Long Mynd Hard

This mountain bike route of 27.6 miles starts in [Church Stretton](http://www.churchstretton.co.uk/), Shropshire. It’s a winch and plummet route that reaches the ridge five times, with little riding on the flat in between. It takes in the best descents the hills have to offer but also a lot of hard climbs. While your legs will definitely be sore you should finish with a big grin on your face.

1. Leave the car park [(GR454936)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=345387&y=293632&z=115&sv=345387,293632&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=614&ax=345387&ay=293632&lm=0) from the exit by the supermarket and turn right to the mini roundabout by the pub.  Turn right on the roundabout and follow the road a short way to the crossroad junction. Turn left and climb gently to the next junction.  Go straight on and follow the lane as it bears slightly right then left before kicking up steeply at the start of a long road climb.  Stay on the tarmac all the way to the top of the hill.  After reaching the crest descend to a junction [(GR424945)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=342452&y=294537&z=120&sv=342452,294537&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=576&ax=342452&ay=294537&lm=0). Turn right and follow the lane to the next junction with a wide gravel track on the right [(GR422951)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=342262&y=295142&z=120&sv=342262,295142&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=576&ax=342262&ay=295142&lm=0). Turn right through the low wooden posts and follow the track along the ridge.  The track bares left then right and passes a track on the left with low posts across the entrance, before coming to a four-way junction at the top of Carding Mill valley [(GR427958)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=342712&y=295812&z=120&sv=342712,295812&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=615&ax=342712&ay=295812&lm=0).

2. Take the second track from the left to bear slightly right, going past the right hand side of the maker post.  The track soon bears right then comes to a junction on the following left hand bend. Bear left along the main trail and descend the rutted, grassy track to a wide junction near a fence straight ahead [(GR440967)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/newmap.srf?x=343930&y=296625&z=3&sv=343500%2c296500&st=4&ar=Y&mapp=newmap.srf&searchp=newsearch.srf&dn=751). Turn right before reaching the fence and descend the wide grassy track away from the fence.  Keep an eye out for horses and walkers on this fast undulating grassy track. Continue straight on down the trail and go past the tracks on either side lower down.  After some distance go over a rock section, at speed this can be tricky as it suddenly appears from nowhere.  After the rocks follow the track over a small rise then drop down a short descent to a junction in the bottom of the dip, just before the house on the left [(GR451962)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=345115&y=296255&z=120&sv=345115,296255&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=808&ax=345115&ay=296255&lm=0).

3. Turn right and cross the board walk over the bog then go straight on for a short but steep drop down the bedrock.  At the end of the following plateau, where the trail splits, turn right for a sweet bit of singletrack that clings to the side of the hill and twists its way down to a junction at the valley floor [(GR448961)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=344767&y=296072&z=120&sv=344767,296072&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=615&ax=344767&ay=296072&lm=0). Turn left and follow the wide grassy track down the valley, along the left hand side of the stream.  The track soon bears right and becomes hardpack before reaching a ford.  Turn left after the ford and continue down the valley. Go across the next ford where the track becomes a tarmac lane.  Not long after, directly before a car park on the right just before the houses, turn right and cross the stream on the small concrete bridge [(GR456955)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=345612&y=295522&z=120&sv=345612,295522&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=576&ax=345612&ay=295522&lm=0).

4. After the bridge climb turn left and climb the concessional singletrack that bears right around the hill.  After a steep section by the fence on the left the track flattens off and comes to a junction. Bear right along the singletrack that clings to the side of a steep slope. Go straight on over the following crest then at the junction in the trees take the track on the left to descend, bearing right, into the next valley. Continue straight on down the singletrack to a junction at the bottom [(GR453948)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=345357&y=294847&z=120&sv=345357,294847&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=576&ax=345357&ay=294847&lm=0).

5. Go straight across the dirt road then climb a steep grassy trail to a gate.  After the gate turn left and climb the steep singletrack that follows the line of the fence, on the left.  The track then bears right and flattens off at the golf course.  Go straight on and descend the doubletrack to the next junction.  Continue straight on, keeping by the fence on the left.  After a small gate the trail bears right and descends into Carding Mill Valley.  Be careful as this trail fast and has drainage channels across it. Descend to the junction with the lane at the bottom [(GR448943)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=344832&y=294337&z=120&sv=344832,294337&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=576&ax=344832&ay=294337&lm=0).

