

# Quandary Peak – Quick Trail Guide

Colorado's Most Popular 14er | 14,265 ft

## Trail Basics

- Route: Standard East Ridge Trail (Class 1)
- Distance: ~6.75 miles round trip
- Elevation Gain: ~3,450 ft
- Trailhead Elevation: 10,850 ft
- Summit Elevation: 14,265 ft
- Difficulty: Moderate to Challenging
- Best Season: July to September

## Getting There & Parking

- Trailhead is 8 miles south of Breckenridge on CO 9, turn right onto Blue Lakes Road.
- Trailhead parking is just west of the highway.
- Parking reservations required late June–mid September (Summit County online system).
- Shuttle option available from Breckenridge if no reservation.

## What to Expect

- From parking lot, briefly follow road before turning left onto marked Quandary Peak Trail.
- Forest climb with switchbacks, large boulder landmark, thinning trees around 11,300 ft.
- Reach East Ridge near 11,600 ft.
- 12,800 ft: rejoin ridge after south traverse.
- 13,150 ft: flat section/false summit before steep final push.
- Final 1,000 ft: steady climb on well-defined trail to 14,265 ft summit.
- Summit views are among the best of any Class 1 14er — stunning panorama of Tenmile Range.

## Route Classification

- East Ridge: Class 1, non-technical, well-defined trail — suitable for beginners with preparation.
- West Ridge: Class 3 scramble with exposure and route-finding. NOT for beginners.
- Warning: Hiking apps often label both routes as 'Hard,' causing confusion — know your route.

## Recommended Gear

- Hiking boots with good traction
- Layered clothing + waterproof/windproof jacket
- 2–3 liters water + electrolytes
- Sunglasses, sunscreen, hat
- Map/GPS or trail app
- Trekking poles (optional but helpful)
- High-energy snacks
- Basic first aid kit + headlamp

## **Safety & Altitude Awareness**

- Watch for Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS): headache, nausea, dizziness, fatigue.
- If symptoms occur: stop climbing, rest, hydrate, descend if needed.
- Check weather forecast before starting.
- Inform someone of your plans.
- Pace yourself; take breaks often.
- Stay on the trail — fragile alpine terrain can be damaged easily.

## **Emergency Contacts & Info**

- Local Search & Rescue: 911 or Summit County Sheriff / Search & Rescue.
- Cell service is limited; carry an emergency communication device (Garmin InReach, Zoleo, or SPOT).
- Always leave your hiking plan with someone before heading out.

Enjoy the climb, respect the mountain, and stay safe!