



# Daikoku-sawa

Iwaki-zan


大黒沢 (岩木山)   Ski Touring Map   1:25000






3.5hrs

Time




643m

Total Climb




1438m

Highest point




9km

Distance



7/10

Difficulty



Jan-Apr

Best season

Daikokuzawa (大黒沢) is an iconic volcanic valley descending from Iwaki-san's (岩木山, 1625m) summit, popular among serious ski tourers seeking a long, rewarding day out on western Aomori's classic volcano. Situated in the Tohoku region in northern Honshu, the area receives apocalyptic amounts of snow during January and February, lingering well into the spring months. This route ascends Iwaki-zan's southeastern slopes from the top of the Hyaku-sawa Ski Area, and descends towards the east-north-east. You'll need someone to shuttle you back to your car at the ski area,

but the hassle is worth it - this may be one of the longest descents in the area (1200m vertical loss).

LOCATION

Iwaki-san is a large free-standing volcano located on the western side of Aomori Prefecture, Honshu's northern-most prefecture. This route is concentrated on the southeastern quadrant of the conical volcano, starting at the top of the Hyaku-zawa Ski Area, here. Note that this route is a traverse – you'll end up on the eastern side of the mountain, far from your start point.

GENERAL NOTES

There's a few ways to experience the grandeur of Iwaki-zan's Daikoku-sawa valley on the

eastern side of the mountain. One is to climb up the valley, and then ski down. This is the logistically rational choice. However, if you can arrange transport from the end of the route, then starting from the top of Hyakuzawa Ski Area to the south will cut out around 700m of climbing. The traverse from the ski area requires some solid time in very exposed alpine conditions, so the views from the upper section are epic. At the same time, that exposure will require good snow-safety skills and experience. It's perfectly possible to climb to the summit on this route – if planning to do so, add an extra two hours to the total time.

**Shuttle options:** Shuttle options between the end and start of the route are scarce during the deep winter months. Accommodation

AOMORI PREFECTURE

when crossing the snowfield at around 1350m – a slide here will send skiers over high bluffs 100m below.

From just below Ganki-san, rip skins and enjoy the descent. As always, check snow stability, particularly in the upper alpine bowl. Further down the slopes are well anchored – you'll be doing classic Tohoku tree skiing among well-spaced beautiful birch trees. About half way down the valley, it may pay to stick to the skier's right ridge-top, as undergrowth can get thick on the valley walls.

Eventually, you'll join up with the summer trail. Enjoy the last 500m or so skiing through gorgeous apple orchards down to the upper-most snow-clearing end..

TRANSPORT

**By car:** There is ample parking at the Hyaku-zawa Ski Area car park. At the end of the route, if you do depot a car there in advance, make sure to park well off the side of the road, so as

to not obstruct traffic. You may need to spend 20 minutes clearing a spot to park. **Public transport:** There's very patchy public transport around Iwaki-zan. The closest bus stop to the end of the route is the Yayoi Bus Stop (弥生バス停). From here, there's five buses per day towards Hirosaki City (timetable here). From Hirosaki, you'd then get another bus back to the Hyaku-zawa ski area, by catching a bus to Hyakuzawa Onsen (Hyakuzawa Onsen Mae Bus Stop, 百沢温泉前). From there it would be a 1.5km walk to the ski area. Don't count on taxis being available – even if you could call a taxi, it would be coming from Hirosaki City, a solid 30 minute drive away.

SAFETY NOTES

This route involves an exposed alpine traverse across high-risk avalanche terrain. Take the appropriate precautions, including observations of snowpack, as well as checking the weather forecast in advance. Being a free-standing volcano, wind and weather conditions can vary dramatically depending on aspect. Make conservative decisions once above the tree line.

