



EXPANDED EDITION - FREE GUIDE

VICTORIAN HIGH COUNTRY

4WD - HUTS - HISTORY - RIVERS - HIKING - WINTER - TRIP PLANNING

A practical A4GW guide to planning, driving and exploring Victoria's mountain country.

WHY WE MADE THIS

More than a list of tracks.

The Victorian High Country is one of those places where the trip can change completely with the weather. A dry climb can become slippery after rain, a river can rise, a winter gate can shut a route, and a two-hour drive can turn into a full day.

This guide combines the places we've actually explored with practical planning, safety and history so you can build your own trip rather than follow a rigid itinerary.



IMPORTANT

Track access, river levels, weather, fire restrictions and park conditions can change after this PDF is downloaded. Use this guide to plan, then check official live information before you leave and again on the day.

[LIVE PARKS VICTORIA CONDITIONS >](#)[VICEMERGENCY >](#)

THE A4GW RULE

If the track, river, weather or timing doesn't feel right, change the plan. The High Country will still be there next trip.

THE GUIDE

Save it. Print it. Use it.

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THE BIG PICTURE

One region. Very different trips.

4WD COUNTRY

Steep climbs and descents, rock, clay, mud, river crossings, narrow ridges and long remote sections.

ON FOOT

Short waterfall walks through to serious alpine hikes. Weather exposure increases quickly above the treeline.

SEALED TOURING

The Great Alpine Road gives you huge mountain scenery without needing low range.

WINTER

Snow, ice, chains, road closures and rapidly changing alpine conditions create a completely different trip.

HISTORY

Cattlemen's huts, mining ruins, old town sites and mountain tracks carry a lot of the region's European history.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Fuel, food, water, first aid, recovery and communications matter once you leave the gateway towns.

CRITICAL PLANNING

Winter gates change the map.

Parks Victoria says seasonal road closures generally operate from after the King's Birthday long weekend in June through to the end of October. Individual roads vary, and closures can be extended when conditions are unsuitable for reopening.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

TYPICAL VEHICLE CLOSURE WINDOW

Mid-June → late October

Treat this as the planning pattern, not a gate-opening guarantee.

2026 EXAMPLE

The 2026 Parks Victoria list shows many Alpine National Park tracks closing 11 June and reopening 29 October. Some roads have different dates, and current weather-related closures can override the calendar.

BEFORE EVERY TRIP

- Check the official seasonal road closure list and map.
- Check the individual park's Changed Conditions page.
- Check VicEmergency for fire, storm and incident warnings.
- Have an alternate route that does not depend on a closed seasonal gate.

2026 SEASONAL CLOSURE LIST >

CURRENT CHANGED CONDITIONS >

SAVE THESE NUMBERS

When remote really means remote.

000

Life-threatening emergency - Police, Fire or Ambulance.

132 500

VICSES - flood, storm, landslide, tsunami and earthquake emergency assistance.

1800 226 226

VicEmergency Hotline - current emergency information and warnings.

13 1963

Parks Victoria - park information and conditions; not a substitute for 000.

CLOSEST HELP

Do not plan around a single 'nearest hospital' in this guide. Your closest practical response point changes with your exact track, road access, closures and whether you can self-extract. In an emergency call 000 and give your exact location, track name, nearest intersection or emergency marker, injuries and access conditions.

COMMS PLAN

- Download offline maps before leaving reception.
- Carry UHF for convoy/local communication; it is not a guaranteed emergency service.
- For remote trips, carry a PLB or satellite communicator and know how to use it.
- Leave your route and overdue time with someone who is not on the trip.

DRIVE THE CONDITIONS

Capability is not a challenge.

High Country tracks can change dramatically after rain, storms, snowmelt or heavy traffic. Parks Victoria warns that muddy and slippery tracks can become inaccessible and that wet-weather driving can damage tracks and surrounding environments.



BEFORE THE TRACK

Know the rating, expected terrain, distance, fuel range, weather, closure status and turnaround points.

ON STEEP COUNTRY

Select the correct range and gear before the climb or descent. Keep control; do not rely on brakes alone on long descents.

