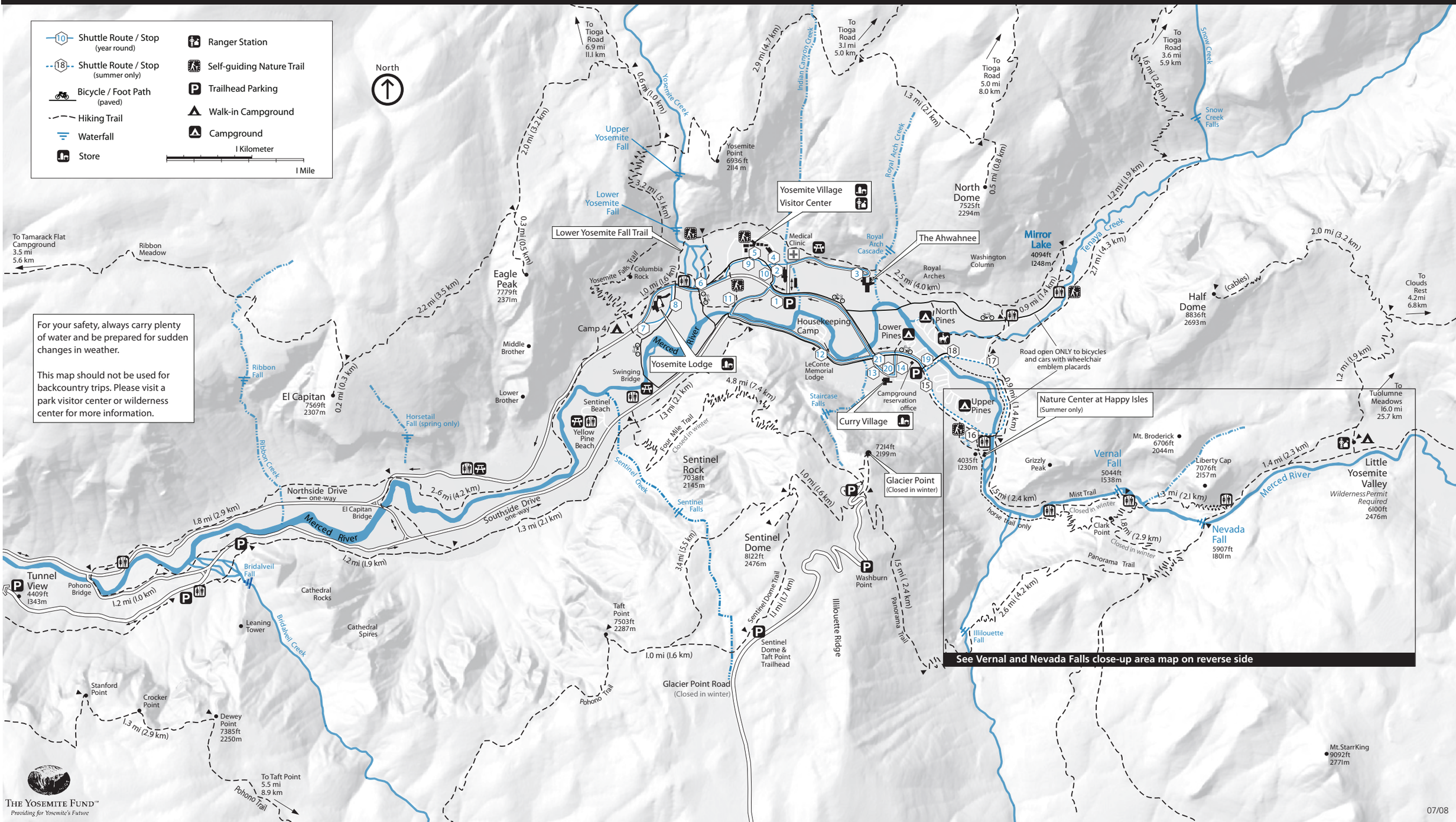
Yosemite Valley Hiking Map

Yosemite National Park
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



The Yosemite Fund™
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07/08

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Easy (flat and short)

Bridalveil Fall — 0.5 miles/0.8 km round-trip; 20 minutes
Begin at the Bridalveil Fall parking area

A paved trail leads from the Bridalveil Fall parking area to the base of this waterfall, which flows year round. Walk back to the parking area via the same trail. Expect lots of spray in spring and early summer.

