

Suggested Hikes, Rides and Paddles!

Mount Tom State Reservation

125 Reservation Road, Holyoke, MA 01040, (413) 534-1186

To help you plan your visit to DCR's Mount Tom State Reservation, we offer the following suggested experiences that we think you might enjoy.

- **“Introductory”** are short and appropriate for most users, including families with children.
- **“Signature”** are recommended trail experiences. These may be longer or more difficult but highlight some of the best park features.

For a safe and enjoyable park experience please review the **Things to Know Before You Go** section at the end of this document. Download a map before you go:
<https://www.mass.gov/doc/mt-tom-state-reservation-trail-map/download>

Introductory Hike Universal Access Loop

Trailhead: Enter the park from the Route 5 entrance in Holyoke, park at the Bray Lake parking lot, off Reservation Road. **Lat/Long:** 42.268911, -72.616636

Distance: 0.8 mile loop **Difficulty:** Easy

Brief Description: This packed gravel trail is great for an easy walk or wheelchair use. Begin the Universal Access Trail at the kiosk at the far (south) end of the parking lot. The winds through white pine and hardwood forest, with wetland and lake views, out to Bray Brook bridge. There is an alternate accessible route so users can make a shorter loop trail on the return.

Introductory Hike Bray Loop Trail

Trailhead: Enter the park from the Route 5 entrance in Holyoke, park at the Bray Lake parking lot, off Reservation Road. **Lat/Long:** 42.268911, -72.616636

Distance: 2.1 mile loop **Difficulty:** Easy

Brief Description: Begin the Bray Loop Trail on the Universal Access Trail. Go past the Kay Bee and Keystone Trails. Take a right onto the Bray Loop Trail (follow the yellow blazes). Continue on the Bray Loop Trail, crossing the stream, staying left at each intersection, until you come back around to the Bray Brook bridge. Cross the bridge and take the Universal Access Trail back to the parking area.

Signature Hike Goat Peak View

Trailhead: Mount Tom Visitor Center (stone house) at the intersection of Reservation Road and Christopher Clark Road. **Lat/Long:** 42.267455, -72.636411

Distance: 3.4 miles round-trip **Difficulty:** Moderate

Brief Description: Goat Peak offers you an observation tower with maybe the best view on the Mount Tom Range, that include sweeping views of the surrounding Connecticut River valley. Facing the Visitor Center, head to right (west) and past the gate onto Old Reservation Road. 200 feet further turn right onto the Dynamite Trail (yellow blazes). Follow Dynamite Trail (0.3 miles) to John McCool Trail (blue blazes). Turn left onto McCool Trail, continue (0.2 miles) to first intersection. Take a right, then a left onto paved road. Continue 250 feet up the road. On your right is a trailhead for the New England Trail (NET) (white blazes). Follow the NET up to Goat Peak (0.3 miles). Climb the Goat Peak observation tower and enjoy the view. To return, follow the NET (south) to Reservation Road (0.5 miles). Turn right for a short walk (0.16 miles) along Reservation Road back to the Visitor Center. Be mindful of vehicle traffic.

Signature Hike NET-Beau Bridges Loop

Trailhead: Mount Tom Visitor Center (stone house) at the intersection of Reservation Road and Christopher Clark Road. **Lat/Long:** 42.267455, -72.636411

Distance: 1.8 mile loop **Difficulty:** Moderate

Brief Description: Enjoy the view from Goat Peak and along tumbling Cascade Brook. Walk east on Reservation Road (0.16 miles) to the New England Trail (NET, white blazes) on the left. Be mindful of vehicles while walking along the road. Hike to the Easthampton overlook (0.4 miles). Turn right past the benches and up to the Goat Peak observation tower, and climb up for a great view. Following, continue down the opposite side of Goat Peak, pick up the NET (north) and continue (0.25 miles) to the intersection with the Beau Bridges Trail (blue blazes) on your right. "Beau Bridges" might remind you of the actor, but here it refers to the seven lovely footbridges crossing over and along Cascade Brook. Turn right onto Beau Bridges Trail and continue (0.6 miles) to the Hampden Field. Keep left to go to the parking area, then right, through the parking lot to return to Reservation Road. Turn right onto Reservation Road and continue for 0.2 miles back to the Visitor Center.

Signature Hike NET-DOC-Quarry Loop

Trailhead: Mount Tom Visitor Center (stone house) at the intersection of Reservation Road and Christopher Clark Road. **Lat/Long:** 42.267455, -72.636411

Distance: 2.3 miles round-trip **Difficulty:** Moderate

Brief Description: Walk up the rugged ridgeline of Mount Tom. From the Visitor Center head east on Reservation Road (0.09 miles) to the New England Trail (NET, white blazes) on your right. Be mindful of vehicles while walking along the road. Turn right (south) and follow NET to Whiting Peak and intersection with the D.O.C. Trail (red blazes) on your left (0.84 miles). D.O.C. refers to Daniel O'Connell, Holyoke construction contractor, quarry owner, and developer of the former Mt. Tom Ski Area. Turn left and continue down the D.O.C. to the Quarry Trail (yellow blazes) intersection (0.75 miles). Turn left onto the Quarry Trail and continue to the intersection with the NET (0.25 miles). Turn right onto NET and return by the same route to Reservation Road and the Visitor Center.

Things to Know Before You Go

- **Time, distance, difficulty.** The average hiker pace is estimated at 1.5 miles per hour. Most distances are round-trip. Plan conservatively, start early. Be aware of weather and sunset. Trail difficulty ratings based on ruggedness and gradient are *easy*, *moderate*, or *difficult*.
- **Wear weather appropriate clothing**, layer for temperature changes. Bring sunblock. Wear appropriate and sturdy footwear.
- **Parking at trailheads.** [Parking fees](#) may apply. Space may be limited. Be courteous to avoid blocking in others. Do not leave valuables in your car.
- **Bring a map and share your plans with someone.**
- **Drinking water** may not be available on site. Bring plenty!
- **Stay on designated trails.** Follow painted blazes and signs if available. Generally, double blazes indicate an intersection or direction change.
- **Pace & group size.** Keep your group together; hike only as fast as your group's slowest hiker or rider. Limit your group size to 12 people or fewer to lessen impacts.
- **Carry-in, carry-out all trash and personal belongings.** Follow the Leave No Trace outdoor ethics. [More information here.](#)
- **Know which parks are pet friendly.** Dogs are not permitted in DCR Water Supply Protection areas (such as Quabbin and Wachusett Reservoirs) and certain state parks. Always keep your dog leashed, 10-foot maximum. Always pick up after your dog and dispose of waste properly. [Complete guidelines here.](#)
- **Be aware of hunting seasons.** Wear blaze orange when appropriate. [More information here.](#)
- **Wear a bicycle helmet** while biking. Riders age 16 and under must wear a helmet. It is the law. [More information here.](#)

- **Wear your PFD** while boating. A Personal Flotation Device (PFD), or life preserver, must be worn by boaters age 12 and under; and canoeists/kayakers from Sept. 15-May 15. [More information here.](#)
 - **Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers.** Prevent the transport of nuisance species. Clean all recreational equipment. It is the law. [More information here.](#)
 - **Be aware some trails may not be well marked, and some may not be identified on a trail map.**
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The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) oversees over 450,000 acres of state parks, forests, beaches, bike trails, parkways, watershed lands, and dams across the Commonwealth. DCR's mission is to: *Protect, promote and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural and recreational resources for the well-being of all.*