6. Go straight ahead along the lane and head up the valley. Go past a parking area on the left then the visitor centre. Continue climbing the lane through a ford to where it ends at a car park. Don't take the little track on the left but follow the wide track out the back of the car park. Follow the track through a few fords. Where the valley splits turn 90deg right to cross the stream for the final time, after which the trail kicks up steeply and climbs up the left hand side of a valley. The loose rocks and steepness make the first part of the climb a push for a short distance but it soon becomes rideable again. While it is possible (for some) to climb all the way to the top from this point it is very steep with water bars further up. The trail eventually levels out and leads to a junction at the top of the hill [(GR427958)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=342712&y=295812&z=120&sv=342712,295812&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=615&ax=342712&ay=295812&lm=0).  
  
7. Turn left and follow the wide gravel track down a gentle slope to a junction with a track on the right, just before the gravel track bears left [(GR424956)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=342392&y=295647&z=120&sv=342392,295647&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=576&ax=342392&ay=295647&lm=0). Go through the low wooden posts and follow the track on the right along the top of the hill. At the junction a short distance later, at the marker post, turn right and follow the thin track through the heather. Follow the double track across the top of the hill then descend to the junction on a corner of the road [(GR418956)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=341862&y=295622&z=120&sv=341862,295622&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=576&ax=341862&ay=295622&lm=0). Go straight on and leave the road straight away for the next section of double track.  This track soon transforms into a fast grassy descent. Go straight on down the track until reaching a house, then turn left to a junction with the lane. Turn right and descend the lane to the junction at the bottom [(GR402967)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=340242&y=296712&z=120&sv=340242,296712&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=576&ax=340242&ay=296712&lm=0).  
  
8. Turn left and follow the lane to the next junction. Go straight on past the lane on the right.  Climb past a couple of lanes on the left to a four-way junction at a farm in Coates [(GR392954)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=339257&y=295472&z=120&sv=339257,295472&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=576&ax=339257&ay=295472&lm=0). Turn left through the gate to enter the farm then bear left to the next junction [(GR393954)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=339297&y=295412&z=120&sv=339297,295412&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=576&ax=339297&ay=295412&lm=0). Head straight on and go through the gate to climb the steep double track through a couple of bends. At the top of the bends goes through a gate where the track becomes less steep but turns muddy and grassy.  Follow the line of trees on the right and continue straight on past Priory Cottage, where the track kicks up for a short distance to a gate.  After the gate follow the track over a crest for a gentle descent. At the bottom of the dip the track becomes gravel hardpack that climbs to a junction with the lane at the top. Bear right on the lane to a crossroad junction on the ridge a short distance later [(GR420953)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=342062&y=295297&z=120&sv=342062,295297&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=576&ax=342062&ay=295297&lm=0).  
  
9. Turn right and climb the ridge track, going straight on at the next junction, all the way to the trig point at the summit of Pole Bank [(GR414940)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/newmap.srf?x=341500&y=294430&z=3&sv=341500%2c294430&st=4&ar=Y&mapp=newmap.srf&searchp=newsearch.srf). After the summit continue straight on down the rocky track to a junction with the lane at the other end.  Bear right on the lane and descend a short way to the stand of trees on the right, in the dip. Directly after the trees turn right into the car park [(GR413937)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/newmap.srf?x=341300&y=293695&z=3&sv=341300%2c293695&st=4&ar=Y&mapp=newmap.srf&searchp=newsearch.srf). Cut diagonally left across the car park and follow the double track out the other side. This track soon points down hill for a fast, loose and rocky descent. It goes through a number of bends before bearing gently left for a fast finish down to the gated junction at the bottom [(GR403931)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/newmap.srf?x=340305&y=293135&z=3&sv=340305%2c293135&st=4&ar=Y&mapp=newmap.srf&searchp=newsearch.srf).

10. After the gate and turn left onto the lane. Go straight on at the next junction, with a lane on the right. A short distance later, before the farm, turn left through a gate to follow the marked bridleway [(GR403929)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=340327&y=292857&z=120&sv=340327,292857&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=615&ax=340327&ay=292857&lm=0). The next section is a grassy and muddy push but it’s only a short distance to the next gate where it becomes rideable again. Continue climbing the steep, grassy singletrack through a few gates. When the track emerges from the trees it bears left and becomes even steeper. It eventually comes to a forked junction. Turn right and follow the singletrack through the bracken. The track soon levels off and heads in the direction of the Glider Club. At the fence bear left to the road [(GR405919)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=340482&y=291912&z=120&sv=340482,291912&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=615&ax=340482&ay=291912&lm=0).

