The Countryside

Hills, paths and villages, walking and rural life, and the precise and regional words of landscape, from A1 to C2.

A1–C2 · English Vocabulary, Lesson 25

follow the path · climb the stile · the lie of the land

The land *A1–A2*

hill	mountain
valley	river
stream	lake
field	forest
wood	tree
grass	rock
sunny	muddy

live in the country (not in the field)

In the country *A1–A2*

path	gate
fence	bridge
village	farm
cottage	rabbit
fox	deer
owl	sheep
woods	church

one deer, two deer · one sheep, ten sheep · fox → foxes

Walking and rural life *B1–B2*

Land: meadow, moor, heath, hedgerow, copse

On a walk: footpath, bridleway, stile, country lane, right of way, access land

The village: the village green, the parish, the local pub, a market town

Life: rural · urban · commute · a commuter village · livestock

Walking: ramble, a rambler, go hiking, trespass, the right to roam

The Countryside Code: leave gates as you find them · keep dogs on a lead near livestock · take your litter home

*Climb the **stile**, follow the **footpath** along the **hedgerow**, and keep your dog **on a lead**.*

trespass = go onto land without permission

Landscape and debate *C1–C2*

Describing: undulating, verdant, rugged, bleak, desolate, windswept, pastoral, idyllic, secluded

Regional: a tor (SW England), a fell, a dale (N England), a glen, a loch (Scotland), a hamlet, an escarpment

Debates: second homes, holiday lets, affordable housing, rural buses, rewilding, food security

Idioms: not out of the woods, can't see the wood for the trees, the grass is always greener, beat about the bush, a stone's throw, the lie of the land, a mountain out of a molehill, up the garden path

*The road climbs from a **secluded hamlet** onto a **bleak**, **sparsely populated** moor.*

loch ends in /x/, as in Scottish "och", not /k/

On a country walk

- *Let's go for a walk in the woods.*
- *Follow the path and cross the bridge.*
- *Please close the gate behind you.*
- *Wear boots: it's muddy.*

Common mistakes

- ~~We live in the field.~~ → We live in the **country**.
- ~~two sheeps~~ → two **sheep**
- *a wood* (small forest) · *wood* (the material)
- ~~the lay of the land~~ (US) → **the lie of the land** (UK)

Words with a past

- **stile**: Old English *stīgan*, to climb
- **copse**: from *coppice*, a wood that is cut
- **country**: Latin *contrata*, land lying opposite
- **pastoral**: *pastor*, shepherd · **undulating**: *undula*, little wave

My new words

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