CONVOY

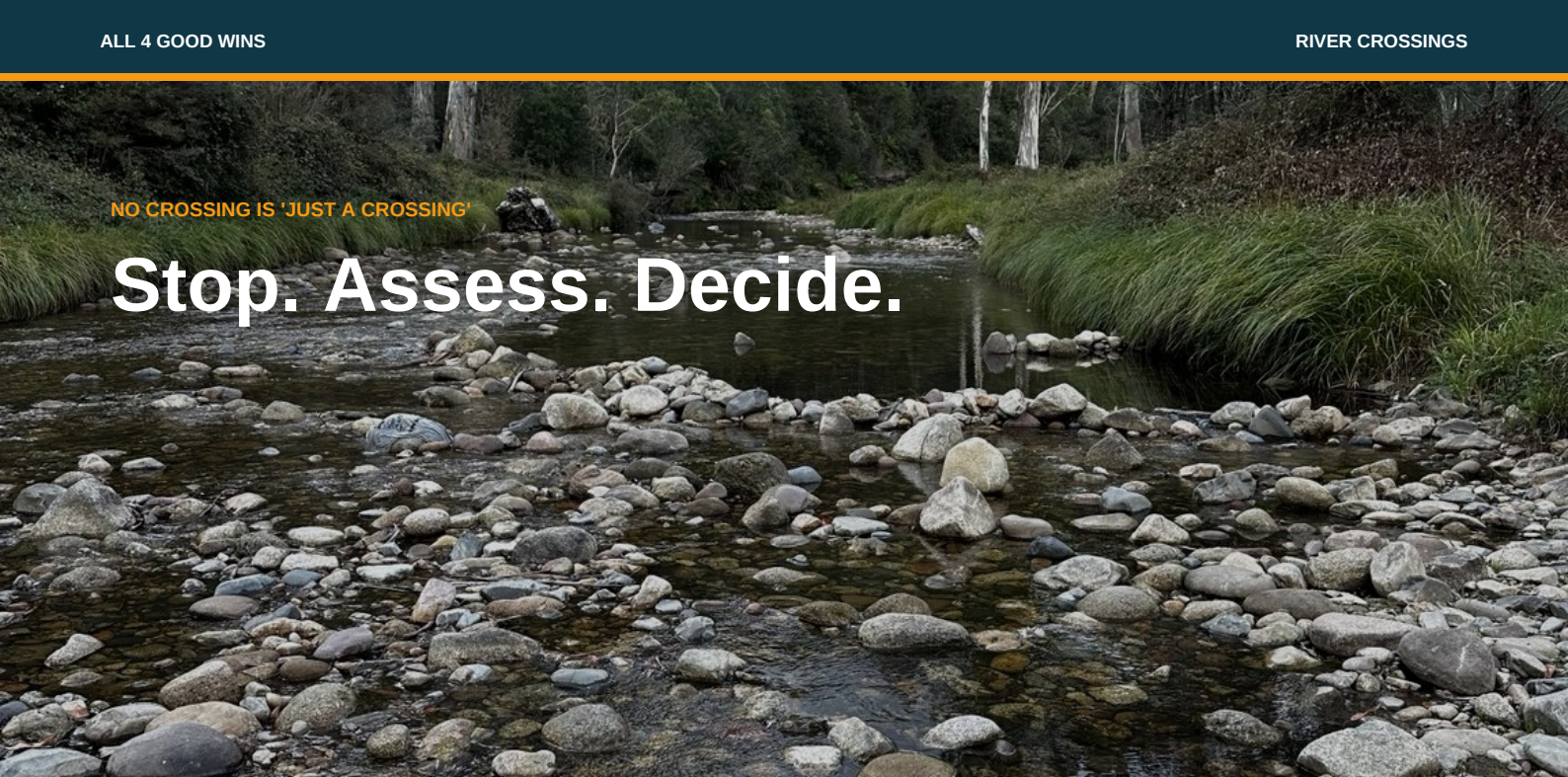
Keep visual or radio contact, wait at intersections and make sure the vehicle behind sees your turn.

RECOVERY

Use rated points and suitable equipment. Keep people clear of loaded recovery gear and stop if the recovery plan is uncertain.

TURN AROUND

A damaged track, rising river, mechanical issue, fading daylight or worsening weather are all valid reasons to change the plan.



NO CROSSING IS 'JUST A CROSSING'

Stop. Assess. Decide.

1. STOP

Never enter because the vehicle ahead did. Get out somewhere safe and assess your own crossing.

2. LOOK

Check current speed, depth, bottom, holes, rocks, debris, entry and exit. A clear river can still hide a bad bottom.

3. KNOW THE VEHICLE

Know your intake height, wading limits, recovery points and whether water can affect electronics, diffs or breathers.

4. PLAN THE LINE

Choose the shallowest safe line with a workable exit. Avoid turning sharply midstream.

5. PREPARE

Select the right gear/range before entry. Secure loose gear and have recovery equipment ready if conditions justify it.

6. DRIVE SMOOTHLY

Maintain controlled momentum. Avoid excessive speed and wheelspin.

7. AFTER

Check brakes, listen for changes, inspect for water ingress where appropriate and reassess the next crossing.

THE MOST IMPORTANT RULE

If you cannot confidently assess the crossing or the current is strong/rising, do not enter. Turning around is cheaper than losing a vehicle - and far safer.

REMOTE ICON DRIVE

Treat the valley with respect.

Parks Victoria's Wonnangatta Icon Drive is a 222 km 4WD-only loop through Wonnangatta Valley, Grant Historic Area, Dargo and the Howitt/Dargo High Plains. They recommend allowing two to three days and classify the whole loop as Very Difficult in dry conditions.

DISTANCE

222 km loop

ALLOW

2-3 days

RATING

Very Difficult

RIVERS ARE THE VARIABLE

The Wonnangatta and Crooked River systems can change with rainfall upstream. A gauge or forecast is useful context, not permission to cross. Always assess the actual crossing in front of you.

CROOKED RIVER / GRANT

Grant Historic Area combines old mining sites with river flats and 4WD access. The Crooked River Track passes mining relics including the New Good Hope battery site. River levels can affect both driving and walking routes.

BOM RIVER DATA

Use Bureau of Meteorology river observations as one planning input before entering remote river country. Check the station name, observation time and trend - then still assess every crossing on site.

[BOM WONNANGATTA RIVER DATA >](#)[WONNANGATTA ICON DRIVE >](#)

A4GW PLANNING TIP

Carry enough fuel, food and time to abandon your preferred exit and use an alternate route if water, weather or track damage changes the plan.

