

Tyrol	Upper Austria	Vorarlberg	Salzburg	Lower Austria	Switzerland	SAC	South Tyrol	CAI / SAT	DAV / ÖAV	Common features
<p>Hiking trail – easy Wide, with gentle inclines, not exposed, no risk of falling. Atypical hazards are generally secured (signposted). Suitable for walkers without alpine knowledge.</p>	<p>Valley trail/Trail marked with a blue dot Predominantly wide, generally with gentle inclines and without passages exposed to falling, minor elevation differences, no requirement for being free from vertigo.</p>	<p>Walking and hiking trail – easy Easy to walk, comfortable, high level of safety, generally well-developed paths, suitable for all age groups.</p>	<p>Walking trail/ Easy hiking trail – easy Easy, flat terrain, no major inclines, small differences in elevation. No special requirements.</p>	<p>Walking trail/ Easy hiking trail – easy Predominantly wide, narrow paths possible. Mostly gentle inclines, small differences in elevation, not barrier-free. No special requirements.</p>	<p>Hiking trail Steep sections are overcome with steps, exposed spots are secured. Streams are crossed on footbridges. Easy hiking trails pose no special requirements.</p>	<p>Hiking Well-constructed paths, exposed sections are very well secured, risk of falling largely excluded. No specific requirements.</p>	<p>Footpath Hiking route – pure valley trails, mainly in settlement areas.</p> <p>Hiking trail Hiking route – broadly constructed routes outside settlement areas up to alpine regions.</p>	<p>Tourists Comfortable hiking trails on relatively short, clearly visible and marked routes that require no particular experience or physical preparation.</p>	<p>Valley trail Predominantly wide, gentle inclines, no passages exposed to falling, near the valley and of easy character.</p> <p>Mountain trail marked with a blue dot Simple trail that may be narrow and steep and have (few) passages exposed to falling.</p>	<p>Hiking trail easy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trail design: wide, predominantly gentle inclines • Requirements: 'Good everyday fitness' (climbing stairs, secure footing on loose, uneven ground, getting up independently after a fall, etc.) • Consequences: no risk of falling or the risk of falling is largely excluded (hazard spots are secured)
<p>Mountain trail – moderately difficult Often narrow and steep, partly exposed (risk of falling), with short secured sections. Suitable for surefooted, experienced mountain hikers in good physical condition and with mountain experience to assess alpine hazards.</p>	<p>Trail marked with a red dot Predominantly narrow, often steep, with passages exposed to falling and short secured sections.</p>	<p>Mountain hiking trail – moderately difficult Sections may be narrow, rocky and exposed. Usually natural trails, generally well walkable, with exposure to natural alpine hazards.</p>	<p>Mountain hiking trail – moderately difficult Partly narrow and sloping sections, steep steps possible along the route. Requirement: freedom from vertigo in some places.</p>	<p>Mountain hiking trail – moderately difficult Predominantly narrow paths, often steep. Steep and sloping terrain possible. Short secured walking sections (ropes, artificial steps, ladders, etc.) possible. Requirements: hiking and mountain experience, sure-footedness, occasional freedom from vertigo.</p>	<p>Mountain hiking trail Partly difficult terrain, predominantly steep and narrow and partly exposed. Particularly difficult passages are secured with ropes or chains. Streams may need to be crossed at fords. Requirements: sure-footedness, freedom from vertigo, good physical condition, awareness of mountain hazards.</p>	<p>Mountain hiking Continuous trail, partly steep, risk of falling not excluded. Requirements: basic sure-footedness and ability to orient.</p> <p>Difficult Mountain hiking Trail not necessarily continuously visible, steep, possible risk of falling, exposed sections may be secured. Scree fields, light rocky terrain, possible use of hands. Requirements: sure-footedness, orientation skills, basic alpine experience.</p>	<p>Mountain trail Mountain route – varying in width and incline, mainly in mountain regions (alpine pastures, mountain lakes, summits) up to the snow line.</p>	<p>Hikers Mostly on paths or partly across varied terrain (pastures, scree, debris fields). Require a certain sense of orientation, experience, and familiarity with mountain terrain.</p>	<p>Mountain trail marked with a red dot Predominantly narrow, often steep, may have passages exposed to falling. Short secured sections may occur.</p>	<p>Mountain trail/ Mountain hiking trail moderately difficult</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trail design: narrow, steep, partially secured sections (ropes, steps, ladders, etc.) • Requirements: 'Alpine-specific fitness' (surefootedness, balance, responsiveness, strength) • Consequences: places with a risk of falling (sections), exposed trail
<p>Mountain trail – difficult Mostly narrow and steep, highly exposed (risk of falling), with longer secured sections or climbing passages. Suitable for sure-footed, vertigo-free, alpine-experienced mountaineers in very good physical condition and with sufficient mountain experience to assess alpine hazards.</p>	<p>Mountain trail marked with a black dot Narrow, often steep, with passages exposed to falling, numerous secured sections and/or easy climbing sections (use of hands). Requirements: sure-footedness and freedom from vertigo.</p>	<p>Alpine trail – difficult Requirements: mountain experience, surefootedness and freedom from vertigo, high level of personal responsibility. Trails with increased alpine risks, suitable only for experienced hikers.</p>	<p>Mountain hiking trail/ Alpine trail – difficult Often narrow and steep passages, partly secured, risk of falling. Requirements: surefootedness, freedom from vertigo (use of hands), mountain experience.