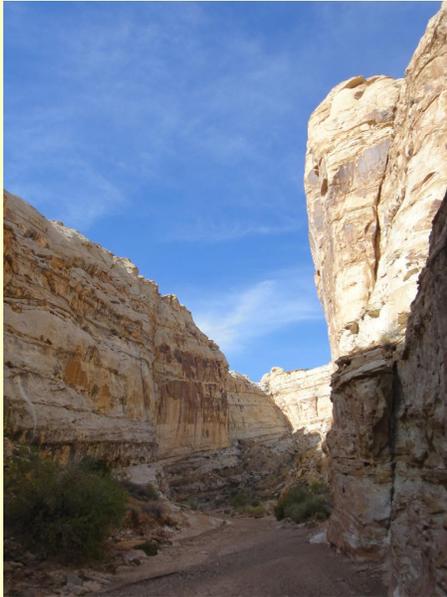




## CHUTE CANYON - SOUTHERN SWELL



**Rating:** Easy Hiking or Moderate for Full Loop

**Length:** 3-7 hours (up to about 11 miles for the full loop)

**Gear:** Standard Hiking Gear

**Maps:** Little Wild Horse Mesa, UT; Horse Valley, UT; Goblin Valley, UT; Temple Mountain, UT

**Water:** None.

**Flash Flood Danger:** Low except a very short section in Crack

**Season:** Fall, Winter, Spring

**Waypoints:**

Crack Canyon TH	12S 522176mE 4277192mN N38° 38' 35" W110° 44' 43"
Chute Canyon TH	12S 520363mE 4275229mN N38° 37' 31" W110° 45' 58"
Pictograph	12S 521860mE 4271857mN N38° 35' 42" W110° 44' 56"
Chute Bottom	12S 521635mE 4271656mN N38° 35' 35" W110° 45' 06"
Crack Exit	12S 523907mE 4273246mN N38° 36' 27" W110° 43' 32"

### Hype

Compared to its neighbors, Crack Canyon to the east and Little Wild Horse to the west, Chute Canyon comes off as a bit of a dud. Wide and high walled, it is easy to pass through and lacks the narrow slot sections of its neighbors. Chute Canyon is best visited as a loop hike going down Crack and up Chute, or as a casual after dinner hike after climbing Chute Butte. The loop hike is fairly long, but can be shortened a bit with two cars. Though long, I recommend it. Seeing Crack Canyon, then traversing along the face of the reef and up Chute makes for a good loop.

Note: There is a small pictograph at the end of Chute, but it is quite small and not very well preserved. There are also many old mining ruins near the trailhead that are interesting to visit, though it goes without saying, don't enter them!

**Tags:** hike, dog friendly, family friendly, access: 2wd

### Trailhead

From I-70 (west of Green River), go south on Highway 25 about 25 miles.

- A signed road goes off to the west signed Goblin Valley. Take it, resetting your odometer. ( 12S 537737mE 4275878mN / N38° 37' 50" W110° 33' 59" )

- Follow this paved road 5.1 miles to a junction. Go straight. ( 12S 530077mE 4278354mN / N38° 39' 12" W110° 39' 16" )
- At 7.2 miles from the highway, a good road goes off on the left. This is the behind the reef road. ( 12S 527155mE 4279922mN / N38° 40' 03" W110° 41' 16" )
- Reset your odometer, and follow the Behind the Reef road. At 4.1 miles is the Crack Canyon trailhead. If your doing the full loop, and have 2 vehicles, this will be your starting point, leave the other vehicle at the top of Chute Canyon. ( 12S 522177mE 4277215mN / N38° 38' 36" W110° 44' 43" )
- 6.25 miles down the Behind the Reef road is Chute Canyon. This is also where the Behind The Reef trail goes off to the west. ( 12S 520581mE 4275663mN / N38° 37' 45" W110° 45' 49" )
- The road gets a little rougher past here, where it crosses Chute Wash. Those in cars may wish to park and walk from here. Otherwise, continue another 0.5 miles into Chute Canyon to 6.8 miles where a parking area on the left with some old metal shed ruins are. This is the trailhead, just before the road crosses Chute Wash again. ( 12S 520363mE 4275229mN / N38° 37' 31" W110° 45' 58" )

## Route

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### Down and Back (1-4 hours)

From the trailhead, simply wander down Chute as far as desired. It is easy going, on an old road at first, then in the dry stream bed. After about 3.5 miles (1.5 hours), Chute exits the reef, with a prominent side wash coming in on the left. Follow it up a couple of minutes for a pictograph on the left hand wall. Return the way you came.

### Crack / Chute Loop (5-7 hours)

My favorite way to do Chute is as a loop with Crack with two cars, this is about 8.5 miles. Without two cars, about 11 miles. Start at the Crack Canyon trailhead.

From the signed trailhead, follow an old road as it heads down the wash. It gets progressively worse as you follow it toward Crack Canyon. As you near the reef, where the canyon deepens, the road ceases to exist and a wooden fence marks the end of motor vehicle travel. Follow the canyon as it cuts deeply into the reef. This first section of canyon is impressively deep with fascinating solution pocket marred walls. 10-15 minutes past the fence a short narrows section is encountered. It has a couple of easy downclimbs, or can be bypassed on the right (looking down canyon).

5 minutes past this first small narrows is an impressively undercut section. This undercut section of narrows is very photogenic in the right light. The canyon opens briefly before another short narrow section is encountered. This section has a couple of minor downclimbs, but nothing difficult.

The pattern repeats itself, as the canyon opens and then begins to narrow again. This narrow section, however, begins with a 2 m ( 7 ft. ) downclimb that can be a little tricky for some. If this seems too difficult, go back up canyon about 3-5 minutes, watching on your right (looking up canyon) for a boulder filled crack. You can ascend this crack a level, and then follow a cairned trail down canyon bypassing the difficulties. The bypass is a good option if you have dogs with you.

Continue down canyon through more open and narrow sections. Near the end a very deep narrow section is encountered and marks the spot where the canyon begins getting shallow as it exits the reef. 20 minutes or so after the deepest section, you exit the slickrock walled canyon and enter the dirt and rock lined wash on the other side of the reef.

Just before a dryfall in the now wide and open canyon, a trail and trail marker point to Chute Canyon on the right. Follow this social trail. It is well defined and easy to follow at first, but then deteriorates in sections. Head west, with a touch of southwest across broken ground for about a mile until a deep side wash appears on your right. Follow the rim until it is easy to scramble in.

Follow the deep wash down. Just before Chute a pictograph panel appears on the right. A couple of minutes past the panel is the confluence with the now wide open Chute Canyon. Follow Chute up canyon as it cuts through the reef. (3.5 miles from the confluence to the trailhead.)

If you spotted a car at the Chute Trailhead, your are done. Otherwise walk the road back to the Crack Trailhead. (about 2.6 miles / 1 hour)