OUTSIDE THE 4WD

The walk needs its own plan.

A short waterfall walk and an exposed alpine hike are not the same thing. Once you leave the vehicle, your clothing, water, navigation, turnaround time and emergency options become the plan.



NAVIGATION

Carry an offline map; for longer walks carry a map/compass and know how to use them.

WATER

Parks Victoria suggests 3-4 litres per person for a full-day hike in hot conditions. Do not assume a creek is safe drinking water.

WEATHER

Alpine weather can change quickly. Pack a warm/waterproof layer even when the valley is comfortable.

FOOTWEAR

Use sturdy footwear with grip. Wet rock, mud, snow and steep descents punish casual shoes.

CYCLING

Expect long climbs, fast descents, loose surfaces and shared roads/tracks. Carry repair gear, lights and enough food/water.

TURNAROUND TIME

Set one before you start. A summit, hut or waterfall is optional; getting back safely isn't.

WINTER HIGH COUNTRY

Snow changes everything.

Our Matlock photos show the High Country in snow, but conditions vary enormously. Winter planning needs to account for road closures, ice, falling trees, chains, reduced daylight and much colder consequences if something goes wrong.

CHAINS

Know the current chain requirements for alpine roads and know how to fit them before you need them.

ICE

Shaded corners, bridges and early mornings can remain icy even when the road looks mostly clear.

TREES

Snow, wind and saturated ground increase the risk of branches or trees coming down.

CLOTHING

Carry waterproof outer layers, warm mid-layers, beanie, gloves and dry spare clothing.

SNOW TRAVEL

Deep or unstable snow, steep icy slopes and poor visibility can turn hiking into specialist terrain.

DAYLIGHT

Short winter days reduce the margin for mechanical problems, slow driving and route changes.

REMOTE TRAVEL

Carry the delay, not just the day.

A High Country trip can be delayed by a fallen tree, mechanical issue, river, weather or closed exit. Pack so the family can comfortably absorb an unexpected extra night.

FUEL

Start remote sections with margin. Low range, detours and idling use more fuel than highway calculations.

WATER

Carry drinking water plus reserve. Do not depend on finding a clean creek.

FOOD

Carry at least one simple extra meal and snacks beyond the planned return.

POWER

Keep phones/navigation charged; protect a backup power source from cold and water.

FIRST AID

Carry a proper kit and any essential personal medications.

TOOLS + SPARES

Tyre repair, compressor, basic tools, fuses and vehicle-specific spares that you can actually fit.

SHELTER

Warm layers, rain protection and a way to stay sheltered if the vehicle cannot move.

TIME

The cheapest emergency reserve is often an extra few hours of daylight and no pressure to be home at a fixed minute.

BEFORE LOW RANGE

Prepare the 4WD, not the ego.



TYRES

Good-condition A/T or M/T tyres, suitable pressures and a full-size spare.

RECOVERY POINTS

Know where the rated points are before you're stuck.

RECOVERY GEAR

Carry gear matched to the vehicle and know how to use it safely.

COMPRESSOR + REPAIR

Air down only when appropriate, and be able to reinflate and repair a puncture.

COOLING + BRAKES

Long climbs and descents work both systems hard. Fix marginal components before the trip.

CLEARANCE

Know the low points under your vehicle and do not blindly follow a taller rig's line.

LOAD

Secure everything. Steep angles and corrugations turn loose gear into damage or injury.

FUEL RANGE

Calculate remote range with margin, not your best highway consumption.

SPRING • SUMMER • AUTUMN

Warm-weather trip checklist.

Tap the boxes in a compatible PDF viewer or print the page. Adjust for your route, family and forecast.

☐ Offline maps downloaded☐ Drinking water + reserve☐ Seasonal closures checked☐ Extra meal / emergency food☐ VicEmergency checked☐ Hat + sunscreen☐ Weather forecast saved☐ Rain shell / warm layer☐ Trip plan left with contact☐ Sturdy walking shoes☐ UHF / satellite / PLB checked☐ Torch / headlamps☐ Recovery points + recovery kit☐ Fire restrictions checked☐ Tyre repair kit + compressor☐ Rubbish bags☐ Full-size spare tyre☐ Toilet kit where required☐ First aid kit + medications☐ Fuel range + backup route

WINTER / SNOW

Cold-weather trip checklist.

Winter needs everything from the warm-weather list plus cold-specific equipment and a more conservative route.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Snow chains if required / recommended | ☐ Battery condition checked |
| ☐ Practised fitting chains | ☐ Winter-rated screenwash where needed |
| ☐ Waterproof outer shell | ☐ Earlier turnaround time set |
| ☐ Warm insulated mid-layer | ☐ Current alpine road report checked |
| ☐ Beanie + gloves | ☐ Seasonal gate status checked |
| ☐ Dry spare socks / clothing | ☐ Alternate sealed route planned |
| ☐ Emergency blanket / bivvy | ☐ Headlamps + spare batteries |
| ☐ Thermos / hot drink setup | ☐ Recovery gear accessible |
| ☐ Extra food for delays | ☐ PLB / satellite communicator |
| ☐ Ice scraper / demister sorted | ☐ Forecast rechecked on departure |

HIGH COUNTRY HERITAGE

The huts are part of the story.



Hundreds of huts across Victoria's alpine region were built by different groups including graziers, prospectors, road and forestry workers, utilities and recreation groups. They were practical shelters in remote country, not decorative props.

