



Climbing Kebnekaise

Information about the West Trail

Published in 2020



Trail description

The West Trail starts at Kebnekaise mountain station. It first follows a path sloping gently upwards. The path splits in some places. Check the map and surroundings so you do not end up wrong.

After about 1.5 km you will reach the stream Jökelbäcken. If you feel unsure of wading across, there is a bridge 300 m further down.

After 3 km the path turns towards the Kitteldalen Valley. Here, the incline increases for about 1 km until you arrive in the valley and the bridge over the stream. Here, there are some limited opportunities to find an acceptable tent site.

Now the path continues up towards Verranvåri 1,700 m a.s.l. The terrain becomes high alpine and boulder-strewn with snowfields. Carefully follow the trail marks. A stone staircase has been built by Nepalese sherpas along part of the stretch.

On Vierranvåri, there are several top cairns built by visitors. Here you should consider whether to continue or turn back. From here the trail leads down 200 metres' altitude into Kaffedalen Valley.

From Kaffedalen there is a 500 m climb past an old cabin up to the new safety cabin. The safety cabin is signposted with "feelers" made of steel pipes with arrows pointing towards the cabin. From the cabin it is about 100 metres' altitude to the summit. Safety cabin coordinates: SWEREF99 TM N 7535757 E 647470 H 2042

The trail ends at a summit cairn just below the peak snowdrift. If you want to go to the top snowdrift, you are on your own. There is a sheer drop several hundred meters on both sides.

Facts

Length: 9 km each way, totally over 18 km.

Duration: 10 -14 hours (for the total trip, back and forth).

Climb: 1,800 metres.

Trail markings: red painted stones and stone cairns. The trail markings can be missing due to collapsing cairns, poor visibility or deep snow.

Terrain: High alpine, steep and boulder-strewn, exposed to weather and wind. Snowfields with varying hardness can remain all summer along the trail.

Summit snowdrift: narrow and icy.

Height: The height of the south peak varies because the top is a glacier. In 2019 it was measured to 2095,6 m a.s.l.

IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT

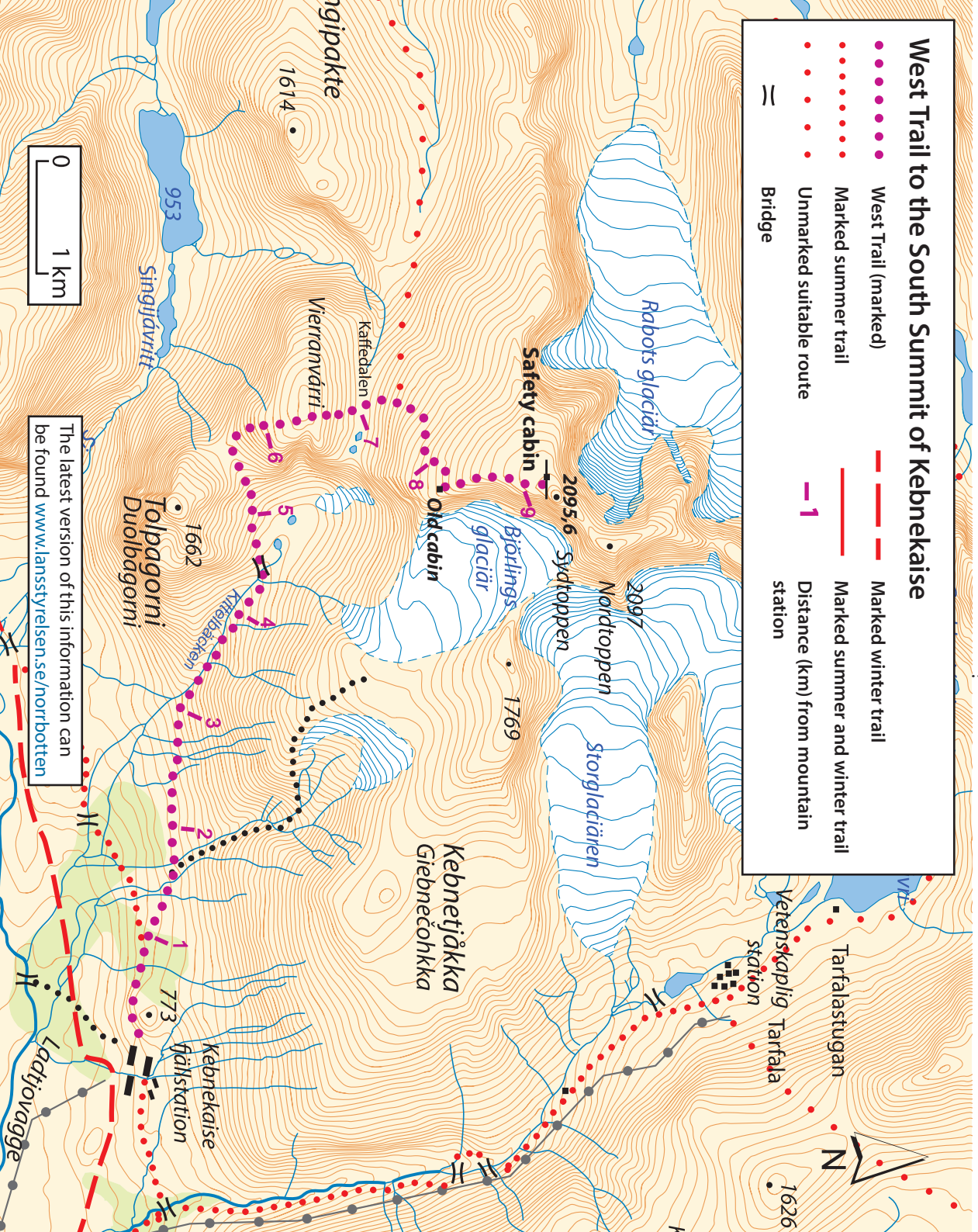
CALL112 and say what has happened and where you are. Save your mobile phone battery.

