London Travel Notes

PLAN LONDON LIKE YOU'VE BEEN BEFORE

FREE GUIDE

SELF-GUIDED WALKS

London Walking Routes

Six self-guided walks through London's best neighbourhoods, with route maps, step-by-step stops, timings and one-tap Google Maps directions.



UPDATED NOVEMBER 2026 · LONDONTRAVELNOTES.COM

FREE GUIDE · UPDATED NOVEMBER 2026

See London on foot

Central London is smaller than it looks, and walking is the best way to understand it. These six self-guided routes link the city's highlights into easy, logical walks. Each one has a route diagram, numbered stops, timings and a link that opens walking directions in Google Maps.

#	ROUTE	DISTANCE	TIME	BEST FOR
1	Westminster & South Bank	4 km	2–3 h	First-timers, sunset
2	Royal London	3.5 km	1.5–2.5 h	Palaces & parks
3	Soho & Covent Garden	3 km	1.5–2 h	Evenings, food
4	Notting Hill	2.5 km	1.5–2 h	Photos, markets
5	Greenwich	3.5 km	2–3 h	Views, history
6	City of London History	3.5 km	2 h	History lovers

Before you set off

- [ ] Wear comfortable shoes. London pavements are hard work.
- [ ] Carry a small umbrella or rain jacket, even if the morning looks clear.
- [ ] Charge your phone, or save the routes for offline use in Google Maps.
- [ ] Bring water. Free refill points and cafés are easy to find.
- [ ] Check opening times for anything you plan to go inside.

GUIDE GUARD'S NOTE

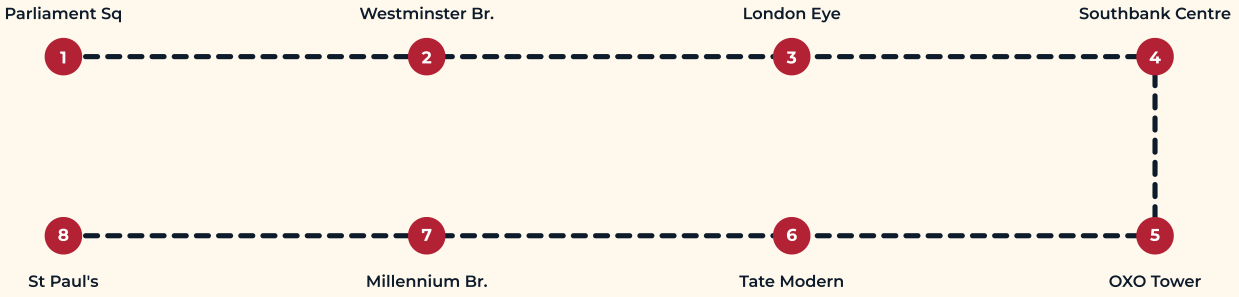
Combine routes for a full day. Route 2 flows into Route 3 (Piccadilly Circus links them), and Route 1 finishes where Route 6 begins (St Paul's).

ROUTE 1 · THE ESSENTIAL FIRST WALK

Westminster & South Bank Walk

The walk every first-time visitor should do: Parliament, the Thames, the London Eye and the South Bank's galleries, ending at St Paul's.

DISTANCE	TIME	START → FINISH	BEST TIME
About 4 km	2–3 hours	Westminster → St Paul's	Afternoon into sunset



Route diagram, not to scale. Stops shown in order.

1. **Parliament Square.** Start at Westminster station. See Big Ben (Elizabeth Tower), the Houses of Parliament and Westminster Abbey.
2. **Westminster Bridge.** Cross the bridge for the classic river view of Parliament.
3. **London Eye.** Walk along the riverside past the London Eye and Jubilee Gardens.
4. **Southbank Centre.** Pass the Southbank Centre, the skate space and the book market under Waterloo Bridge.
5. **Gabriel's Wharf & OXO Tower.** Small shops, then the OXO Tower Wharf.
6. **Tate Modern.** Free entry. Go up to the viewing level if you have time.
7. **Millennium Bridge.** Cross the footbridge with St Paul's straight ahead.
8. **St Paul's Cathedral.** Finish at the cathedral steps. St Paul's station is a few minutes away.