CATTLEMEN

Seasonal grazing shaped parts of the High Country for generations. Historic cattlemen's huts remain one of the most visible links to that era.

RESPECT THE HUT

Do not damage, carve or remove material. Do not assume a heritage hut is accommodation. Keep access clear and treat emergency/refuge use as the priority where applicable.

FIRE + CAMPING

Use designated or existing fireplaces where permitted, follow current fire rules and never light a fire against or inside a historic structure unless specifically authorised.

[HIGH COUNTRY HUTS - PARKS VICTORIA >](#)

MINING COUNTRY

Ruins hiding in the bush.

The High Country isn't only cattlemen and 4WD tracks. Gold pulled thousands of people into steep, remote country and left town sites, batteries, mines, tramways, cemeteries and relics scattered through the forest.

GRANT

Alluvial gold was found in the district from the 1850s and Grant boomed in 1864-65. Parks Victoria records a population of around 2,000, with hotels, a church, courthouse, police station, stores and even a newspaper. By 1916 the last residents had left.

TALBOTVILLE + CROOKED RIVER

Talbotville is now a riverside camping area and a useful base for exploring mining history. The Crooked River Track passes old mining sites including the New Good Hope battery.

WOODS POINT

Woods Point gives a High Country trip a different character: a living mountain town surrounded by historic mining country and 4WD routes.

SAFETY AROUND OLD MINES

Do not enter abandoned workings. Old shafts, unstable edges and hidden holes can be extremely dangerous. Leave artefacts where they are.

[GRANT HISTORIC AREA >](#)

SEALED HIGH COUNTRY

Big views without low range.

The Great Alpine Road gives you a completely different way to experience the mountains: sealed touring through Bright, the Mt Hotham high point and down toward Dinner Plain and Omeo. It is ideal as a standalone road trip, a weather fallback or a link between off-road sections.



PANORAMIC STOP

Danny's Lookout at Mt Hotham is a straightforward stop for sweeping mountain views. The road then descends through alpine country toward Dinner Plain and Omeo.

DRIVING

It is sealed, but it is still an alpine road: long climbs and descents, tight bends, weather exposure, wildlife and winter chain requirements can all matter. Use lower gears on descents rather than leaning on the brakes.

SIDE TRIPS

Use the sealed route as the spine, then add short walks, lookouts, Mt Buffalo/Bogong High Plains detours or 4WD trips when conditions allow.

[HIGH COUNTRY SCENIC LOOKOUTS >](#)

A4GW DESTINATION

King Billy Track

DISTANCE

~15 km

ALLOW

~1.5-2 hrs

A4GW

10 / 10

WHY GO

King Billy is still our favourite High Country track. It has enough variety to stay interesting from start to finish rather than relying on one big obstacle.

THE DRIVE

Expect rocky climbs and descents, tight switchbacks, creek crossings, forest and exposed mountain country. We rate it moderate in the conditions we've driven, but weather can change that quickly.

PLAN IT

Link it into Howitt / Brocks Road / Bluff country when access allows. Check closures first and leave enough daylight to change the route.

A4GW TAKE

The whole track is the highlight.

A4GW DESTINATION

Lake Cobbler

STYLE

Camp / base

ACCESS

Route dependent

A4GW

9 / 10

WHY GO

Lake Cobbler works because it gives you a destination and a camp, not just another track to tick off.

THE DRIVE

Our overnight visit is remembered for the mist over the lake the next morning. Access can range from straightforward touring to more serious surrounding 4WD routes depending on how you approach it.

PLAN IT

Use the lake as a base or overnight stop and add Dandongadale Falls and nearby High Country tracks to suit conditions.

A4GW TAKE

One night was enough to make it memorable.

A4GW DESTINATION

Bluff Hut + Lovicks

STYLE

Hut / ridge

TERRAIN

Mountain tracks

A4GW

9 / 10

WHY GO

Bluff Hut gives the day a destination, but the mountain country around Bluff and Lovicks is the bigger reason to go.

THE DRIVE

Route choice can bring steep climbs and descents, rocky sections and river crossings. Conditions and the exact approach matter more than a single difficulty label.

PLAN IT

Build it into a broader Howqua / King Billy / Lovicks run where current access allows rather than racing in and out.

A4GW TAKE

The drive there is the trip.

A4GW DESTINATION

Craig's Hut + Mt Stirling



STYLE

Hut / family

ACCESS

Seasonal

A4GW

9 / 10

WHY GO

Craig's Hut is iconic, but we like it as part of a wider Mt Stirling day rather than a single photo stop.

THE DRIVE

Direct 4WD access is seasonal. There is also a walking option for visitors who park lower down. The surrounding Mt Stirling country lets you turn it into a bigger day.

PLAN IT

Check seasonal access, allow time to walk around and respect the hut and other visitors.

A4GW TAKE

Quin getting the chance to sit on a horse there is still the memory we talk about.

A4GW DESTINATION

Rubicon

STYLE

Base camp

TERRAIN

River / forest

A4GW

9 / 10

WHY GO

Rubicon is a strong weekend area: camp, then spend a couple of days exploring rather than chasing huge kilometres.

THE DRIVE

Our Rubicon trips have included river crossings and forest tracks in the GQ. The valley fog photo and river-crossing shot in this guide are from those trips.