If there is no telephone coverage:

- Send a runner to the nearest telephone.
- Attract the attention of other climbers.
- **Stay calm – give first aid – keep warm.**

West Trail to the South Summit of Kebnekaise

- West Trail (marked)
- Marked summer trail
- Unmarked suitable route
- == Bridge
- Marked winter trail
- Marked summer and winter trail
- 1 Distance (km) from mountain station



The latest version of this information can be found www.lansstyrelsen.se/norbotten



Foto: Länsstyrelsen



Foto: Länsstyrelsen



Säkerhetsstugan. Foto: STF

Kebnekaise/Giebmejáisi

It is an adventure and a challenge to climb Kebnekaise. Here is some information about what to bear in mind when planning your hike.

Annually many visitors hike the so-called West Trail from the Mountain Station up to the South Summit of Kebnekaise. The trail is a summer trail, which means there are no visible markings in winter. In wintertime there is also a risk of avalanches along the trail. The best time to hike is usually in July and August.

Kebnekaise is highly demanding to climb and accidents happen every year. The terrain is boulder-strewn and there is a considerable height difference to struggle up (and down). It is important to keep a check of the weather, which can quickly change. Be prepared for rain, snow and strong winds in combination with poor visibility. Bad weather makes it easy to stray off the trail, which can be dangerous. Many also misjudge how long it takes to complete the entire hike. To shorten the ascent, it may be suitable to camp near the entrance to Kitteldalen valley.

It is recommended that any children in the group should be aged at least 10-12 to manage the difficulties and find the climb a rewarding experience.

Since the glacier on the South Summit has been melting in recent years, some years the North Summit can be higher. Crossing the top ridge between the summits requires a guide or alpine mountaineering skills of your own.

Things to remember

- Give yourself plenty of time for your ascent to the summit. Start early so that darkness does not begin to fall during your descent.
- It is safer not to hike alone. See to it that the group always stays together.
- Check the weather forecast before you start. Wait for better weather if there is a risk of snow or strong winds. Be aware of how the weather changes during the tour. Remember that the difference in weather between low and high terrain can be considerable, and the weather can quickly change.
- At the summit of Vierranvárrí it can be appropriate to decide whether to carry on or turn back.
- Do not count on your mobile phone working. Few operators have coverage in the area.
- Avoid staying overnight at the summit in a shelter or tent. If the weather changes you may not be able to descend.
- Avoid sliding downhill on snowfields. It often happens that people cannot stop and collide with rocks lower down, which can cause severe injuries.
- Take with you all the litter from your hike.
- There are no toilets along the trail. If nature calls, move well off the trail. Place stones over what you leave, or take it with you.

Suggested equipment

Backpack for a day tour. It is a good idea to have your important equipment in a waterproof pack.

Dress layer by layer. Underclothes of wool or wool mixture closest to the body are the best; preferably with a dry change of clothing.

A shell suit that is wind- and rainproof. The jacket should have a hood for extra protection. Bright colored clothes can help if rescue is needed.

Garments for extra warmth, for example a down jacket or sweater. Boots with heavy duty sole, preferably with a high shaft. Headgear and gloves, preferably windproof.