</p>	<p>Demanding mountain trail – difficult Narrow paths, often steep, exposed terrain. Numerous secured walking sections (ropes, artificial steps, ladders, etc.), use of hands required. Requirements: alpine mountain experience, absolute sure-footedness and freedom from vertigo.</p>	<p>Alpine hiking trail Demanding mountain hiking trails, sometimes pathless across snowfields, glaciers, scree slopes, couloirs with rockfall hazard or through rock with short climbing sections (use of hands). Securing limited to particularly exposed locations with risk of falling. Requirements: sure-footedness, freedom from vertigo, very good physical condition, ability to use alpine equipment, and knowledge of mountain hazards.</p>	<p>Alpine hiking Trail traces, often pathless, rough steep terrain, individual easy climbing sections (I), boulder fields, steep grassy slopes, rocky terrain, easy snowfields, glacier crossings (mostly marked), risk of falling. Requirements: familiarity with exposed sections, good sure-footedness, good orientation, alpine experience, basic terrain assessment.</p> <p>Difficult Alpine hiking Trail traces, often pathless, rough steep terrain, easy climbing sections (I – II), demanding boulder fields, very steep grassy slopes and rocky terrain, steep snowfields, glacier crossings (partly marked). Long sections with risk of falling. Requirements: familiarity with exposed terrain, very good sure-footedness, very good orientation skills, advanced alpine experience.</p> <p>Very difficult Alpine hiking Mostly pathless, pronounced steep terrain, longer climbing sections (II), challenging boulder fields, extremely steep grassy slopes and rocky terrain, tricky snowfields, glacier crossings, long sections with increased risk of falling. Requirements: familiarity with very exposed terrain, excellent sure-footedness, very good orientation skills, extensive alpine experience, very reliable terrain assessment.</p>	<p>Alpine trail Mountain route – alpine, often pathless terrain in mountain regions, including trails, partially secured sections, rock with climbing passages, glaciers.</p>	<p>Experienced hikers Route not always marked, difficult, steep terrain, slippery slopes, scree fields, short snowfields. Requirements: ability to move safely in partly difficult mountain terrain, good mountain experience, surefootedness, physical fitness, suitable equipment, good sense of orientation.</p> <p>Experienced hikers with mountaineering equipment Routes requiring via ferrata equipment. These may be secured trails or actual via ferratas. Prerequisite: safe handling of technical equipment as well as some experience with exposed terrain and alpine routes.</p>	<p>Mountain trail marked with a black dot Narrow, often steep and exposed. Numerous secured walking sections and/or easy climbing sections that require the use of hands. Sure-footedness and freedom from vertigo are absolutely necessary.</p> <p>Alpine route Trail traces or pathless terrain, exposed, slippery and fall-prone sections as well as unsecured walking and climbing passages, possibly unmarked. Requirements: absolute sure-footedness and freedom from vertigo, good physical condition, excellent orientation skills, safe terrain assessment, alpine (high-alpine) climbing and mountain experience, ability to use essential mountain and emergency equipment.</p>	<p>Mountain trail difficult</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trail design: often narrow and steep; frequent secured sections (ropes, steps, ladders, etc.); climbing sections • Requirements: 'High alpine-specific fitness' (surefootedness, balance, responsiveness, strength, a good head for heights, ability to concentrate, climbing technique) • Consequences: longer exposed sections with a risk of falling <p>Alpine route/Alpine hiking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trail design: not a hiking trail in the strict sense, often pathless or not necessarily constructed, marked or signposted; footprints or traces; open, unsecured alpine hiking and climbing terrain; glaciers • Requirements: 'Very high alpine-specific fitness' (surefootedness, balance, responsiveness, strength, a good head for heights, ability to concentrate, excellent climbing or alpine-specific skills) • Consequences: exposed terrain with a risk of falling over extended sections
<p>Alpine route Pathless terrain or only faint tracks, open, unsecured alpine terrain including climbing sections and glaciers, usually neither constructed, marked nor signposted. Suitable only for vertigo-free, sure-footed, highly alpine-experienced mountaineers in excellent physical condition, with comprehensive mountain experience to assess alpine hazards and with appropriate equipment.</p>	<p>Alpine route Pathless terrain or faint traces of tracks, exposed sections with a risk of slipping and falling, unsecured walking and climbing passages. Requirements: absolute surefootedness and a head for heights, good physical condition, excellent orientation skills, reliable terrain assessment, alpine (high-alpine) climbing and mountaineering experience, and the ability to use the necessary mountain and emergency equipment safely.</p>									

Summary and comparison of different trail classifications:

The individual textual descriptions do not correspond to the sometimes very detailed original texts; instead, they are semantically comparable and summarized in such a way that a direct comparison is possible. The column 'Common features' summarizes these terms and attributes into a 'common denominator' (which should not be understood as a proposal for a 'new' classification). Language versions not included in the primary literature are based on professional translations. The full original descriptions are available in the digital comparison and translation tool (see QR code).