Lower Yosemite Fall — 1.1 miles/1.7 km loop trail; 30 minutes
Begin at the Lower Yosemite Fall Trailhead **(shuttle stop #6)**

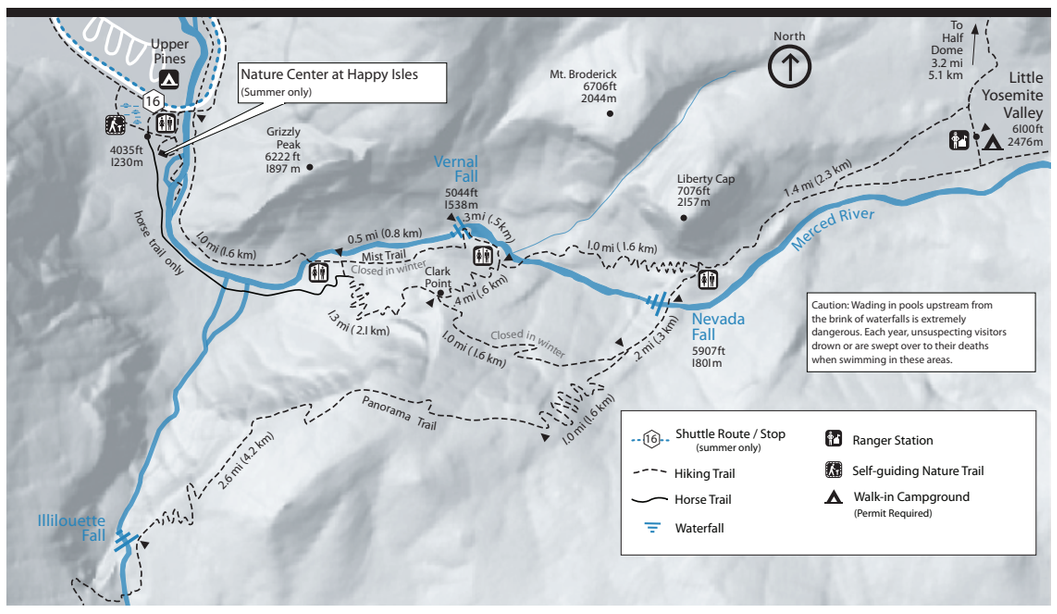
This short, easy walk rewards visitors with spectacular views of Upper and Lower Yosemite Falls. This waterfall may be dry in late summer and early fall. Expect lots of spray in spring and early summer.

Cook's Meadow Loop — 1 mile/1.6 km; 30 minutes
Begin at **shuttle stop #5 or #9** (Visitor Center)

This short walk offers stunning views of Half Dome, Glacier Point, and the Royal Arches. From the shuttle bus stop at the Visitor Center (stop #5/#9), walk west along the bike path (in the direction of Yosemite Falls). At shuttle bus stop #6, cross the street (watch for traffic!) and follow the bike path, bearing left as the path forks. At the Sentinel Bridge parking area, walk out onto the bridge to enjoy a classic view of Half Dome (photographed by Ansel Adams) before returning to the parking area. Follow the boardwalk back across the meadow, cross the street, and turn right to return to the Visitor Center (stop #5).

Mirror Lake/Meadow (dry in summer and fall) — 2 miles/3.2 km round-trip to lake; 1 hour
5 miles/8 km loop around the lake; 2 hours
Begin at Mirror Lake Trailhead **(shuttle stop #17).**

From the shuttle stop, a paved trail leads directly to Mirror Lake. Hikers may access a loop trail from the paved path. This loop follows Tenaya Creek beyond the lake, crosses two bridges beyond the Snow Creek intersection and returns past Mirror Lake. When filled in winter and spring, the lake offers beautiful reflections of surrounding cliffs. This is a great place to see wildlife. Exhibits detail the story of the area's lake-to-meadow succession.



Moderate (flat & long)

Valley Floor Loop — **Full loop:** 13 miles/20.9 km; 5 to 7 hours. **Half loop:** 6.5 miles/10.5 km; 2.5 to 3.5 hours
Begin at the Lower Yosemite Fall Trailhead **(shuttle stop #6)**

This trail follows many of the Valley's first east-west trails and wagon roads. The half-loop trail crosses the Valley on El Capitan Bridge. Continue on to Bridalveil Fall for the full loop. The Valley Floor Loop provides solitude with occasional route-finding difficulty. Hike through meadows, forests, and along the Merced River. Along the way, enjoy striking views of Sentinel Rock, Cathedral Rocks, Bridalveil Fall, El Capitan, Three Brothers, and Yosemite Falls.

