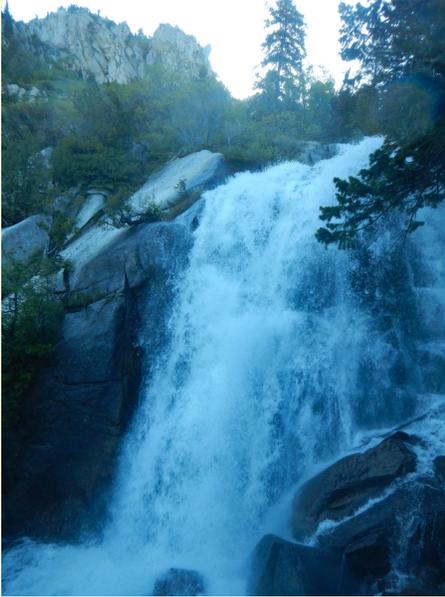




# BELLS CANYON - SALT LAKE CITY



**Rating:** Moderate Hike  
**Length:** 1+ hours (4+ miles)  
**Gear:** Standard Hiking Gear  
**Maps:** Draper, UT;  
**Water:** Filterable along the entire trail.  
**Season:** Summer, Fall

**Waypoints:**

Trailhead	12T 431964mE 4490813mN N40° 33' 55" W111° 48' 13"
Left	12T 432512mE 4490810mN N40° 33' 55" W111° 47' 50"
Right	12T 432566mE 4490912mN N40° 33' 58" W111° 47' 48"
Left on Trail	12T 432828mE 4490875mN N40° 33' 57" W111° 47' 37"
Bridge	12T 433409mE 4490500mN N40° 33' 45" W111° 47' 12"
Wilderness	12T 433636mE 4490463mN N40° 33' 44" W111° 47' 02"
Left to Lower Falls	12T 434770mE 4490254mN N40° 33' 38" W111° 46' 14"
Lower Falls	12T 434772mE 4490322mN N40° 33' 40" W111° 46' 14"
Stay right	12T 434927mE 4490266mN N40° 33' 38" W111° 46' 07"
Upper Falls	12T 435528mE 4490020mN N40° 33' 30" W111° 45' 42"
More Falls	12T 435748mE 4489812mN N40° 33' 24" W111° 45' 32"
Bridge	12T 436057mE 4489517mN N40° 33' 14" W111° 45' 19"
Upper Reservoir	12T 436480mE 4488130mN N40° 32' 29" W111° 45' 00"

## Hype

Bells Canyon is a very popular and scenic hike on the edge of Salt Lake City. The hike offers something for everyone. For the family, or less motivated, a short 15 minute hike leads to the lower reservoir and an excellent short outing. More motivated groups can continue 2 miles from the trailhead to the photogenic and impressive Lower Bells Canyon waterfall. Still motivated? The crowds subside at the lower falls, but an additional 20 minutes up the trail is the almost equally impressive Upper Bells Canyon falls.

The trail continues past the upper falls to the Upper Bells Canyon Reservoir, though this is about 5 miles one

way and a fairly strenuous endeavor. On our trip in early June on an average snow year, we got turned back about .75 miles from the reservoir by very deep snow. If going to the reservoir, wait until mid-summer when the snow has melted!

**WARNING:** Use good judgement and common sense around the falls. Several people have been injured and even killed slipping and falling into the falls. Keep a safe distances and watch your footing. The area around the falls is slippery.

*Tags: hike, wildflowers, fall colors, family friendly, beginner, access: paved*

## Trailhead

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The hike starts on the south east side of the Salt Lake Valley in Sandy.

Take I-125 to exit 6 and go east. This is the same exit to get to Big Cottonwood Canyon.

Follow Wasatch Blvd past the mouth of Big Cottonwood. 2.3 miles past the entrance to Big Cottonwood, turn right to stay on Wasatch Blvd and continue 1.9 miles. The trailhead is on the left side of the road here with a small parking lot. You'll have to go past it and make a u-turn to get back to it.

## Route

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### To The Lower Reservoir

From the trailhead, follow the well used and well-signed trail as it winds through the neighborhood, crosses the creek, and climbs a short steep boulder section to the Lower Reservoir. This is a good stopping point for those looking for a short hike. From the Lower Reservoir, views of the upper section of Bells Canyon come into view. Stunning!

### To The Lower Falls

Follow the left side of the reservoir on an old jeep road. Once around the reservoir, a signed trail junction is reached. Go left here, turning off the old road and onto the single track trail. A sharp eye up canyon will reveal the Lower Falls in the distance along this section of the hike.

The trail becomes more shaded as it winds up Bell Canyon. It crosses a bridge, then enters the Wilderness Area. Once in the wilderness area, the trail begins climbing in earnest and becoming steeper. After a particularly steep rocky section and crossing a small side stream, keep an eye out on the left for a major side trail. This is hard to miss, but some groups do. At this junction, the main trail goes left for about 4 minutes to the Lower Falls. The right branch is less traveled and continues to the upper falls.

### To The Upper Falls

From the junction with the lower falls, continue climbing up the right-hand trail. This is rocky and a bit less traveled than the section below. Not far above the lower falls junction (5-10 minutes or so) a side trail goes off on the left. This goes over to Bells Towers on the north side of the canyon and is used by climbers. Stay right!

The trail meanders up past a bit of a meadow to the top of a small cascade. This is not the upper falls, keep going. The obvious upper falls will be on the left not far above with a granite slab to view the falls from and hang out on.

### Continuing On

Above the upper falls, the trail continues to the Upper Reservoir. 15 or so minutes past the Upper Falls is

another excellent waterfall.

Above that the trail crosses a wooden log bridge, then begins a steep ascent to the reservoir. Our trip ended about 0.75 miles short of the reservoir due to heavy snowpack.

Return the same way.