ONSEN NEARBY

The small village of Dake Onsen (嶽温泉) on the southern side of Iwaki-zan has a number of very traditional onsen options. Do note, however, that many close to day visitors relatively early in the day. We visited Dake Hotel Onsen (嶽ホテル, 550yen), and loved the traditional onsen vibes. ■

Japanese Map Glossary		
Romaji	Kanji	English
bunki	分岐	junction
cho	町	town
dake/mine	岳/峯	peak
eki	駅	station
goya/koya	小屋	hut
hinangoya	避難小屋	shelter
ike	池	pond
kawa/gawa	川	river
kako	火口	crater
ko/mizumi	湖	lake
kyo	峡	gorge
numa	沼	pond
onsen	温泉	hot spring
sawa	沢	stream
taira/daira	平	plateau
tani/dani	谷	valley
taki	滝	waterfall
toge	峠	pass
yama/san/zan	山	mountain

ONLINE ROUTE GUIDE

Please visit the full route guides for GPS files, interactive maps, and extra safety notes: <http://hokw.jp/iwadaik>

**Disclaimer** The information on this map was derived from digital databases provided by the Geospatial Information Authority of Japan and the Biodiversity Center of Japan. Care was taken in the creation of this map. HokkaidoWilds.org cannot accept any responsibility for errors, omissions, or positional accuracy. There are no warranties, expressed or implied, including the warranty of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose, accompanying this product. However, notification of any errors will be appreciated.

TEXT, PHOTOS, MAP | Rob Thomson

[hokkaidowilds.org](http://hokkaidowilds.org) 2020/12/18

MAP FOLD & LAYOUT CONCEPT | Dominika Gan

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# Daikoku-zawa Traverse Iwaki-zan

岩木山 (大黒沢)    Ski Tour Map    1:25000

0                      250                      500                      750                      1,000 m

1cm on the map equals 250m on the ground

Magnetic declination: 9°11' W | Map by [hokkaidowilds.org](http://hokkaidowilds.org) CC BY SA 2020/12/18

**岩木山 (大黒沢) Ski Tour Map 1:25000**



A horizontal scale bar with tick marks at 0, 250, 500, 750, and 1,000 m. The bar is white with black outlines and text.

0 250 500 750 1,000 m

1cm on the map equals 250m on the ground

Magnetic declination: 9°11' W | Map by [hokkaidowilds.org](http://hokkaidowilds.org) CC BY SA 2020/12/18



1cm on the map equals 250m on the ground  
Magnetic declination: 9°11' W | Map by [hokkaidowilds.org](http://hokkaidowilds.org) CC BY SA 2020/12/18

**Symbol Key** (some may not be present)



 0:30 → Route (time between points)       600 Contour lines (100m, 10m)



 National Highway  Power transmission lines



 Prefectural Road  Trees/no trees



==== Municipal Road        Rocks/cliffs



— Minor Municipal Road       Onsen (hot spring)



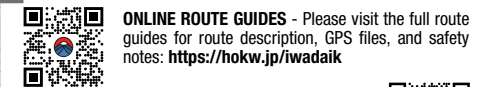
— — — — Walkway  Fumerole




 Bus route  
(bus stop)
  1022 Highway number



 Designated campsite  Hut



 **ONLINE ROUTE GUIDES** - Please visit the full route guides for route description, GPS files, and safety notes: <https://hokw.jp/iwadaik>



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この図の作成に先立ち、国土・地方院庁の承認を得て、関係府庁の基礎地図情報及び電子地形図（タイル）を使用した。（承認番号30年保地 第867号）  
1:25,000植生GISデータ（環境省生物多様性センターも使用し、[hokaido.wilds.org/](http://hokaido.wilds.org/)が作成、加工したものである）

We created this map using the Geospatial Information Authority of Japan digital base map (tiles) and base map data, with the Authority director's permission (no. Hei-30-joshi, da-867/90). We also modified 1:25000 scale vegetation map data created by the Biodiversity Center of Japan (<http://gis.biodic.go.jp/>).



