



THE BLOCK - CEDAR MESA



Rating: Easy hiking, moderate navigation

Length: 5-7 hours

Gear: Usual hiking gear

Maps: Sewing Machine, UT; Clearwater Canyon, UT; Fiddler Butte, UT

Water: None

Flash Flood Danger: None

Season: Any, although summers can be hot.

Waypoints:

Trailhead

12S 565980mE 4204054mN
N37° 58' 54" W110° 14' 55"

Hype

The Block, a large mesa in a remote corner of southern Utah, is a great hike with outstanding views. The Block is composed of two different mesas, The North Block and The South Block, that are joined by a narrow slickrock ridge that is less than 20 feet wide. A hike up to its summit provided outstanding views from the San Rafael Swell to the north all the way to Navajo Mountain to the south. Camping in Cove Canyon is particularly nice, with solitude and great scenery all around.

If you are a canyoneer, [Cove Canyon](#) is a worthwhile leg stretcher if you are in the area, and is on the way to the trailhead.

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

Trailhead

Travel south out of Hanksville on Highway 95 about 45 miles to between mile posts 45 and 46. There is a dirt road on the east side of the highway here, just before the bridge over the Colorado River. Take this road.

- Reset your odometer as you turn off onto the side road. Stay on the main road, avoiding the many side roads along the way. (12S 554607mE 4195028mN / N37° 54' 04" W110° 22' 44")
- At 19.6, just before the road crosses Cove Canyon, there is a junction. The road to this point should be passable by all vehicles if carefully driven. At this junction, go left and reset your odometer. (12S 566089mE 4202078mN / N37° 57' 50" W110° 14' 51")

This last section of road gets progressively more rugged. Drive as far as comfortable. After 0.5 miles, there will be a corral on the right. Continue, passing a rough spot in the wash just after the corral. At 1.5 miles, there are a couple of fantastic camping spots on the right. This is the recommended trailhead for most, as the road has a particularly rough spot just around the bend.

Route

From the trailhead, walk the road. After 5 minutes, it goes left up a side canyon and out onto the mesa. Once up the side canyon, you may notice a track going to the left. Stay right on the most traveled road. At this point, you can see the low angle slope up The Block that will be your route for climbing it in the distance. You also have great views of the Sewing Machine Needle on your left. (The last pointed tower at the end of The Block.)

Continue along the road, coming to another junction after 15 minutes from the trailhead. Right goes to Cove Spring. Go left, following the road to its end below the low angle slope up The Block (45 minutes from the trailhead). The road deteriorates here into an old trail. The trail up the slope is intermittent and tricky to locate. Simply stay to the right (looking up) of the gully. As you get closer to the top, the trail will become better traveled and easier to follow.

Once you reach the top, you can hike to different viewpoints on the mesa. Because it is densely forested, hiking cross country on the mesa top requires good map and compass skills and/or a GPS. Hiking to the slickrock ridge connecting the North Block and South Block requires heading North by a North-West for about 25 minutes and provides a good destination. From the ridge, you can see the San Rafael Swell off in the distance to the north. The Dirty Devil drainage closer on the west. The Colorado River canyon to the south, and Jacob's Chair off in the distance to the south.

Return the way you came.