PLAN IT

Check river conditions and closures, then choose tracks to suit the weather and the group. Add Snobs Creek Falls for a break from the vehicle.

A4GW TAKE

Same area, completely different drive after rain.

A4GW DESTINATION

Woods Point

STYLE

History / 4WD

PACE

Multi-day

A4GW

9 / 10

WHY GO

Woods Point mixes a real mountain town with old mining history and surrounding tracks.

THE DRIVE

The attraction is the combination: winding mountain roads, forest, rivers and historic country rather than a single hero obstacle.

PLAN IT

Slow it down. Use the town as part of a broader route and leave room for changed conditions and historic stops.

A4GW TAKE

Somewhere we'd happily build another trip around.

A4GW DESTINATION

Mt Matlock

CONDITIONS

Our snow trip

STYLE

Winter memory

A4GW

9 / 10

WHY GO

Matlock shows why the High Country can't be reduced to one season. Snow completely changed the landscape and the way we approached the drive.

THE DRIVE

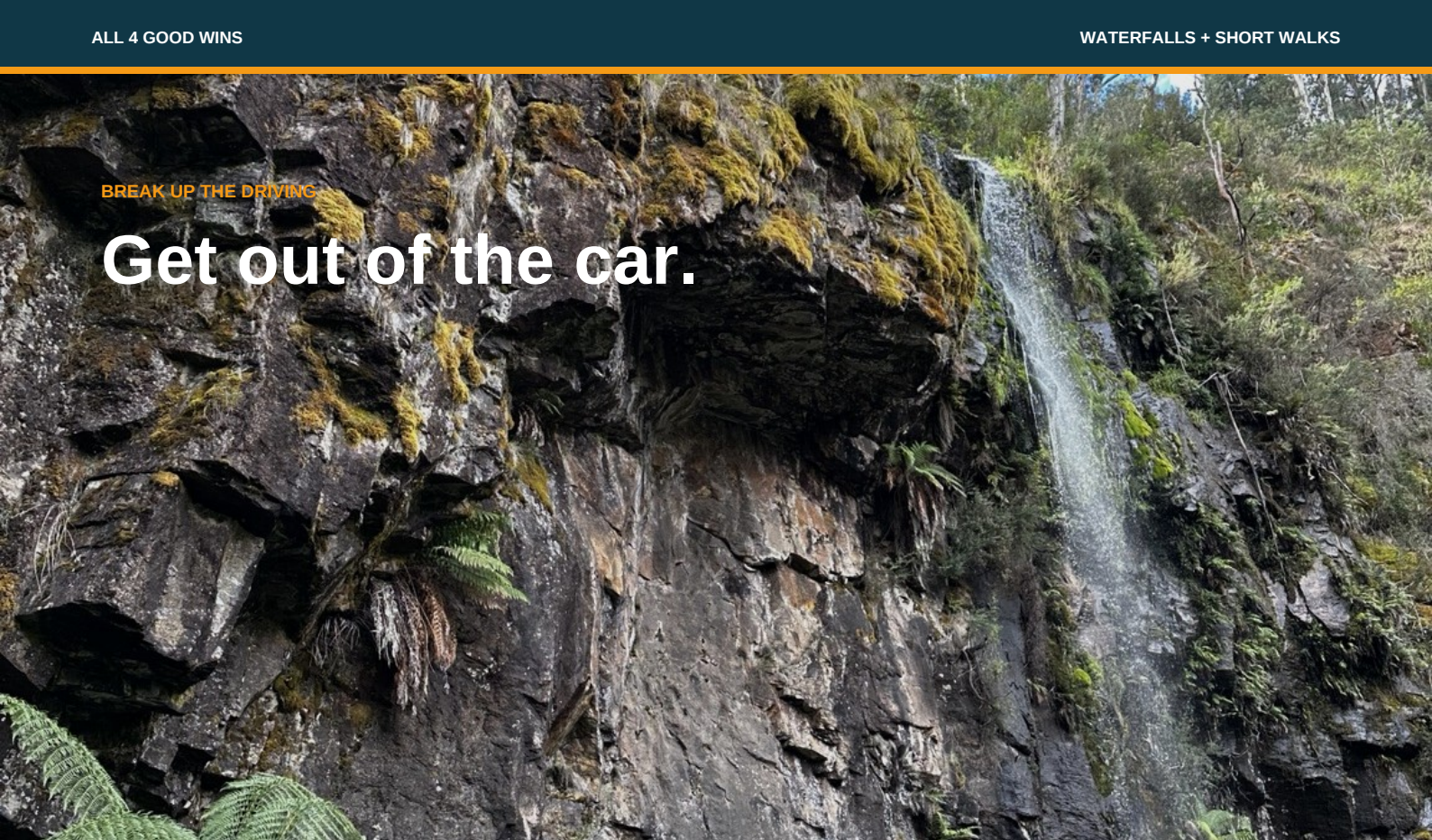
These photos are from our experience in winter conditions in the GQ. They are not a promise of snow or a suggestion that every road is open in winter.

PLAN IT

Check road and seasonal closures, chain requirements and weather. A winter drive can require a completely different route from the same trip in summer.

A4GW TAKE

The High Country looked like a different place.



BREAK UP THE DRIVING

Get out of the car.

DANDONGADALE FALLS

Cobbler Plateau area. A natural add-on to a Lake Cobbler trip.

