



## WATSON CANYON - TORREY



**Rating:** 3A

**Length:** 2-3 hours

**Gear:** Standard Technical Gear

**Maps:** Torrey, UT;

**Rappels:** 1+ 20 m ( 66 ft. )

**Water:** Generally avoidable.

**Flash Flood Danger:** Moderate

**Season:** Spring, Summer, Fall

**Waypoints:**

Trailhead	12S 461497mE 4245935mN N38° 21' 39" W111° 26' 27"
Leave Old Road	12S 462029mE 4245723mN N38° 21' 32" W111° 26' 05"
First Drop	12S 462142mE 4245726mN N38° 21' 32" W111° 25' 60"
Slot Start	12S 462466mE 4245602mN N38° 21' 28" W111° 25' 47"

## Hype

Elementary my dear Watson! Watson Canyon is short, straightforward, doesn't hold water, has short rappels (or challenging downclimbs), and a short approach and exit. What more could you want? Well, a more easily accessible trailhead would be helpful. Though a short approach, reaching the trailhead will require a true high clearance 4x4 and a bit of skill. Only a few miles from pavement, reaching the trailhead took us about 45 minutes. No real problem for a Jeep Grand Cherokee, but I doubt you would get a Subaru or the likes to the trailhead.

This is a canyon that I would recommend to 4wd and ATV enthusiasts. Others may find the rough approach road greatly detracts from the canyon. The canyon itself is similar to the East Fork of Sunglow. It has about 5 short drops, several of which yield well to partner assists and group spotting strategies. For those not inclined, all can be rappelled off natural anchors. A highly skilled group may get by with as little as one rappel.

**Tags:** *canyon, beginner, access: 4x4*

## Trailhead

From the near the west side of Torrey.

- Turn north on Sand Creek Road and reset your odometer. ( 12S 462189mE 4239096mN / N38° 17' 57" W111° 25' 57" )
- 0.7 miles - Turn left onto Forest Road 146. ( 12S 462196mE 4240272mN / N38° 18' 35" W111° 25' 57" )

- 1.5 miles - After a rough wash crossing, the road splits. Go right. ( 12S 461319mE 4241237mN / N38° 19' 06" W111° 26' 33" )
- 2.3 miles - Junction, stay right toward Sulphur Basin. ( 12S 461494mE 4242311mN / N38° 19' 41" W111° 26' 26" )
- 2.4 miles - Junction on a bend. Go left. The road gets rougher the farther you go. Stay on the obvious main road as it follows near the wash, crosses, then climbs to the mesa above. ( 12S 461590mE 4242356mN / N38° 19' 43" W111° 26' 22" )
- 5.5 miles - Road bends to the left after reaching the hill top. This bend is the trailhead. ( 12S 461505mE 4245945mN / N38° 21' 39" W111° 26' 26" )

## Route

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From the trailhead, a wide path heads east. This is an old road that is very torn up. Follow it about 5-10 minutes (0.3 miles), then find any reasonable path to the canyon bottom that is north (left) of the road. It should be steep dirt, but easy if you look around. Once in the canyon bottom, head down canyon.

### Canyon

Heading down the canyon, a nuisance drop is encountered. This 7 m drop can be rappelled or downclimbed by the highly skilled by climbing to the chockstone and then down, or you can backtrack 2 minutes and climb around it on the right looking down the canyon (south) side and re-enter the canyon just below it.

The canyon begins to cut into sandstone with a couple of easy downclimbs before dropping into a slot proper.

**R1 - 19 m ( 63 ft. )** - The first drop is a series of 3 short drops. These can easily be downclimbed with a little teamwork, or rappelled if needed. If rappelling all 3 drops, it is about 19 m.

The canyon is deep and quite striking here. From here on out, the canyon rhythm is walk a short distance, encounter an obstacle, repeat!

First up is a 3 m ( 10 ft. ) rappel or awkward downclimb around a big boulder.

Next up is another 3 m ( 10 ft. ) awkward rappel or partner downclimb, followed by another 4 m ( 14 ft. ) awkward downclimb that most may want to rappel. A few more minor downclimbs present before the final rappel.

**Final Rappel - 8 m ( 27 ft. )** - The final rappel is about 8 m ( 27 ft. ) down a low angle slab to the edge of a pool that was easily avoidable on our trip. Just below this, the canyon opens and a steep dirt slope comes in on the right.

### Exit

Fun is over! Walk down canyon a few minutes until the steep dirt slope on the right looks palatable, then grunt up it. You are likely to pass a canyon coming in on the left before it seems palatable. If so, the up should be just after the side canyon comes in. This may require a bit of zig-zagging. Keeping a bit of a westerly heading will intersect the old road that is followed back to the trailhead.

