



Uluru–Kata Tjuṯa National Park Notes

Please don't climb

'That's a really important sacred thing that you are climbing. You shouldn't climb. It's not the real thing about this place. The real thing is listening to everything' - traditional owner.

Anangu traditional owners of Uluru–Kata Tjuṯa National Park have a responsibility to teach and safeguard visitors to our land. We feel great sadness when a person dies or is hurt on our land. We would like to educate people on the reasons we ask you not to climb and if you choose to climb, we ask that you do so safely.

Cultural reasons

We ask visitors not to climb Uluru because of its spiritual significance as the traditional route of the ancestral *Mala* men on their arrival at Uluru. We prefer that visitors explore Uluru through the wide range of guided walks and interpretive attractions on offer in the park. At the Cultural Centre you will learn more about these, and about the significance of Uluru in *Anangu* culture.

Safety reasons

The climb is physically demanding and can be dangerous. At least 35 people have died while attempting to climb Uluru and many others have been injured. At 346 metres, Uluru is higher than the Eiffel Tower, as high as a 95-storey building. The climb is very steep and can be very slippery. It can be very hot at any time of the year and strong wind gusts can hit the summit or slopes at any time. Every year people are rescued by park rangers, many suffering serious injuries such as broken bones, heat exhaustion and extreme dehydration.

Environmental reasons

There are also significant environmental impacts of climbing Uluru. If you have a close look you can see the path is smooth from millions of footsteps since the 1950s. This erosion is changing the face of Uluru.

Also, there are no toilet facilities on top of Uluru, and no soil to dig a hole. You can imagine what happens many times a day when the climb is open. When it rains, everything gets washed off the rock and into the waterholes where precious reptiles, birds, animals and frogs live and depend on that water. A water quality study at Uluru has found significantly higher bacterial levels in the waterholes fed by runoff from the climb site, compared to those further away.

Less people are climbing

The proportion of visitors who climb Uluru has dropped. It is estimated that around 38 per cent of visitors climb each year, down from 74 per cent in 1990. Visitors from some countries are much more likely to climb than others. During a recent survey, most visitors who didn't climb mentioned, as the reason, their desire to show respect for *Anangu* and their culture. Other reasons include lack of interest in climbing, safety concerns, lack of fitness and fear of heights.

Risks and safety precautions

If you choose to climb, please be aware of the following risks and safety precautions. Do not attempt to climb Uluru if you have high or low blood pressure, heart problems, breathing problems, a fear of heights, or if you are elderly, a young child, or not reasonably fit.

For your safety the climb is always closed:

- OVER NIGHT - outside park opening times
- SUMMER - from 8am during the Summer Seasonal Closure Period - December, January and February
- HEAT - from 8am if the temperature forecast (at 4.30pm the day before) is 36 degrees Celsius or above*



The climb is also closed with little or no notice due to:

- HEAT - if the actual temperature at Yulara reaches 36 degrees Celsius or above*
- RAIN - when there is greater than 20 per cent chance of rain within three hours*
- RAIN - when there is greater than 5 per cent chance of thunderstorms within three hours*
- WIND - if the estimated wind speed at the summit reaches 25 knots or above*
- WET - when more than 20 per cent of the rock surface is wet after rain
- CLOUD - when cloud descends below the summit
- RESCUE - during rock rescue operations
- CULTURE - if the traditional owners request closure for cultural reasons eg during a period of mourning

(* in consultation with the Bureau of Meteorology)

Safety precautions – don't risk your life!

- Carry and drink one litre of water per person for every hour (it takes roughly three hours to climb Uluru)
- Wear sturdy, rubber-soled boots or shoes, a hat with a secure strap, a long sleeve shirt and maximum protection sunscreen
- Do not try to retrieve items that have dropped or blown away from the climbing track
- Do not drink alcohol or eat a large meal before climbing

Alternative walking opportunities in the park include the Uluru Base Walk, Kuniya Walk which takes you to Muŋiŋjulu Waterhole, and the ranger-guided Mala Walk each day at 10am (May to September) and 8am (October to April). There are also two walks at Kata Tjuta, the Valley of the Winds Walk and Walpa Gorge Walk.



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Left to right - the Base Walk takes you around the perimeter of Uluru, this walk is 10.6 kilometres in length and an easy grade, and the Kuniya Walk takes you into Muŋiŋjulu Waterhole, an easy walk of two kilometres return



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