

3.798 m

The Grossglockner

Summit ascents

Großglockner

Feeling safe on the highest point in Austria



Information for mountain hikers

on local mountain guides, mountain rescue, tourism associations, the Hohe Tauern National Park and the Austrian Alpine Association

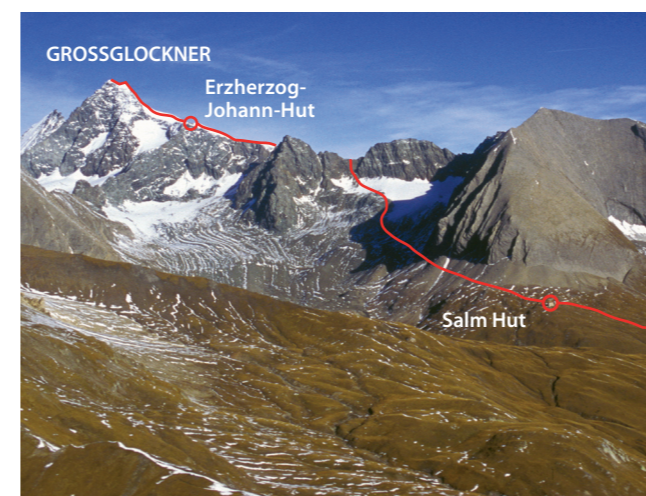
The highest mountain in Austria acts as a magnet for domestic and international mountain hikers. Starting with the most common ascents via Salm Hut and Stüdl Hut, and continuing over Stüdlgrat ("Stüdl Ridge") and extreme icy ascents (such as Palavicinirinne ["Palavicini Gorge"]), it offers tempting goals to all mountain hikers. The Grossglockner is repeatedly underestimated by mountain hikers. Even the supposedly simplest of ascents from Salm Hut or Stüdl Hut up to Erzherzog-Johann Hut and the Grossglockner demand that mountain hikers have alpine experience and the correct methods for roping and securing techniques. In the last few years the Grossglockner has no longer been climbed only in summer, but has increasingly become a winter target for people on skiing trips and wintertime mountain hikers. Furthermore, in the last few years, it has become possible to regularly encounter mountain hikers with tents, especially on Ködnitzkees, although camping is generally prohibited in the Hohe Tauern National Park. This trend has resulted in an increasing number of serious accidents involving difficult mountain rescue operations. Mountain hikers and skiers should therefore be provided with important information on preventative safety measures. A large-scale census carried out by the Austrian Alpine Association allows us to make two fundamental statements:

1. The Grossglockner does get full, but only on certain days, at certain times and in certain locations.
2. A lot of mountain hikers underestimate this mountain.

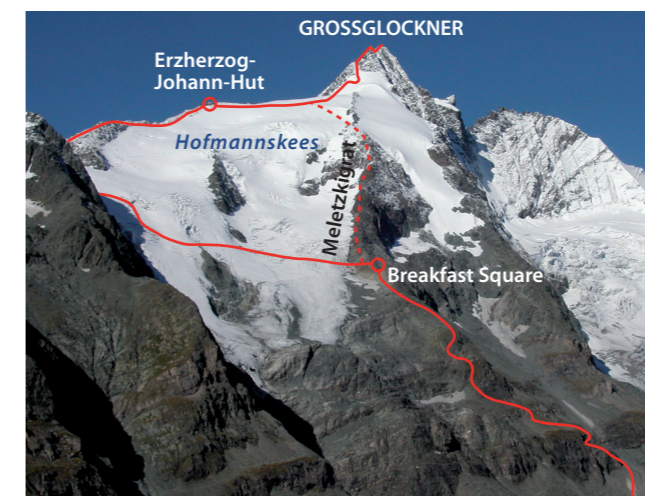
Descent is from the Kleinglockner in the direction of Erzherzog-Johann Hut.