▸ **Open this route in Google Maps (walking directions)** Online version: **londontravelnotes.com/london-walking-routes**

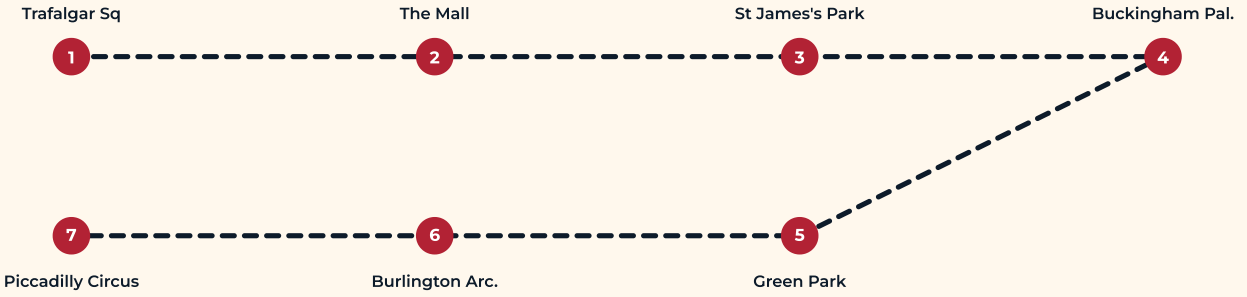
> ♛ **GUIDE GUARD'S NOTE**
>
> Do the walk in this direction. The light is behind you in the afternoon, and the dome of St Paul's grows bigger as you approach.

ROUTE 2 · PALACES AND PARKS

Royal London Walk

Trafalgar Square, the Mall, Buckingham Palace and two royal parks, finishing among the historic shops of Piccadilly.

DISTANCE	TIME	START → FINISH	BEST TIME
About 3.5 km	1.5–2.5 hours	Charing Cross → Piccadilly Circus	Morning



Route diagram, not to scale. Stops shown in order.

1. **Trafalgar Square.** Nelson's Column, the lions and the National Gallery steps.
2. **Admiralty Arch & The Mall.** Walk under the arch and down the wide, red ceremonial road.
3. **St James's Park.** Cross into the park: the lake, the pelicans and the Blue Bridge view.
4. **Buckingham Palace.** The palace and the Victoria Memorial. Check the Changing of the Guard schedule.
5. **Green Park.** Walk diagonally up through the park toward Piccadilly.
6. **Burlington Arcade.** A Regency shopping arcade with uniformed beadles.
7. **Piccadilly Circus.** Finish under the famous lights.

▸ **Open this route in Google Maps (walking directions)** Online version: **londontravelnotes.com/london-walking-routes**

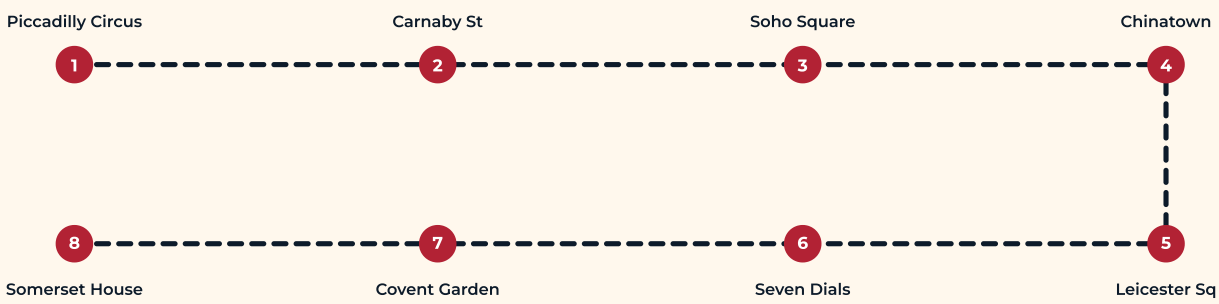
> ♛ **GUIDE GUARD'S NOTE**
>
> Changing of the Guard draws big crowds. If you want to see it, arrive at least 45 minutes early. If you don't, avoid the area around 10:30–12:00 on ceremony days.

ROUTE 3 · THE WEST END

Soho & Covent Garden Walk

Colourful streets, Chinatown, Seven Dials and the Covent Garden Piazza: the West End at its liveliest.