PARADISE FALLS

King Valley. Short walk and best considered as part of a broader touring day.

BINDAREE FALLS

Howqua / Mt Stirling country. Useful when building a mixed driving-and-walking day.

SNOBS CREEK FALLS

Rubicon foothills. A short, steep walk with viewing platforms.

EUROBIN + LADIES BATH

Mt Buffalo. Short waterfall walks that fit well into a wider North East trip.

WOOLSHED FALLS

Beechworth area. Easy to combine with the historic goldfields and gorge country.

PHOTO NOTE

The waterfall image above is one of our own High Country trip photos. We haven't labelled it as a specific fall here unless we're certain of the location.

WITH KIDS

Don't make the track the whole day.

Our kids have been coming on 4WD trips for years. What works for us is giving the day more than one reason to be good.



A DESTINATION

A hut, waterfall, lookout or old town gives everyone something to get out for.

SHORTER DAYS

Leave time to enjoy camp rather than arriving after dark because the route took longer.

WARM + DRY

Kids feel cold faster when everyone gets out of a warm vehicle at a windy lookout.

FOOD

Keep easy snacks and water accessible, not buried under camping gear.

INVOLVE THEM

Maps, choosing stops, spotting track signs and radio calls make the trip theirs too.

PLAN B

A changed route is easier when the family knows it was always part of the plan.

LEAVE IT BETTER

The next trip should still look like this.

STAY ON FORMED TRACKS

Driving around bog holes or making new lines widens damage and can destroy sensitive vegetation.

RUBBISH OUT

Many remote camps have no bins. Everything you bring in leaves with you.

CAMPFIRES

Use existing fireplaces where permitted, obey restrictions and extinguish with water until cold. Never leave a fire unattended.

FIREWOOD

Where collection is allowed, follow local rules. Parks Victoria recommends bringing firewood to popular Alpine National Park camps and collecting only appropriate fallen material where permitted.

HUTS + RELICS

Do not carve, remove, move or damage historic material. Old mining and grazing sites are part of the place.

TOILETS + WASTE

Use provided toilets. Where there are none, follow the rules for that park and keep waste well away from water.

WILDLIFE

Slow down, especially dawn/dusk. Do not feed wildlife.

DOGS

Rules vary by land manager. Dogs are prohibited throughout Alpine National Park; do not assume that applies to every High Country state forest or reserve.

NO RIGID ITINERARY

Start with the conditions.

1

CHOOSE THE AREA

King Billy / Bluff, Cobbler, Rubicon, Mt Stirling, Woods Point, Wonnangatta or sealed alpine touring.

2

CHECK THE GATES

Remove anything closed before you start drawing the route.

3

CHECK WEATHER + FIRE

A technically open track may still be a poor choice.

4

PICK ONE MAIN OBJECTIVE

Track, hut, camp, waterfall or town. Everything else is a bonus.

5

ADD A CAMP

Choose a camp that still works if the day runs slower than planned.

6

BUILD THE EXIT

Know the normal exit and the alternate exit.

7

SET THE OVERDUE TIME

Tell someone when to act if they have not heard from you.

8

RECHECK ON THE DAY

Conditions beat screenshots and old trip reports.

FINAL CHECK

Ready to leave reception?

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Current track closures checked | ☐ Tyres + spare checked |
| ☐ Weather checked | ☐ Recovery gear accessible |
| ☐ VicEmergency checked | ☐ Compressor + repair kit packed |
| ☐ Fire restrictions checked | ☐ First aid + medication packed |
| ☐ River information checked if relevant | ☐ Food + reserve packed |
| ☐ Offline maps loaded | ☐ Water + reserve packed |
| ☐ Fuel range confirmed | ☐ Warm / wet-weather gear packed |
| ☐ Alternate route identified | ☐ Campfire rules understood |
| ☐ Trip plan sent to contact | ☐ Rubbish / toilet plan sorted |
| ☐ Overdue time agreed | ☐ Kids / passengers briefed |
| ☐ UHF tested | ☐ Emergency numbers saved |
| ☐ PLB / satellite device tested | ☐ Route rechecked this morning |

PRINT / SCREENSHOT / SHARE

Leave this with someone.

Trip / area

Date out

Expected return

Overdue time - call / act if no contact

Driver / group leader

People travelling

Vehicle(s) + rego

Main route / tracks

Alternate route

Camp(s)

Fuel stop / range

Emergency device details

Contact numbers

Medical / essential notes

Other information

IF WE ARE OVERDUE

Try our agreed contact method first. If there is genuine concern for safety or a life-threatening emergency, call 000 and provide this trip plan.

HUTS OF THE HIGH COUNTRY

More than photo stops.



High Country huts were built for different reasons and in different eras - cattle grazing, mining, forestry, road work, utilities, skiing and recreation. Some are historic structures; some are reconstructions; some still serve as emergency refuge. Treat every hut as heritage first.

HOW TO USE THIS SECTION

The huts below are useful anchors when building a route. Access, camping rules and road conditions can change, so use the descriptions to choose an area and then confirm the current official conditions.

DO NOT PLAN TO SLEEP IN A HUT

Unless a specific site explicitly allows it, plan to carry your own shelter. Huts can be needed for emergency refuge and should not be treated as booked accommodation.