Routes to the top from Kals. Glockner south side



Route to the top from Salm Hut over Hohenwartscharte ("Hohenwart Gap")



Routes to the top from Heiligenblut. Glockner north side

The main routes lead to the top from the "mountain climbing villages" of Heiligenblut and Kals a. G. to Erzherzog-Johann Hut (3,454m) at Adlersruhe. Any ascent of the Grossglockner is recommended as a two-day trip.

- Drive a car or take the bus from **Kals a. G.** (1,325m) via Kals Glocknerstrasse to Lucknerhaus (1,920m); and then via Luckner Hut (2,241 m) to Stüdl Hut (2,802m; 3 hours). From Stüdl Hut take AV path no. 712 to the cairn at the beginning of the Ködnitzkees. Cross the Ködnitzkees and over a protected ridge to Erzherzog-Johann Hut (3,454m) to Adlersruhe. An alternative route takes us from Lucknerhaus to Luckner Hut and, after continuing to walk for 10 minutes, we arrive at a fork. We then turn right onto path no. 712A, to Mürztal Track. Take this route, protected in parts, up to Erzherzog-Johann Hut (4.5 hours).

- From **Heiligenblut**, go along Mautstrasse to Franz-Josefs-Höhe ("Franz-Josefs Summit"); over the Pasterze glacier path (glacier track), down to Pasterze; after crossing the glacier, a steep path leads up to "Frühstücksplatz" ("Breakfast Square" [2,793 m]); continue over Hofmannskees, which has plenty of crevices, to Salmkamp ("Salm Field") and to Erzherzog-Johann Hut at Adlersruhe (5 hours). An alternative route from "Breakfast Square" is via Glocknerkar Field (= "Melezkigrad"; class II degree of difficulty).

- From **Heiligenblut**, through Leitertal ("Leiter Valley") (on Fürstbischof Salm path) to Salm Hut (4 to 5 hours) or on Mautstrasse to Glocknerhaus and over Stocker Gap to Salm Hut (2,638m; 3 hours); an alternative route leads from **Lucknerhaus** to Glorer Hut in 2 hours and another hour to Salm Hut; over Hohenwartkees and the western side of the rocks (class I degree of difficulty, protected) into Hohenwart Gap. Continue over Salm Field to Erzherzog-Johann Hut (3 to 3.5 hours).

Beware: glacier visits on all routes; ropes should definitely be used. Crampons required.

Beware: No small route on the Grossglockner is easy, and not the climb over the Salm Hut! Stüdl Ridge is not a climbing ascent.

There are around 30 routes - including variations - leading up to the Grossglockner. More than 90% of all ascents in the summer months are made from **Salm Hut** and **Stüdl Hut** over the normal path to **Erzherzog-Johann Hut** and then over **Glocknerleitl** to the summit.

The ascent from **Stüdl Hut** over **Stüdl Ridge**, leading directly onto the Grossglockner, is also very popular.

- **„Ascent of the Grossglockner from Erzherzog-Johann Hut“**

360m climbing height, fixed securing points in places, class II degree of difficulty, up to 40 degrees on "Glocknerleitl", 1.5 to 2.5 hours (even on the easiest descent).

From Erzherzog-Johann Hut over Firnrücken ("Firn Ridge") and the steep, 40 degrees ice overhang of "Glocknerleitl" up to the point where the rocks begin. Over the ridge to the Kleinglockner, descent into the Glockner Gap and over steep paving (class II degree of difficulty) up to the summit cross. Bolts with rings and iron sticks are provided as securing option all over the rocky area.

- **„Stüdlgrat“** (south-west ridge), 550m climbing height from entrance, partly fixed securing points, class II and III and on one section class IV degree of difficulty, 3.5 hours (1,000m climbing height from Stüdl Hut, 5 hours).

From Stüdl Hut to Teischnitzkees, travelling west under Luisen Ridge to Luisen Gap and further west past the Grat ("ridge") and directly to the entrance of Stüdl Ridge. Climbing is usually directly on the ridge - danger of rock falls on the west side. The really difficult climbing only begins from the second half of the ridge (Breakfast Square).

