

BEAVER LAKE – WEST SIDE

This walk is a relatively gentle one that takes you from the Commonwealth Place Sports Centre in Saanich and over to the western shores of Beaver Lake. It is a one-booter. Turn off Elk Lake Drive into the Sports Centre and, once you reach the roundabout just in front of the building turn right and drive around to the north side of the building. There's a large parking lot and find a spot up at the far end, adjacent to a stand of trees.

1. At the far end of the parking lot, to the left of the stand of trees, you will see a yellow access barrier. The broad trail leads to some houses. At the roadway turn left and follow the road around to the right into a cul-de-sac. There's a pathway at 'A' that runs between a house and the entrance to the townhouse development. This leads into what used to be the Royal Oak Golf Course.
2. At the end of the short path between the housing, turn left and walk along the edge of the golf course. The trail starts to go downhill through the forest to the Colquitz Creek. Stay on the main trail, keeping right where there's a trail leading off to the left. You will end up at a short bridge across Colquitz Creek at 'B'. Turn right and follow the trail to a road at 'C' leading off the parking lot at the end of Beaver Lake.
3. Cross the road and continue on the broad trail which leads up a short hill, keeping left at the top of the rise. This section of the trail will lead you to another road at 'D' which you will cross, walking along the side of a pond. Follow the broad trail along to 'E' where you will be able to see up towards Elk Lake and where you will find a trail leading down a short hill to the edge of Beaver Lake.
4. Follow the trail that parallels the lake short until you get to the dam at the end of Elk Lake. Walk straight ahead, passing a public convenience and a picnic gazebo at 'F'. Cross the grass to the trail/road junction at 'C'. Then retrace your steps to the footbridge at 'B' and wend your way back up the hill through the trees.
5. When you come out of the trees, after a few metres, you'll see an informal trail leading off to the left up a very short rise. Follow that trail a short distance until you come to a groomed trail where you turn right. This trail will take you past the ex-golf course's ponds and towards the old clubhouse which you will see ahead. Walk up the roadway that leads past the clubhouse, keeping the building on your left. (Note that, if you wish, you can wander around the golf course along the old golf cart trails – they all lead back to the ex-clubhouse). You'll then come to a parking lot and over in the far right hand corner you'll see another informal trail leading downhill to the roadway. Just across the road is where the cars are parked.