

CHAPTER 1: PLANNING YOUR HIKE & SEASONAL OPERATIONS

- [Is the entire 300km trail open, and how long does it take?](#)
- [Can I hike during the monsoon season?](#)

Is the entire 300km trail open, and how long does it take?

“📄 **Quick Summary:** The trail is fully open across all 22 stages. To walk the entire trail from end-to-end typically takes between **16 to 22 days**.”

? Detailed Guidance

The Pekoe Trail is a curated **300-kilometer (186-mile)** long-distance walking trail that winds through the Central Highlands of Sri Lanka.

- **Flexible Pacing:** Each of the 22 stages ranges from **9 to 18 kilometers**, taking approximately **4 to 6 hours** to complete per day.
- **Independently Accessible:** You do not have to hike the entire trail. Every stage begins and ends near transport links and can be completed as a standalone day hike.
- **Direction:** The trail is fully waymarked and can be hiked in either direction.

?? Critical Alerts & Requirements

- **Physical Fitness:** The trail has an average difficulty rating of **6.5 out of 10** (graded as Moderate to Difficult). Ensure you are in good health before treading.

? Official Resources

- **Mobile App:** [Download The Pekoe Trail App](#)

Can I hike during the monsoon season?

“📄 **Quick Summary:** While the trail is technically accessible year-round, hiking during the heavy monsoons (May-June and September-December) is challenging due to rain, thick mist, and leeches.

? Detailed Guidance

If you plan to walk during wet weather, be prepared for the following:

- **Rapid Weather Changes:** Temperatures drop dramatically in the highlands during heavy rain. Visibility can decrease to near-zero within minutes due to heavy mist.
- **Leeches:** High dampness increases the presence of forest and tea estate leeches. They are harmless but require careful removal (slide a fingernail under their base to unstick them).

?? Critical Alerts & Requirements

- **Early Finishes:** High rainfall means it gets dark much faster. Plan to complete your stage by **2:00 PM** to avoid being stranded in the dark.
- **Essential Gear:** Carry heavy-duty wet weather gear, a backup power bank, a personal first-aid kit, and short gaiters to block leeches.