## PRINTING INSTRUCTIONS

### STEP 1

Load your printer with A3 printer paper (297mm x 420mm). If you've only got Tabloid or Ledger size (279mm x 432 mm), just follow the instructions below. You'll achieve an accurate scale, but the map will be clipped a little at the top and bottom.

### STEP 2

Open the print window by clicking on File > Print (or hitting Ctrl + P on your keyboard).

### STEP 3

Make sure "Actual Size" is selected.

### STEP 4

For double-sided printing, select "Print on both sides of paper".

### STEP 5

For best results, select the highest quality print option available on your printer (settings will vary).

### STEP 6

You won't need this instructions page, so just select the pages that don't include this instruction sheet.

### STEP 7

Click "Print".

## PLEASE PRINT AT 'ACTUAL SIZE' (NO SCALING)

The 1:25,000 scale used in the map is accurate if the PDF is printed without scaling (i.e., ACTUAL SIZE). Follow the instructions on this page to ensure an accurate rendering of the scale.

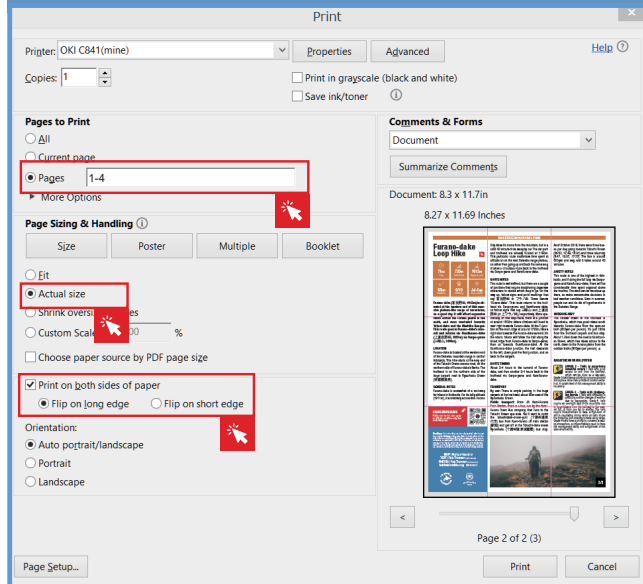
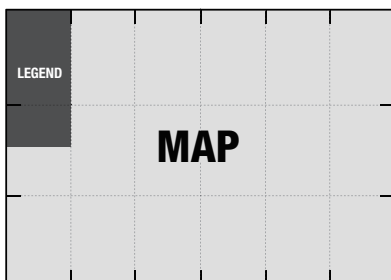


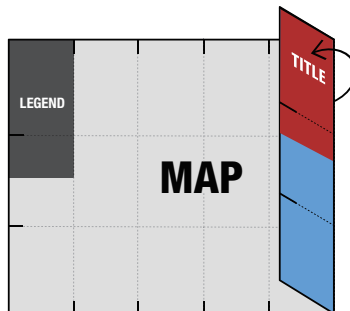
Figure 1. Ensure "Actual Size" is selected (Windows).

## ORIGAMI INSTRUCTIONS

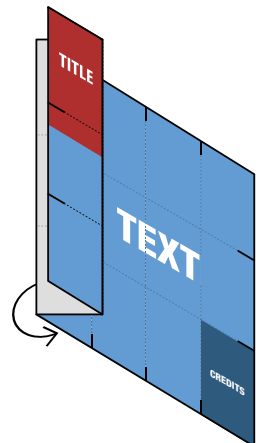
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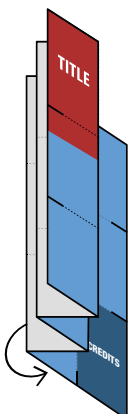
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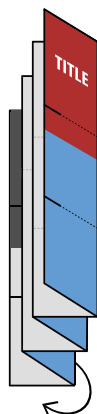
3



4



5



6



7