DISTANCE	TIME	START → FINISH	BEST TIME
About 3 km	1.5–2 hours	Piccadilly Circus → Somerset House	Late afternoon



Route diagram, not to scale. Stops shown in order.

1. **Piccadilly Circus.** Start under the lights and head north up Regent Street.
2. **Carnaby Street.** Fashion and colourful street decorations.
3. **Soho Square.** A small green square in the middle of Soho.
4. **Chinatown.** Gerrard Street, its gates and bakeries.
5. **Leicester Square.** Cinemas and the half-price theatre ticket booth.
6. **Seven Dials & Neal's Yard.** The sundial column and a colourful courtyard.
7. **Covent Garden Piazza.** Street performers and market halls.
8. **Somerset House.** Finish in the grand courtyard (an ice rink in winter).

▸ **Open this route in Google Maps (walking directions)** Online version: londontravelnotes.com/london-walking-routes

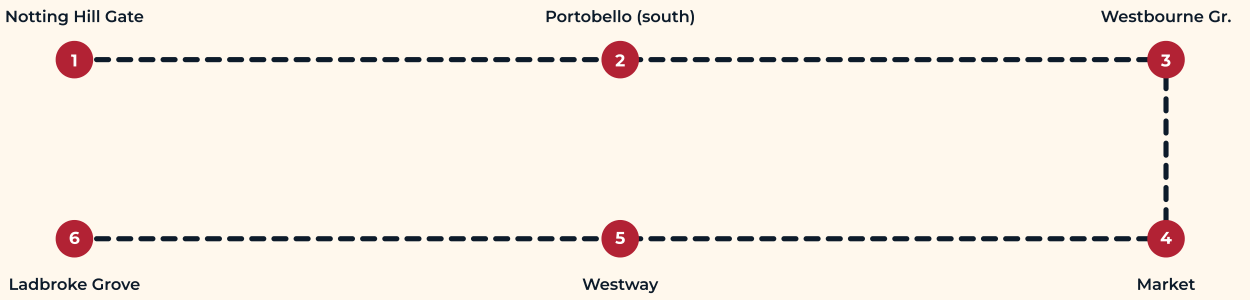
♛ **GUIDE GUARD'S NOTE**

Start around 16:00 and finish with dinner in Soho or a pre-theatre meal. This area really wakes up in the evening.

Notting Hill Walk

Portobello Road from end to end, with the pastel terraces and mews that make Notting Hill so photogenic.

DISTANCE	TIME	START → FINISH	BEST TIME
About 2.5 km	1.5–2 hours	Notting Hill Gate → Ladbroke Grove	Weekday morning



Route diagram, not to scale. Stops shown in order.

1. **Notting Hill Gate.** Exit the station and walk along Pembridge Road.
2. **Portobello Road (antiques end).** The southern end, with antique arcades and pastel houses.
3. **Westbourne Grove.** A detour for boutiques and cafés.
4. **Portobello Market.** Food stalls and the busiest stretch on Saturdays.
5. **Westway & vintage stalls.** Vintage clothing under the flyover.
6. **Ladbroke Grove.** Finish at the station, or keep walking north to Golborne Road.

▸ **Open this route in Google Maps (walking directions)** Online version: **londontravelnotes.com/london-walking-routes**

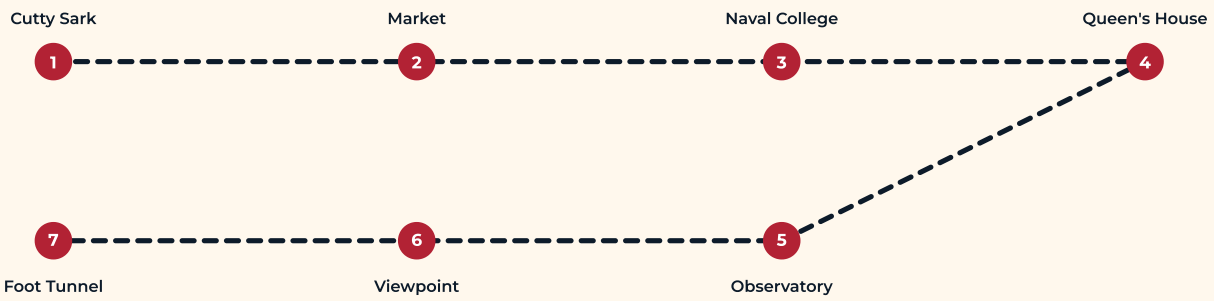
> ♛ **GUIDE GUARD'S NOTE**
>
> Many of the pastel houses are private homes. Take photos from the pavement, and keep doorsteps clear for the people who live there.