Dangers

Rock falls

As a result of climate change (e.g. melting of permafrost, glacier loss), the risk of rock falls is increasing. Rock falls may also come off the mountainsides and onto the adjacent glacier. Late spring, or autumn, constitute the best times for trips onto the ice.

Thunderstorms /sudden falls in temperature

Such events are related to ice floods, snowfall and poor visibility. The degree of difficulty on rocky ascents suddenly increases. Orientation becomes almost impossible in "white out" on glaciers in Glocknerleitl.

Avalanches

Avalanches may occur at any time of the year, especially after snowfall and subsequent wind or warming. Access to Pasterze is made very dangerous by avalanches in winter.

Glacier crevices

Ropes should be used on glaciers, as a crevice fall may only be controlled through ropes and the correct roping and securing techniques.

Subjective dangers - man

Advances in equipment, alpine training and technical resources have been noticeable in recent years. As a result, understanding of nature, instinct and therefore the ability to take the right decisions with regard to the weather and terrain have reduced. The size of the Grossglockner, the large number of ropes on normal ascents and long, exposed ridge ascents require rapid progress and climbing and securing, using short distances between ropes.

Insufficient skills

This has also increasingly become an issue by virtue of exposure and narrow locations in the summit area; a lot of people struggle on the way up and down "Glocknerleitl", over the narrow "Glockner Gap" and back; lack of expertise in rope usage obstructs groups pressing on from behind, encouraging them to attempt risky overtaking manoeuvres.

Inadequate equipment

Mountain hikers not using ropes, or mountain hikers wanting to overcome the Grossglockner without appropriate use of crampons put themselves and other mountain hikers at risk.

Planning trips

Weather report

The "Alpine Association weather service" offers a recorded announcement and personal advice on the telephone. Local mountain guides and hut landlords are also happy to provide information on weather and conditions on the mountain.

Personal advice: +43/(0)512/291600 (Mon-Sat 13.00-18.00)

Recorded service in Austria

- Overall alpine weather: 0900 91156680

- Eastern Alps: 0900 91156682

- Regional alpine weather: 0900 91156681

Recorded service in Germany

- alpine weather report: 0190116011

Equipment (normal path)

- 1x rucksack 30-40l
- weatherproof high-alpine mountain sport clothing, including jacket, top-quality gloves, hat, gaiters
- instep crampon mountain boots (range of use C/D)
- sunglasses, lip protection, sun protection cream and cover
- sleeping bag for use in huts, means of washing (smallest format)
- first-aid equipment, bivouac sack, forehead lamp
- combination-belt or alpine climbing harness
- mountain ropes (simple rope/10mm/40m)
- crampons with anti-spike plate, 1x ice pick, 2x ice screws
- 2x cords (3m and 5m), 2x strap loops (120cm)
- 5x carabiners, 3 of which have screw retention, safety appliance
- Alpine Association map "Glocknergruppe" no. 40

in addition for access to Stüdl Ridge:

- rock fall helmet, 2x express sets

Knowledge & skills

- surefootedness, head for heights, crampon technique
- physical fitness, condition for 8 hours
- acclimatisation
- roping technique, techniques for crevice rescue*
- securing technique on glaciers and ridges*
- knowledge of orientation*

in addition for access to Stüdl ridge inspection:

- climbing technique - class III to IV degree of difficulty
- securing and abseiling technique*

* not required if led by a mountain guide

Emergency measures

Given that an element of risk can never be excluded when hiking on mountains, use of the mountain rescue service may become necessary. Depending on the accident and/or weather situation, this may involve support from helicopters. A large number of mountain hikers, walkers, climbers and skiers already owe their lives to the selfless operations of rescue volunteers - and not just on the Grossglockner. The mountain rescue service is available under the following emergency number:



112 Euro emergency call

There are various causes of accidents in the area of the Grossglockner, and as a result no specific trend can be identified. Mountain rescue operations on the Grossglockner generally constitute a great challenge, even for rescue teams, and are sometimes associated with very large personal risk.

