechi (Amchi Hospital)	3,110 m		5 hours
5	Rechi to Ringmo and Phoksundo Lake	3,640 m		5 hours
6	Rest day at Phoksundo Lake	3,640 m		
7	Ringmo to the Phoksundo Khola camp	3,750 m		6 hours
8	Phoksundo Khola to Phoksundo Bhanjyang	4,402 m		6 hours
9	Over the Kang La to Shey Gompa	4,390 m	5,360 m	7 hours
10	Rest day at Shey Gompa	4,390 m		
11	Over the Nangdalo La to Namduna	4,800 m	5,350 m	7 hours
12	Namduna to Saldang	3,770 m		6 hours
13	Saldang to Sibu	3,942 m		6 hours
14	Sibu to Jeng La Phedi	4,900 m		6 hours

15	Over the Jeng La to Tokyu	4,209 m	5,090 m	6 hours
16	Tokyu to Dho Tarap	4,090 m		4 hours
17	Rest day at Dho Tarap	4,090 m		
18	Dho Tarap to Kamakharka	3,800 m		6 hours
19	Kamakharka to Khanigaon	2,550 m		6 hours
20	Khanigaon to Tarakot	2,537 m		5 hours
21	Tarakot to Dunai	2,140 m		5 hours
22	Dunai to Juphal	2,475 m		3 hours
23	Juphal to Nepalgunj and Kathmandu by air	1,400 m		

How the trek climbs



Safety on the trail

- Rest and acclimatisation days: 3: Phoksundo Lake, Shey Gumpa and Dho Tarap.
- Go slowly, drink enough, and never go higher with symptoms of altitude sickness. If they get worse, we go down. The Safety plan has the details for this route.
- Licensed & Trained Guide: Your safety is the foundation of every trip I lead. I am licensed by the Government of Nepal as a trekking guide (licence no. 18550) and a tour guide (licence no. 4606), and trained in first aid, basic rescue and trekking-based search and rescue. I check your gear and the weather before every stage, so you can enjoy the trek with peace of mind. For groups larger than four, I bring in additional government-licensed guides I have worked with before.
- Health & First Aid: Certified Wilderness First Responder: I hold up-to-date certifications in Wilderness First Aid and CPR, ensuring I am fully trained to handle medical emergencies, injuries, and illnesses in remote terrain. Proactive Health & Altitude Tracking: Your safety is my daily priority. I monitor your pulse, oxygen saturation (SpO2), and acclimatisation levels daily using a pulse oximeter to catch early signs of Altitude Sickness (AMS). Fully Stocked First Aid Kit: I carry a comprehensive medical kit on every trek, equipped with essential medications, wound dressings, and emergency response supplies tailored to the route. Established Emergency & Evacuation Protocols: I maintain clear protocols and direct lines of communication for medical evacuations, including swift coordination with helicopter rescue teams if severe conditions arise. Strict Hygiene & Safe Water Standards: I ensure clean, safe drinking water throughout the trail and verify strict hygiene practices during all meal breaks to protect you against waterborne illnesses. Personalised Care & Medical Attention: Before we step onto the trail, I review any health concerns or allergies you may have so I can cater to your needs and adapt our pace accordingly.
- Communication: Satellite & Emergency Communication: I carry a reliable satellite messaging device (such as a Garmin inReach) to stay connected in remote areas with no cellular coverage, allowing for real-time location

tracking and instant SOS capabilities.

Daily Family & Loved One Updates: When signal or satellite access allows, I provide regular updates to your emergency contacts or loved ones so they always know you are safe and on schedule.

Transparent Route & Weather Briefings: Before we set off each day, I conduct clear briefings on the upcoming terrain, expected weather conditions, trail milestones, and safety protocols.

Open & Encouraging Dialogue: I foster an environment where you can freely express how you're feeling—whether you're experiencing fatigue, discomfort, or symptoms of altitude—without hesitation or judgment.

Direct Operations & Rescue Contact: I maintain continuous connectivity with ground support, local lodge networks, and emergency rescue services to coordinate logistics seamlessly if plans need to adjust.

- **Route Experience: Deep Local & Trail Knowledge:** Having navigated these routes extensively across varying seasons, I know the terrain, trail conditions, hidden hazards, and optimal rest spots in intimate detail.

Flexible & Adaptive Itineraries: I constantly evaluate trail status, weather patterns, and team energy levels, making smart, real-time adjustments to our daily pace or route to avoid risky conditions.

Smart Pace & Acclimatisation Management: I set a steady, sustainable pace (bistarai, bistarai) designed specifically to promote proper altitude adaptation and prevent physical burnout.

Vetted Rest Stops & Accommodation: I choose reliable, high-standard teahouses, campsites, and lodge networks along the route, ensuring safe, hygienic, and comfortable places to rest every night.

Terrain & Environmental Hazard Navigation: From loose scree and river crossings to icy passes and rockfall zones, I guide you through technical and treacherous trail sections with hands-on support and proper technique.

- **Daily Health Check: Morning & Evening Health Checks:** I conduct routine health check-ins every morning and evening to track how your body is adapting to the altitude, workload, and changing climate.

Vital Signs & SpO2 Monitoring: Using a medical-grade pulse oximeter, I measure your blood oxygen levels (SpO2) and heart rate twice daily to spot early, subtle signs of Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS).

Lake Louise Scoring System: I utilize the standardized Lake Louise Score card to systematically assess symptoms like headache, fatigue, nausea, and sleep quality, taking the guesswork out of altitude safety.

Hydration & Appetite Tracking: I monitor your daily fluid intake and meal consumption, ensuring you stay properly hydrated and sufficiently fueled for tough trekking days.

Early Intervention & Action Plans: If any health metrics or symptoms dip, I take immediate, preventive action—whether that means adjusting our daily pace, adding a rest day, or initiating a controlled descent.

- **Emergency Evacuation: Direct Helicopter & Ground Coordination:** In the event of severe illness or injury, I maintain direct contact with local helicopter rescue operators and ground transport services to arrange immediate, rapid evacuation.

Insurance Verification & Claims Support: Before setting out, I review and verify your high-altitude travel insurance details so rescue protocols can be triggered instantly without bureaucratic delays.

Rapid Medical Evacuation Protocols: I carry standard, high-altitude emergency protocols to prepare and stabilize you quickly, ensuring a swift transfer to the nearest medical facility or hospital in Kathmandu.

Constant SOS Satellite Connectivity: Using my satellite messaging device, I can trigger a 24/7 global emergency SOS and send exact GPS coordinates to search-and-rescue teams, even in complete dead zones.

24/7 Ground Operations Backing: I work alongside an experienced city-based support team that coordinates hospital admissions, logistics, and communication with your insurance provider and loved ones while I manage the evacuation on-site.

Contact

- Rujan Neupane, licensed trekking guide: +977 984-3808583 (phone and WhatsApp)
- Email: rujanneupane@gmail.com