ROUTE 5 · MARITIME LONDON

Greenwich Walk

Ships, a royal park, the Prime Meridian and the best free view of London's skyline.

DISTANCE	TIME	START → FINISH	BEST TIME
About 3.5 km	2–3 hours	Cutty Sark (DLR) → Island Gardens	Clear-weather day



Route diagram, not to scale. Stops shown in order.

1. **Cutty Sark.** The famous tea clipper by the river.
2. **Greenwich Market.** Covered market with food and crafts.
3. **Old Royal Naval College.** Wren's twin domes and the Painted Hall.
4. **Queen's House.** An elegant royal villa with free entry.
5. **Royal Observatory.** Climb the hill to the Prime Meridian.
6. **General Wolfe viewpoint.** The skyline view over Canary Wharf and the City.
7. **Greenwich Foot Tunnel.** Walk under the Thames. Island Gardens DLR is on the other side.

▸ **Open this route in Google Maps (walking directions)** Online version: **londontravelnotes.com/london-walking-routes**

♛ GUIDE GUARD'S NOTE

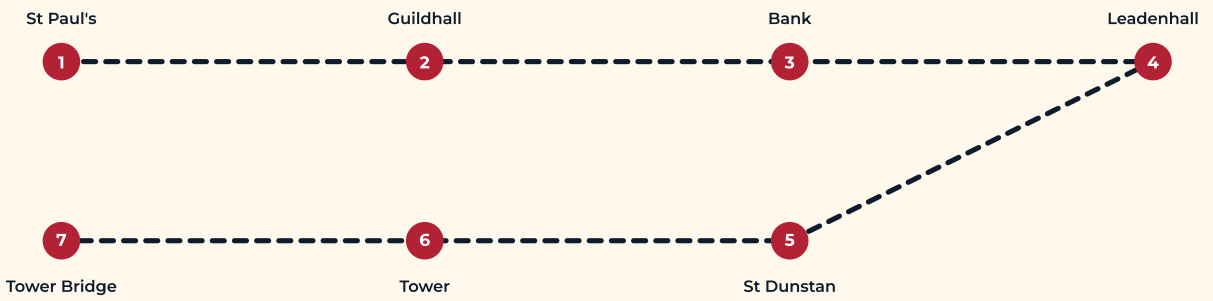
The view from beside the Wolfe statue is best in the late afternoon. Come back up the hill before you leave if you were there at midday.

ROUTE 6 · 2,000 YEARS IN TWO HOURS

City of London History Walk

From Wren's cathedral through Roman London and Victorian markets to the Tower and Tower Bridge.

DISTANCE	TIME	START → FINISH	BEST TIME
About 3.5 km	2 hours	St Paul's → Tower Bridge	Weekday



Route diagram, not to scale. Stops shown in order.

1. **St Paul's Cathedral.** Begin on the cathedral steps.
2. **Guildhall.** The medieval heart of the City, with traces of a Roman amphitheatre.
3. **Bank Junction.** The Bank of England and the Royal Exchange.
4. **Leadenhall Market.** A painted Victorian market arcade.
5. **St Dunstan in the East.** A garden growing inside a bombed church ruin.
6. **Tower of London.** Walk around the walls and the moat.
7. **Tower Bridge.** Finish on the bridge.

▸ **Open this route in Google Maps (walking directions)** Online version: **londontravelnotes.com/london-walking-routes**

♛ GUIDE GUARD'S NOTE

Do this walk on a weekday when the City is busy and everything is open, or on a Sunday morning for empty streets and better photos.

KEEP EXPLORING

More walks & planning tools

Our interactive map shows every stop in this guide alongside restaurants, viewpoints and neighbourhood highlights.

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Interactive London map
All walking routes
Neighbourhood guides

Route diagrams are not to scale. Use the Google Maps links for exact directions. Distances and times are approximate and don't include time spent inside attractions. Information was checked in November 2026.