However, a lot of mountain hikers are unaware of the fact that rescue operations are not free of charge. Every mountain hiker is therefore advised to take out an appropriate insurance policy covering costs of rescue prior to setting out on any mountain adventures. The Austrian Alpine Association therefore offers targeted global insurance cover for any recreational accidents through the **Alpine Association Worldwide Service**. The insurance premium is included in membership fees. Helicopter costs at home and abroad, or mountain rescue operations that are subject to payment of costs, and costs of return following accidents are covered in amounts of up to € 22,000 per person and per insured event.

The mountain rescue service also offers an **insurance policy** for the costs of rescue, which covers such costs up to an amount of € 15,000.

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Important information at a glance

Mountain guide agencies

Mountain Guide Association of Heiligenblut, Hof 4, A-9844 Heiligenblut
tel. +43/(0)4824/27 00, fax +43/(0)4824/27 00-4
email: grossglockner-bergfuehrer@bung.at
www.grossglockner-bergfuehrer.at

Mountain and Ski Guide Association of Kals, A-9981 Kals a. G.
tel. +43/(0)4876/82 63, fax +43/(0)4876/82 63
email: info@glocknerfuehrer.at
www.glocknerfuehrer.at

Mountain rescue - emergency calls

tel. 140 or 112
Heiligenblut location: +43/(0)4824/2004
Kals location: +43/(0)4876/8248

Avalanche warning service, Tyrol

Herrengasse 1-3, A-6020 Innsbruck
free of charge: +43/(0)800 800 503
abroad: +43/(0)512/581839 503
fax (call): +43/(0)512/580915
email: lawine@tirol.gv.at, www.lawine.at

National Park information sites

A-9844 Heiligenblut, tel. +43/(0)4824/2700
A-9981 Kals am Grossglockner, tel. +43/(0)4876/8370
(information sites are only open in the summer season)

Tourism associations/tourist information

A-9844 Heiligenblut, tel. +43/(0)4824/2001-21
email: office@heiligenblut.at, www.heiligenblut.at
A-9981 Kals am Grossglockner, tel. +43/(0)4876/8800
email: kals@tirol.com, www.kalsamgrossglockner.info

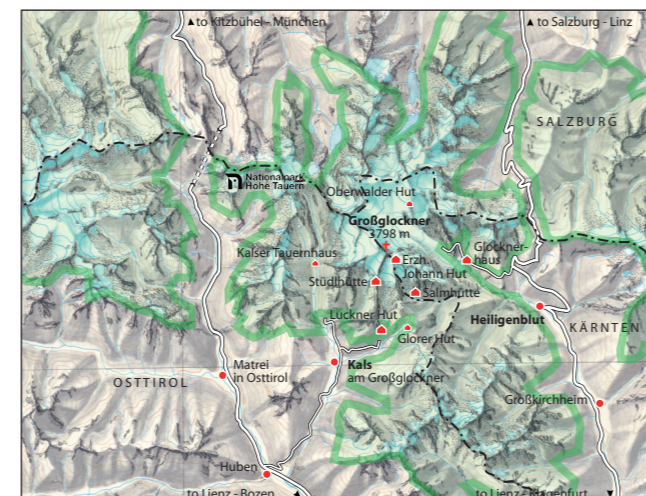
Further information on the Internet:

ÖBB-Postbus GmbH: ⇨ www.postbus.at
Austrian Federal Railways: ⇨ www.oebb.at
Austrian Alpine Association: ⇨ www.alpenverein.at
Hohe Tauern National Park: ⇨ www.hohetauern.at
National Park Region of Hohe Tauern Carinthia: ⇨ www.tauernalpin.at
National Park Region of Hohe Tauern East Tyrol: ⇨ www.hohetauern-osttirol.at

Literature & maps

End, W. (2003): Glockner group and Granatspitz group. Alpine Association guides, 10th updated edition, Rother publishing house; Munich, 697 pages
Alpine Association map no. 40 (Glockner group), 1:25,000 scale map
Alpine Association digital map (East Alps; 3D-animation)
Map of Austria (no. 3227), 1:25,000 scale map and 1:50,000 scale map

