



GOBLIN VALLEY - SOUTHERN SWELL



Rating: Easy hiking

Length: 1+ hours

Maps: Goblin Valley, UT

Water: None

Season: Any, hot in summer

Waypoints:

Trailhead	12S 525820mE 4268485mN N38° 33' 52" W110° 42' 13"
Last Goblins	12S 524935mE 4264779mN N38° 31' 52" W110° 42' 50"
Great Area	12S 526064mE 4266619mN N38° 32' 51" W110° 42' 03"
Mollys Castle Viewpoint	12S 526693mE 4268922mN N38° 34' 06" W110° 41' 37"

Hype

Goblin Valley has to be one of the most family friendly and fun state parks in Utah. Goblin Valley is a large Entrada sandstone valley that has eroded into hundreds or thousands of hoodoos that take all sorts of Goblin shapes. The area was initially discovered by "modern man" in the 1920's while searching for an alternate route between Hite and Green River. By the 1950's, publicity had spread of this strange place in the desert, and many visitors began flocking to it. In 1964, it was officially made a state park to protect it from vandalism.

The park offers very easy access to Goblin Valley. Young and old can easily visit the main valley. More motivated hikers can explore down the valley, or visit Molly's Castle, rounding out a good day of hiking. The park also has camping, showers, and a yurt for rent. This is an absolute must do if in the area.

I first visited Goblin Valley in the late 1990's and have been back many times since that first visit. For a truly memorable experience, visit during a full moon. Wandering through the goblins via the light of a full moon is a lot of fun and very different character than the usual daytime visit. I'd also recommend a winter visit. The park is typically empty of visitors in the winter, and very peaceful and quiet.

Tags: *roadside, hike, dog friendly, family friendly, access: paved*

Trailhead

South of I-70 about 25 miles on Highway 24 (about 25 miles north of Hanksville), a signed road goes off to the west signed Goblin Valley. Follow this paved road 5.1 miles to a junction. Go south (left) on the signed road toward Goblin Valley, resetting your odometer. Just before Goblin Valley, 6.0 miles, another junction occurs. Go left here, entering Goblin Valley.

Route

The best initial hike is to simply wander down into the valley from the parking area/viewpoint. Motivated hikers can hike south down the valley an hour or so until the hoodoos begin to relent to more standard desert scenery.

The park offers a few short trails. After visiting Goblin Valley proper, I would recommend the Molly's Castle trail. This offers different scenery than the valley and is a nice short hike. Again, motivated hikers can continue past the Molly's Castle trails end and wander south along the Entrada cliff that hides Goblin Valley from the east for a more vigorous hike.

