Weatherman
Walking

Saundersfoot
to Pendine
The Weatherman Walking maps are intended as a guide to help you walk the route. We recommend using an OS map of the area in conjunction with this guide. Routes and conditions may have changed since this guide was written.

The BBC takes no responsibility for any accident or injury that may occur while following the route. Always wear appropriate clothing and footwear and check weather conditions before heading out.

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For this walk we’ve included OS grid references should you wish to use them.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 9 MILES
This is a fascinating walk, rich in history. The first half as far as Amroth is low level and easy plus there’s cafes and public toilets at several points. The second half is more challenging with lots of steep hill climbs but really worth it for the spectacular views. After Amroth there are no amenities until you reach Pendine. The walk crosses the Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire county boundaries.
**Directions**

This walk starts at the pretty seaside town of Saundersfoot about three miles away from Tenby. Saundersfoot was once a small village that developed as the harbour expanded and it's from the harbour we're setting off.

From the harbour either follow the wall round or cross the privately-owned beach. The coast path heads along The Strand, the town's main shopping street, but you can choose to walk along the sandy beach, much of which was bought by a group of local people who were determined to keep its old-fashioned seaside character.

The beach stretches for about a quarter of a mile. At the end of the beach turn north, away from the sea and onto the path heading to an area known as Coppet Hall. Emerging from the second tunnel you arrive at Wiseman’s Bridge, a small bay with limited parking and a pub. There’s an attractive beach with pebbles and rocks soon giving way to golden sand.

**Coppet Hall and Wiseman’s Bridge Tunnels**

(SN 14023 05436)

Here you will find a visitors’ centre, complete with parking, cafe, smart restaurant and toilets.

The concrete path leads through a short tunnel and not long after, a second longer one. These are former railway tunnels carved into the cliffs for transporting coal.

The longer tunnel is about 100m long and although it is lit, it’s still pretty atmospheric. It’s said that lads who worked in the local coal mines would run straight into the sea after their shifts to wash the coal dust off.
Amroth (SN 16385 07055)

This village was an old mining settlement that grew with the industry. Today it’s an attractive beach resort with cafes, beach shops and a large car park on the front. One row of terraced cottages which used to back on to the sea front disappeared about 80 years ago after the sea eroded the defences causing irreparable damage and forcing the families to move out.

If you fancy extending your walk you could visit the village church, St Elidyr’s, about a mile off the coast path. Among the graves there is one to Mary Rees (nee Mary Prout), a poor girl from the parish who became pregnant, gave birth in a workhouse and then dropped her newborn baby daughter down a mineshaft. It’s not known if it was purely despair or the effects of postnatal depression that caused Mary to kill her daughter. But she was sentenced to be hanged and only released after a 1,120 name petition was submitted asking for clemency. Instead, Mary served 14 years in jails in London before being released. She returned to Pembrokeshire, married a local farmer and had two more children who, when she died, put a loving message on her gravestone in the church. The murdered baby, Rhoda, was also buried in the cemetery but is in an unmarked grave.
Colby Woodland Garden (SN 15906 08066)  
A National Trust property which if you can spare a couple of hours for a detour, is well worth a visit. With its fantastic wooded gardens and highly tended walled garden, offering colour all year (there is an entrance fee).

It is believed to be home to the tallest Japanese Redwood tree in Britain, standing at 134ft and also has several industrial remains linking it to the local mining history.

**Directions**

Carrying on along the coast path at Amroth, next to the Amroth Arms, there is a public footpath leading to Colby Woodland Garden.

Back on the footpath, the next stretch of the walk is a bit more strenuous and heads up onto the headland over a series of undulating hills. You will reach a small wooden bridge that is considered to be the county dividing line between Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire.

It is also the southern start of the Pembrokeshire Coast Path and at this point there's still about 4 miles to walk with no cafes or toilets along the way.
SAUNDERSFOOT TO PENDINE

**Directions**
The next two miles will be mainly inland with intermittent views of the sea as you climb up towards Marros Beacon above the stunning beach of Marros Sands. There isn’t easy access to this beach so it makes it very private if you want to rest for a while as you drop down near the shoreline.

This section of coastline played an important part in World War Two and nowhere is it more obvious than at Morfa Bychan, the next bay along. As you drop down towards the beach you will see two short stretches of damaged wall. This was built to simulate Hitler’s Atlantic Wall, the coastal defences the Germans built to defend the northern and western coasts of France against an Allied landing.

**Morfa Bychan** (SN 22576 07511)
The defences were part of a major World War Two planning project known as Exercise Jantzen – rehearsals for the D-Day landings.

The section of coast from Tenby to Pendine was chosen to test assault methods over sand and shingle beaches. ‘Dragon’s Teeth’ anti-tank and landing craft structures were positioned in the sea and are still visible today. The reinforced walls were also used for target practice and were rammed by tanks to see how much they resisted.

Some 20,000 personnel were involved in the 2-week long amphibious exercise.
In 1924 Malcolm Campbell set a new land-speed record of 146.16mph at Pendine in the Sunbeam Bluebird. For the next few years he and John Godfrey Parry Thomas, in his car, Babs, both tried to push the record up. Parry Thomas took it to 170.6mph in 1926 and Campbell clocked 174.2 in February the following year.

The following month Thomas crashed trying to get the record back. He died and Babs was buried in the Pendine sand dunes. In 1969 Babs was dug up and painstakingly restored. She has been on regular display at the Museum of Speed in Pendine which has recently closed for redevelopment and is due to reopen in 2020 as part of a regeneration of the area.