National Park and Alpine Association



Background maps: Tyrol atlas; Institute for Geography - Regional Studies Department, University of Innsbruck

Many mountain hikers are completely unaware that the Grossglockner forms the "centrepiece" of the Hohe Tauern National Park. This includes areas in the Federal provinces of Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol, realised in stages between 1981 and 1991. With total surface area of around 1,836 km² the Hohe Tauern National Park is the largest protected area throughout the Alps.

Very few people know that the Grossglockner, and the entire surrounding area in Carinthia and Tyrol, belongs to the Austrian Alpine Association. Back in 1914, a private individual wanted to purchase the central Glockner ridge on the Carinthian side for use as a hunting area, while closing down all paths and ascents to mountain hikers. The timber industry and nature conservation patron from Villach, Albert Wirth, managed to avert this danger. Albert Wirth acquired some 41 km² of land in the area of "Grossglockner-Pasterze-Gamsgrube" in 1918, which he left to the Alpine Association. In 1938 the Alpine Association acquired another 30 km² of land on the south side of the Grossglockner. Today the Austrian Alpine Association is the largest individual landowner in the Hohe Tauern National Park, with 333 km².

By virtue of clever foresight, "securing this property as a nature protection area for all time", it was possible to successfully hold off any high-technology interventions and thus create the conditions for the Hohe Tauern National Park.

Refuges and valley resorts

Salm Hut (2.638 m) - at the upper end of Leiertal Valley
Austrian Alpine Association - Vienna section, 50 sleeping berths, winter rooms with 6 beds, Operational: from the middle of June until the end of September, tel. +43/(0)4824/2089, email: salmhuette@aon.at, www.salmhuette.at

Kals am Großglockner (1.325 m)

The Kals Valley in East Tyrol is on the "other", slightly quieter side of the Grossglockner. After the first ascent from the Kals side in 1855, tourist development began. Through modest extensions of the summer and winter infrastructure, the Kals Valley has retained its unspoiled nature.

The tremendously impressive mountain scenery around Kals am Grossglockner, in the heart of the Hohe Tauern National Park, accommodates a large number of challenging alpine destinations and unique experiences of nature for the walker and mountain hiker, on the sunny side of the Grossglockner. The Glockner village of Kals, where Tyrolean hospitality is properly nurtured, also constitutes an ideal resort for an invaluable family holiday. You are genuinely encouraged to replenish your energy levels, rest and recuperate and enjoy the natural surroundings on your holiday here. The region offers some interesting cultural and traditional events and has an attractive range in all accommodation categories. We would particularly like to recommend the Grossglockner exhibition in Glocknerhaus to all visitors to the mountain hikers' village of Kals.



Stüdl Hut (2.802 m) - in the Fanat Gap

German Alpine Association - Oberland section, 104 sleeping berths, winter rooms - 24 beds, Operational: from end of June until middle of October, and from the beginning of March until the middle of May (base for access to Stüdl Ridge), tel. +43(0)4876/8209, email: info@grossglocknerappartement.at
www.stuedlhuette.at

Erzherzog-Johann Hut (3.454 m) - at Adlersruhe

Austrian Alpine Club, 120 sleeping berths, **no winter rooms**
Operational: from end of June until end of September (major base for ascent of the Grossglockner on the normal path), tel. +43(0)4876/8500, email: info@erzherzog-johann-huette.at, www.erzherzog-johann-huette.at

Heiligenblut (1.291 m)

Heiligenblut, departure point for the first Glockner ascent in 1800, offers a picture postcard view of the Grossglockner. You can find your way here along the dream street of the Alps, Grossglockner Hochalpenstrasse. Experience means recuperation here. Find your way back to nature in the Hohe Tauern National Park, but without having to forego the convenience and comfort - experience the fascination of the mountains, with the Grossglockner in the middle - superb natural surroundings an unspoiled mountainous world. Heiligenblut makes you want to go out walking or hiking in the mountains and skiing in a friendly environment - and an enjoyable holiday is guaranteed with the range of offers from the "TauernAlpin" and "TauernGold" groups ... alone, in pairs, with children or friends.