[PARKS VICTORIA - HIGH COUNTRY HUTS >](#)

HUT CLUSTER

Three huts that can shape a whole trip.

HOWITT HUT

Built in the early 20th century, Howitt Hut is one of the older huts in this part of Alpine National Park. Parks Victoria links it closely to the Wonnangatta story. The camping area is remote and includes a pit toilet and horse yards. It makes a logical staging point when travelling the Howitt High Plains and broader Wonnangatta country.

BLUFF HUT

Bluff Hut sits in spectacular mountain country above the Howqua system. Parks Victoria specifically recommends the drive to Bluff and Lovicks Huts from the Bindaree/Howqua side. 16 Mile Jeep Track is 4WD and dry-weather only; Bluff Link Road is identified as the wet-weather alternative.

LOVICKS HUT

Lovicks sits farther along Bluff Track and turns the hut visit into a proper mountain drive. The attraction is the route between the huts as much as the buildings themselves: exposed views, changing surfaces and a much stronger sense of remoteness.

BUILD THE ROUTE

A strong trip can connect Howqua/Bindaree, Bluff, Lovicks, King Billy and Howitt depending on gates, weather and river conditions. Do not assume the shortest line on a map is the best or open route.

[BINDAREE / BLUFF OFFICIAL INFO >](#)

MANSFIELD / HOWQUA SIDE

Huts with very different stories.

CRAIG'S HUT

Craig's is the famous one, but it is not an original cattleman's hut. It was created for The Man from Snowy River, later destroyed in the 2006 fires and rebuilt. Direct access is 4WD in season; 2WD visitors can use the roughly 3 km return walking track. The site is subject to winter seasonal closure.



FRY'S HUT

Fry's Hut sits in Howqua Hills Historic Area. Visit Victoria says Fred Fry built it in the late 1930s. It can be worked into the Howqua Hills Historic Walk from Sheeppark Flat, making it useful for a day that mixes camping history with an easy walk.

RITCHIES HUT

Ritchies Hut sits along the Howqua River system. Parks Victoria describes access on foot via the Howqua Feeder Trail from 16 Mile Jeep Track; continuing via the Low Track involves multiple river crossings. It is a good reminder that huts are not only 4WD destinations.

A4GW MEMORY

Craig's Hut is tied to Quin getting the chance to sit on a horse there. That's exactly why we like building trips around places rather than only chasing difficult tracks.

[CRAIG'S HUT ACCESS >](#)

WIDER HIGH COUNTRY

Huts worth knowing beyond our core routes.

WALLACES HUT

Near Falls Creek on the Bogong High Plains. Built in 1889 from snow-gum slabs and shingles, it is regarded as one of the oldest huts on the high plains. It is reached on foot from Bogong High Plains Road.

COPE HUT

Also on the Bogong High Plains, a short walk from the road. Built by the Ski Club of Victoria in 1929 and known for being unusually large and comfortable for a high-plains hut.

GUYS / MOROKA / KELLYS

Parks Victoria lists these among the historic cattlemen's huts in the Heyfield-Licola-Dargo side of Alpine National Park. They fit naturally into trips focused on Dargo, Howitt, Moroka and Wonnangatta country.

WHY ADD THEM

Not every hut needs to become a 4WD objective. Some are better reached by walking or cycling, which is exactly why a mixed High Country trip can be more interesting than spending every hour behind the wheel.

[CATTLEMEN HISTORY >](#)

REGION GUIDE

A strong first High Country base.

The Mansfield side gives you one of the easiest ways to build a varied trip: river camps in Howqua country, Craig's Hut and Mt Stirling, Bindaree Falls, Lake Cobbler, Bluff/Lovicks and access toward more remote Alpine National Park routes.

HOWQUA HILLS

Good for mixing camping, history, short walks and 4WD access. Sheeppark Flat and the Howqua River make the area work even when the day is not built around a hard track.

BINDAREE

Bindaree Flat is 4WD-only and requires river crossings. Parks Victoria warns the Howqua River can rise quickly after heavy rain. Bindaree Falls itself is a short walk reached from Bindaree Road.

MT STIRLING

Craig's Hut is the obvious landmark, but the mountain itself gives you views, walking, seasonal 4WD access and a way to connect the day back into Howqua country.

LAKE COBBLER

Cobbler works as the overnight destination. Add Dandongadale Falls on the approach and choose surrounding tracks to suit conditions and the group.

[HOWQUA 4WD GUIDE >](#)

REGION GUIDE

Gold history meets serious 4WD country.

Dargo is one of the natural gateways into the eastern High Country. North of town, Grant Historic Area and Talbotville combine mining ruins, river camping, walking and access toward some of the region's best-known 4WD routes.

GRANT TOWNSHIP

Grant sits 5 km west of Dargo High Plains Road along McMillans Road. The old township boomed during the gold rush; today the ridge-top camping area and walking tracks let you explore the remains without needing to invent a story around them.

TALBOTVILLE

The former township is now a large riverside camping area. Parks Victoria identifies Talbotville and Grant as the two main camping areas in Grant Historic Area, with basic facilities including pit toilets, fireplaces and picnic tables.

CROOKED RIVER

Crooked River Track links the camping and mining story. The New Good Hope battery site still has mining machinery in place. River crossings and water levels are the variable - check before committing.

WALK IT TOO

Grant Historic Area has walks from around 1.5 hours through to multi-day Grade 4 routes. The Jolly Sailor Mine walk is one way to add mining history without spending the entire day in the 4WD.

