



Title: Matching

Distance: 5.3 miles

Time taken: 2½ hours

Location: Matching, about 2 miles east of Harlow

OS Explorer Map: Chelmsford & The Rodings 183

Grid Ref.: TL 525 120

Parking: [Limited] Outside St Mary the Virgin Church, off Downhall Road, Matching, nr. CM17 0QZ (one car only)

Bus:  47 (Ongar-Harlow) to Matching Tye only (Regal Busways: Tues-Sat)

Train: No train service.

Refreshment: The Fox, in Matching Tye

PEAR Rating: 

Walk Description

This lovely rural walk takes you through fields and woods in the gently rolling countryside of West Essex. Whilst there are some lovely views along the route, this walk is mostly remarkable for the peace, tranquillity and timelessness of the area. The village of Matching has hardly changed since the 18th century, and much of the field layout and the pattern of lanes, bridleways and footpaths are still as they were hundreds of years ago.

Directions

A. Parking for this lovely walk is beside the village church. It is very limited and often used by church visitors. It won't accommodate more than one additional vehicle. From the parking area, walk down the hill towards a glorious duck pond. On the opposite side of the road to the pond, there is a stile to the left of a gate (1). Climb over this and head north into the field, walking to the left of another pond.

B. Go through a gate into the next field and walk alongside the stream. There is woodland either side of the field. At the end of the field there are 2 footpaths - one heading north east to the road, and one on the left. Take the left hand one via the gate (2), and keep left, walking through a wide meadow with the woods on your left.

C. About half way through this meadow a small stream crosses the field. Immediately after this the footpath turns left, via a stile into the woods. (3) Follow the path through the woods .

D. As you exit the woods turn hard right, along the field edge. After about 100 yards you will come to a hedge running across the field to the left: the path goes along the left side of this hedge.

E. The hedge stops at a farm track; turn right along this track (4).

F. When you reach Matching Parsonage Farm turn left along the metalled track to the road. Turn right on the road (by the village pump) then left up High Lane (5).

G. Go past a footpath entrance and 2 or 3 cottages, then where the lane turns sharply to the right, you will see an overgrown but passable bridleway on the left (6).

H. Follow the bridleway to the bottom of the hill; there are several small streams converging here and the route through is a bit untidy, but cross into the open field in front of you and bear right along the field edge, then turn left to walk alongside a ditch roughly in the direction of Housham Hall farm which you can see on the crest of the opposite hill. Before you reach the farm, you will see another farm track leading off to the left, take this (7).

I. Continue along this path, ignoring the footbridge. Shortly after this the track turns left into a field, but bear right, staying in the same field (8).

J. At the next field entrance bear left, keeping the stream on your left (9) and follow the field edge as it twists and turns, heading towards Harlow Road. You will see a house with a white outhouse on your left.

K. At the road, turn left for about 50 yards then take the unsigned footpath on the right (10). There is a rather alarming sign 'Caution: dogs running free' on the gate but we have never seen any dogs here. Follow this path as it turns right and left alongside a hedge, then go through another gate into a small wooded area (look out for Pond Cottage which you can just make out through the trees), from which you cross a grassy area onto another lane at Housham Tye.

L. Turn left along Faggoters Lane past Meadcote (11) and continue for about 400 yards (going straight across the junction following the signposts to Matching) until you come to a sharp left turn, at the entrance to Hoggs Farm.

M. Follow the road around the bend for about 50 yards (12), then turn right into a field containing a black silo: turn right again and follow the edge of this field, passing to the right of the black farm building (13), and take the path between gardens on your right and woods on your left until you come out into a field: then turn left along this field edge (14) walking along The Forest Way.

N. To go to the Fox, Matching Tye for refreshment, turn left at the end of the woods; follow the footpath right to the road then turn left into the village. The pub is on the left.

O. Otherwise, at the end of the woods turn right first, then left, towards The Roundhouse (15). As you come to the lane, turn right for a few yards then take the footpath on the right. Follow the field edge alongside a hedge and some trees, then take the footbridge on the left (16). Go straight across the next field towards the wooded area and continue on with the woods on your left.

P. Turn left at the end of these woods along a farm track heading north north west, and continue over the low gate to the road. At the roadside, turn right then left heading up the concrete track to Matching Hall Farm (17). This footpath is unsigned.

Q. Continue along the concrete track, passing to the right of some buildings, until you approach Matching Hall Farm Just before entering the farmyard, turn right for about 50 yards and look for a stile on your left (18). Cross over this, keeping close to the hedge and look for a stile in the top left corner of the field, which takes you back to the church.

[ROUTE DIRECTIONS at www.essexwalks.com](http://www.essexwalks.com)

The ROUTE MAP and ROUTE PHOTOS **also** need to be downloaded and saved on your computer for printing.



The Route Map PDF can be downloaded from this page: [Description & Map](#)



The Route Photos PDF can be downloaded from this page: [Photos](#)

This route description is not meant to be used in isolation, it is one piece of a three part guide to the walk. The other two pieces are the route map, and the numbered photographs. The walks work best when the description, map and the photos PDF are printed off and used in conjunction with each other.

The numbers in brackets in the description refer to specific points along the route, marked with numbered symbols and these in turn are matched to illustrative photographs which show you the lie of the land.



These symbols are shown at strategic points along the route, overlaid on a 1:50K Ordnance Survey map: [Online OS Map at www.essexwalks.com](#).

Unless otherwise stated, the parking facilities available on this walk are not suitable for large walking groups or those arriving in more than one car. Parking cannot be guaranteed. If you are using a car, be considerate with your parking: parking areas in rural communities are primarily for local use: please don't abuse this and spoil it for others. It could result in parking controls being tightened, requiring the withdrawal of the walk route. For more see: [Advice: Courtesy](#)