Headlight / torch, if you have to walk in the dark or if you need to signal for help.

Food pack and thermos with a warm drink, enough for a long day.

Water flask. At high altitude it can be difficult to find water.

Map, compass, GPS, camera and mobile phone.

Sunglasses and walking sticks can be useful.

If you want to go up on the top snowdrift/glacier, **crampons, an ice axe and safety ropes** can be necessary. It is important that the crampons are securely fastened to the foot and do not come loose. "Cleats" for urban use are often inadequate.

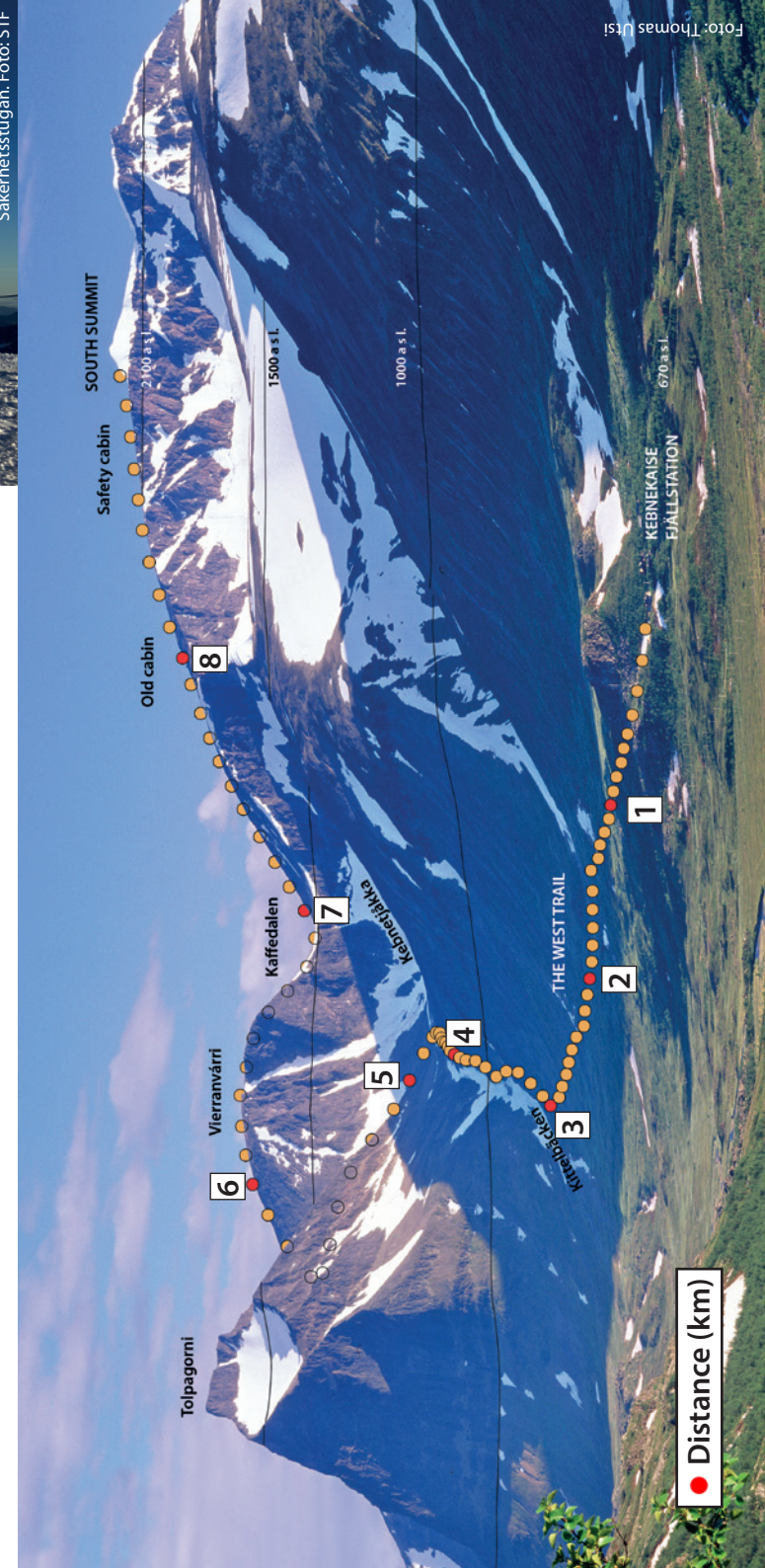


Foto: Thomas Ursti