Strenuous trails may be considered moderate if a only a portion of the trail is hiked.

Strenuous (steep and long)

Four Mile Trail — 9.6 miles/15.5 km round-trip. 6 to 8 hours; 3,200 ft/975 m elevation gain
Begin at the Four Mile Trailhead along Southside Drive in Yosemite Valley

In summer months, take the **El Capitan Shuttle** to the trailhead. Trail can also be accessed from year-round Valley Visitor **Shuttle Stop #7**, adding about ½ mile to the total distance. This trail begins near the base of Sentinel Rock and climbs to the top of Yosemite Valley at Glacier Point. Although many hikers do this trail as a round-trip hike, an alternative in the summer is to purchase a bus ticket to Glacier Point ($) and hike down. Reservations are required; visit a DNC tour desk for details. Trail closed in winter due to ice and extremely hazardous conditions.

Panorama Trail — 8.5 miles/13.7 km one-way to Valley floor (via Mist Trail); 6 hours for 3,200 ft/975 m descent
Begin at the Panorama Trailhead, Glacier Point

As its name implies, this trail offers some incredible panoramic views of Yosemite Valley. The trail crosses Illilouette Fall after 2 miles (3.2 km) and continues partially uphill along the Panorama Cliff. At the top of Nevada Fall, the trail joins the Mist and John Muir Trails to Happy Isles. In the summer, hikers may purchase a one-way bus ticket to Glacier Point ($) and hike down. Reservations required; visit a DNC tour desk for details.

Upper Yosemite Fall — 7.2 miles/11.6 km round-trip; 6 to 8 hours; 2,700 ft/823 m elevation gain
Begin at the Upper Yosemite Fall Trailhead, Camp 4 **(shuttle stop #7)**

One of Yosemite oldest historic trails (built 1873 to 1877), the Upper Yosemite Fall trail leads to the top of North America's tallest waterfall 2,425 feet (739 m) above the Valley floor. Do not stray off the marked path, as you will find steep drops adjacent to the trail. Enjoy spectacular views from Columbia Rock located one mile (and dozens of switchbacks) from the trailhead.

Vernal & Nevada Falls — **Vernal Fall footbridge:** 1.6 miles/2.6 km round-trip;1.5 hours with 400 ft./122 m. elevation gain
Vernal Fall: 3 miles/4.8 km round-trip; 3 hours with 1,000 ft./366 m. elevation gain (via Mist Trail)
Nevada Fall: 7 miles/11.2 km round-trip; 5 to 6 hours with 2,000 ft./610 m. elevation gain (via Mist Trail)
Begin at Happy Isles **(shuttle stop #16)**

An excellent view of Vernal Fall is visible from the footbridge at 0.75 miles (1.3 km). Beyond the bridge, at 0.2 miles, the Mist Trail and the John Muir Trail diverge. To proceed directly to the top of Vernal Fall, follow the Mist Trail 0.5 mile (0.8 km) up a steep granite stairway of over 600 steps. Prepare for slippery footing and a tremendous amount of waterfall spray in spring and early summer. The top of Nevada Fall may be reached by continuing 1.3 miles (2.1 km) along the Mist Trail. Nevada Fall may also be reached via the John Muir Trail (bypassing Vernal Fall). Portions of the John Muir and Mist Trails are closed in winter due to hazardous conditions (see inset map).

Half Dome
Permit required Fridays-Sundays & holidays — (cables typically up from late May to early October) **via Mist Trail** 14 mi/22.5 km round-trip; **via John Muir Trail** 16.3 mi/26.3 km round-trip; **via Mist and John Muir Trails** 15.2 mi/24.4 km round-trip; 10 to 12 hours; 4,800 ft./1,463 m. elevation gain. Begin at Happy Isles **(shuttle stop #16)**

DO NOT BEGIN THIS ASCENT IF: 1) the cables are down, 2) there is any chance of rain (moisture makes the granite too slick for safety), or 3) there is any chance of lightning. Follow the Mist Trail or John Muir Trail to Nevada Fall. Continue on the trail, following the signs to Half Dome. The last 900 feet (275 m) of trail is a very steep climb up the east side of Half Dome. Cables assist hikers on the final 400 feet (122 m). They consist of two steel cables, about 3 feet apart and suspended at arm's height from pipes set in the rock. The top of Half Dome is a fairly large and level open surface. Camping is not permitted on top of Half Dome.

This publication was paid for through a grant from The Yosemite Fund. The Yosemite Fund™ Providing for Yosemite's Future