Mountain guides and history

You can't learn to hike in the mountains from one day to the next. Under the leadership of a state-certified mountain and ski guide it is possible to learn about the correct hiking and climbing techniques on alpine courses at mountaineering schools, as well as tips and tricks for modern roping and securing techniques. If you lack experience and practical skills, you have three options on the Grossglockner:

1. be ready to risk life and limb;
2. forget about climbing the Glockner;
3. trust a mountain and ski guide.

Mountain and ski guides from Heiligenblut and Kals have been leading their guests safely to the summit since the pioneering era for Alpine tourism, as nobody knows the realities on the mountain (weather conditions, local knowledge, risk areas) better than them. Being accompanied by a local mountain and ski guide is considered a guarantee for reaching Austria's highest summit in the greatest possible comfort, while at the same time a Glockner tour, using the knowledge of culture and nature possessed by a mountain and ski guide, becomes a "special mountain experience" in the middle of the Hohe Tauern National Park.

History of Glockner ascents:

The history of the Grossglockner is closely linked to the Alpine Association and to local mountain guides.

1799 and 1800: Franz Xaver Altgraf von Salm, Bishop of Gurk, initiated the Carinthian Grossglockner expeditions.

28. July 1800: first ascent of the Grossglockner. The kudos due to the first Glockner guide belongs to the brothers from Heiligenblut - Martin and Sepp Klotz.

1 September 1853: first Glockner ascent from the East Tyrolean side by Josef Mayr, Josef Schnell and Johann Ranggetiner from Kals.

1869: Prague merchant Johann Stüdl, for whom Kals a. G. became a second home, set up the 1st East Alpine Mountain Guide Association on the instructions of the Alpine Association.

5 August 1869: Karl Hofmann; first access to Hofmannskeeses

1870: founding of the Mountain Guide Association of Heiligenblut.



Skiing + winter ascents

A few years ago the Grossglockner was still primarily climbed in the summer months. The increasing number of skiers has substantially changed the picture in recent years. Today the Grossglockner is climbed virtually all year round. However, winter ascents are very often underestimated, since conditions can be incomparably difficult at this time of year, in contrast to the summer. Cold, rocks that are covered in ice, wind, altitude and conditioning requirements should not be underestimated. Planning time can be much more demanding for skiing or winter hiking than in summer. A ski tour or winter ascent of the Grossglockner should therefore only be undertaken by experienced and fit alpinists, or in the company of a local mountain and ski guide. The best time to visit the Grossglockner is in spring, from the middle of March.

Preparing and planning trips

- objective self-evaluation of physical condition and skiing ability
- obtain information: weather report, avalanche reports (www.lawine.at), conditions
- map (AV Glockner group map no. 40), guide literature

Equipment

- high-Alpine equipment: combination belt, ropes, pick-axe, crampons, ice screws, cords, strap loops, glacier glasses, sun cream with high light protection factor, etc.
- LVS appliance, sensor, shovel, bivouac sack, first-aid pack

Important advice

- select safe ascents and descents
- behave in a way that allows for avalanches (gaps in the group, individual departures, etc.)
- rope securing when ascending the Grossglockner also required by skiers

Departure point and accommodation option

- Lucknerhaus (1,920m; accessible from Kals a. Grossglockner via Kals Glocknerstrasse, open from the beginning of February until the end of October and over Christmas)
- Stüdl Hut (2,802m; open from the beginning of March until the middle of May)

Guide literature

Weiss, R., S. Weiss, K. Schall, Carinthian and East Tyrolean Mountain Guides (2002): Pleasure Skiing Atlas South Tyrol & East Tyrol South, 2nd updated edition, Schall publishing house; Vienna, 312 pages.