[GRANT HISTORIC AREA >](#)

REMOTE HIGH COUNTRY

A destination that deserves days, not hours.

Parks Victoria's Wonnangatta Icon Drive is a 222 km 4WD-only loop and recommends two to three days. That alone tells you how to approach the valley: fuel margin, camp margin, weather margin and more than one exit plan.

WHY PEOPLE GO

Remote valley camping, mountain approaches, river country, cattle-station history, mining country and the unresolved Wonnangatta murder story all sit in the same trip.

ROUTE CHARACTER

The official loop passes Wonnangatta Valley, Grant Historic Area, Dargo and the Howitt/Dargo High Plains. Parks Victoria classifies the overall route Very Difficult even in dry conditions.

RIVER DECISIONS

Rainfall upstream can alter crossings. BOM observations are useful planning context, but the actual crossing in front of you is the decision point. If it cannot be confidently assessed, do not enter.

CAMPING + TIME

Plan at least one proper valley camp rather than treating Wonnangatta as a drive-through trophy. The extra time also gives you margin if an intended exit becomes unsuitable.

[WONNANGATTA ICON DRIVE >](#)[BOM RIVER OBSERVATIONS >](#)

SEALED ALTERNATIVE

Australia's highest sealed through-road.

Visit Victoria describes the full Great Alpine Road journey from Wangaratta to Metung as 339 km, roughly five hours without meaningful stops. The section most relevant to this guide climbs from Bright/Harrietville over Mt Hotham, then descends through Dinner Plain and Omeo.

**BRIGHT → HARRIETVILLE**

The valley approach is the last easy chance to reset before the climb: fuel, food, weather and winter requirements. From Harrietville the road starts doing what makes this route famous.

MT HOTHAM

The road climbs into exposed alpine country with huge views toward Mt Feathertop and surrounding ridges. Danny's Lookout is one of the obvious panoramic stops. Winter conditions bring chain and resort requirements.

HOTHAM → OMEO

The road passes Dinner Plain, then winds down toward Omeo. Use lower gears on long descents, watch for weather and wildlife, and do not rush the drive just because it is sealed.

[GREAT ALPINE ROAD >](#)

A4GW ROUTES

What to build around each stop.

KING BILLY

Best for: a proper track day. A4GW: ~15 km, ~1.5-2 hours without rushing. Build with Howitt, Brocks Road, Bluff/Lovicks where open. Watch: weather, seasonal gates, rocky climbs/descents.

LAKE COBBLER

Best for: camp + broader exploring. Build with Dandongadale Falls and Mansfield/Whitfield country. Watch: rough access depending on route, remote supplies and changing mountain weather.

BLUFF / LOVICKS

Best for: huts + exposed mountain driving. Build from Howqua/Bindaree or into King Billy/Howitt country. Watch: dry-weather-only sections, river crossings and seasonal access.

CRAIG'S / STIRLING

Best for: family day, hut, views and walking. Direct 4WD access is seasonal; a roughly 3 km return walk provides another option. Watch: winter closure and busy peak periods.

RUBICON

Best for: base-camp weekend. Add river country, forest tracks and Snobs Creek Falls. Watch: wet tracks and crossing conditions.

WOODS POINT

Best for: history + multi-day touring. Use the town as an anchor rather than a quick photo stop. Watch: long mountain travel times and limited services compared with larger towns.

PLAN FROM THE OUTSIDE IN

Know your last easy reset point.

Instead of publishing a 'closest hospital' table that can become misleading once tracks close, use gateway towns as planning checkpoints. Fuel, food, weather, communications and your emergency plan should be sorted before you disappear into the valleys.

MANSFIELD

Gateway for Howqua, Mt Stirling/Craig's Hut, Cobbler and western approaches into Alpine National Park.

BRIGHT / HARRIETVILLE

Gateway for the Great Alpine Road climb to Hotham and wider north-eastern alpine touring.

OMELO

Eastern High Country hub for the Hotham/Dinner Plain side and routes toward remote alpine country.

DARGO

Key gateway for Grant, Talbotville, Wonnangatta approaches and Dargo High Plains country.

LICOLA / HEYFIELD

Useful southern approach for Wellington River, Howitt and the south-western Alpine National Park.

EMERGENCY

For life-threatening emergencies call 000. Give coordinates/track, nearest intersection or emergency marker, injuries, vehicle details and whether the route is passable.

KEEP IT CURRENT

The PDF shouldn't pretend the mountains stand still.

Track conditions, gates, river levels, fire restrictions and road access change. The permanent value of this guide is the planning method and destination context; the links below are where you confirm the live situation.

[Parks Victoria - Seasonal Road Closures >](#)[Parks Victoria - Changed Conditions >](#)[VicEmergency >](#)[BOM - Wonnangatta River observations >](#)[A4GW - Victorian High Country >](#)[A4GW - All 4WD Trip Reports >](#)

WHAT WE'LL KEEP ADDING

As we revisit areas, photograph more huts and build more detailed trip reports, the website can carry the latest firsthand A4GW experience while this guide remains the downloadable planning companion.



KEEP EXPLORING

Trip reports, track notes, gear reviews and family travel.

all4goodwins.com.au

VICTORIAN HIGH COUNTRY >

ALL 4WD TRIP REPORTS >

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