11. Go straight across the road and pick up the grassy track that heads off to the left. A short distance later, at the low marker post, bear right and follow the singletrack that leads towards the lone tree at the top of the valley ahead. Just before the tree drop through a quick right then left to start the fantastic descent of Minton Batch. Cross the bog on the boardwalk then follow the fast, flowing singletrack along the the valley, keeping just to the left of the stream. It’s great fun with lots of crests, corners, roots and rocks to keep you on your toes. Follow the track all the way to a junction at the farm at the bottom [(GR420903)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=342052&y=290377&z=120&sv=342052,290377&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=576&ax=342052&ay=290377&lm=0). Go straight on at this junction and the next, keeping the stream on the right. A little while later the track crosses the stream before ending at a junction with a lane [(GR424901)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=342452&y=290077&z=120&sv=342452,290077&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=615&ax=342452&ay=290077&lm=0).  
  
12. Turn right and climb the lane to a crossroad junction in the village of Hamperley. Turn right and climb the lane back up the hill. Go straight on past a track on the left to a three-way junction by a farm on the right [(GR413894)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=341317&y=289377&z=120&sv=341317,289377&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=615&ax=341317&ay=289377&lm=0). Take the middle track and go through the gate to climb the fire track through the forest. Stay on the main track and follow it through a series of bends. The track eventually flattens off a bit and goes through a long left hand bend before reaching a junction [(GR413903)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=341357&y=290307&z=120&sv=341357,290307&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=576&ax=341357&ay=290307&lm=0). Bear left at this junction, and left at the next junction a short distance later. Climb straight on up the wide forest track to a crossroad junction at the top [(GR406903)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=340632&y=290307&z=120&sv=340632,290307&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=615&ax=340632&ay=290307&lm=0).  
  
13. Turn right at the crossroad and ride slightly down hill to a gate on the left. Go through the gate and follow the grassy track through the heather, in the direction of the glider club. At the next junction, a grassy junction before the Glider Club marked by a white circular bridleway marker set into the ground, turn left to a junction with a lane a very short distance later [(GR403907)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=340262&y=290707&z=120&sv=340262,290707&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=615&ax=340262&ay=290707&lm=0). Go across the lane and take the track leading off to the right, signed as the ‘Starboard Path’, that goes around the back of the glider club. After the grassy double track descends through a dip go straight on and climb to a junction just before the trees at the top. Bear left then right along the lumpy grass, keeping just to the left of the trees. Pick up the gravel track a little while later then bear right through a couple of bends to a junction with a lane [(GR405919)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=340462&y=291847&z=120&sv=340462,291847&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=615&ax=340462&ay=291847&lm=0).  
14. Turn left over the cattle grid to the road junction. Turn right and follow the lane uphill. Climb the lane over a crest then descend past a bowl in the hillside on the right. At the top of the next climb take the concessional bridleway on the right [(GR413935)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=341310&y=293554&z=120&sv=341310,293554&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=887&ax=341310&ay=293554&lm=0). Follow the wide grassy track along the top of the hill to the next junction. Bear right up the wide rutted grassy track then at the junction immediately after bear left. Follow this track to a short grassy climb that leads to the top of the hill. At the top bear left to cross the open grassy area of Round Hill. On the opposite side descend the steep grassy track. Go straight on through the dip at the bottom and try to keep your speed to get as far as possible up the climb on the opposite side before using the granny ring. At the top the track becomes rocky as it descends across the right hand side of the hill, before bearing left to the next saddle on the ridge [(GR430922)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=343065&y=292224&z=120&sv=343065,292224&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=887&ax=343065&ay=292224&lm=0).

15. Follow the trail straight on across the saddle then bear right over a short rocky section before dropping down a very fast, straight trail that goes along the right hand side of the valley. Be careful as it is all too easy to go too fast on this bit. About 2/3rds on the way down, where there’s a gate straight on, follow the track left. Near the bottom take care on the water channels before reaching a gate at the bottom [(GR440919)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=344005&y=291954&z=120&sv=344005,291954&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=887&ax=344005&ay=291954&lm=0).

16. After the gate go through the stream and past the cottages on the left. At the junction at the next ford turn right to a junction with a lane in Little Stretton. Turn left to a crossroad junction with the main road [(GR443919)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=344340&y=291904&z=120&sv=344340,291904&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=887&ax=344340&ay=291904&lm=0). Turn left and follow the main road through the valley all the way back to Church Stretton. At the mini roundabout by the Bucks Head turn right and return to the car park by the Co-op to complete the ride.

All of this route can be plotted on OS Landranger 137 although there will be some anomalies as there are a lot of permissive track used. These concessional tracks are shown on the trail guide that is available from the Church Stretton [Tourist Information Centre](http://www.churchstretton.co.uk/visitors/index.php?page=visitor-information%20Centre).