



HIKING DIFFICULTIES SCALE

The Italian Alpine Club has adopted, at national level, a scale to distinguish the hiking difficulties of the itineraries, which expresses an evaluation on the degree of difficulty. This scale considers three fundamental objective parameters: the difference in height, the planimetric distance, the signposting of the route.

Italian Alpine Club classifies hiking trails as follows:

T = tourist

Itineraries on small roads, mule tracks or easy paths, with well-evident paths that do not pose uncertainties or problems of orientation. They generally take place below 2000 m and usually constitute access to alpine pastures or shelters. They require some knowledge of the mountain environment and physical preparation for walking.

E = hiking

Itineraries that almost always take place on paths, or on traces of passage in various terrain (pastures, debris, stony ground), usually with signs. There may be short flat or slightly inclined sections of residual snow, when, in the event of a fall, the slide stops in a short space and without danger. Sometimes they develop on open terrain, without paths but not problematic, always with adequate signs. They can also take place on steep slopes, with the exposed sections generally protected (barriers) or secured (cables). They can have single passages on rock, not exposed, or short and not tiring or demanding sections thanks to equipment (ladders, rungs, cables) which, however, do not require the use of specific equipment (harness, via ferrata set, etc.). For this type of itineraries a certain sense of orientation, a certain experience and knowledge of the mountain territory, walking training, appropriate footwear and equipment are required.

EE = for experienced hikers

Routes that are generally signposted but which imply an ability to move on particular terrains: paths or tracks on impervious and treacherous terrain (steep and/or slippery slopes of grass, or mixed rocks and grass, or rock and debris). Varied terrain, at relatively high altitudes (stony ground, short non-steep

snowfields, open slopes without reference points, etc.). Rocky sections with slight technical difficulties (equipped routes, via ferratas among those of lesser commitment). On the other hand, glacier routes are excluded, even if flat and/or apparently without crevasses (because crossing them would require the use of a rope, crampons and ice ax and knowledge of the related insurance maneuvers). For this type of itinerary, mountain experience, good knowledge of the mountain environment, sure-footedness, absence of vertigo, adequate equipment, equipment and physical preparation are required.

EEA = for experienced hikers with equipment

Aided routes or via ferratas for which the use of approved self-insurance devices (harness and via ferrata set) and personal protective equipment (approved helmet, gloves) is required. It is necessary to know how to use the technical equipment safely and have a certain habit of exposure and the mountaineering environment.

EAI = hiking in a snowy environment

Itineraries in a snowy environment that require the use of snowshoes, with obvious and recognizable routes, with easy access routes, at the bottom of the valley or in wooded areas that are not inaccessible or on open and not very exposed ridges, with generally limited gradients and difficulties guarantee safety of practicability.

(Central Commission for Hiking – Italian Alpine Club)