

MOUNT HERMAN TRAIL

Monument, Colorado

Mt. Herman lies along the Rampart Range of the Front Range between Denver and Colorado Springs. It is the pride of the town of Monument to the east and looks over the Palmer Divide, a 7,000-foot high ridge extending well into the eastern plains which acts as a weather barrier between Denver and Colorado Springs. Summit views include Pikes Peak to the south and Longs Peak to the north (on a clear day) and both the Colorado Springs and Denver skylines.

The easiest route is a relatively steep trail from a trailhead on Mt. Herman Road. This trail is about two miles one way with an elevation gain of about 1,000 feet. It is a moderate hike. The peak sees a handful of people on a nice weekend.

Getting There

Take exit 161 off I-25 in Monument and drive west on 2nd Street. After crossing the railroad, turn left on Mitchell Road. After ½ mile turn right on Mt. Herman road. The last 3½ miles of the road are unpaved and a high clearance vehicle is recommended. There is a small parking area at a sharp bend of the road. There is a Forest Service marker on the right side of this parking area labeling Trail 716. This is the trailhead for Mt. Herman.

When to Climb

The trail could be done year-round except perhaps after a heavy snow. Parts of the trail hold snow well into spring, so waterproof boots may be more comfortable in winter and spring. During winter the Mt. Herman Road may be closed, resulting in a much longer approach.

Trail Overview

The hike begins on the west side of the mountain, south of the peak. The trail is on the right (east) side of the draw. Follow the small intermittent creek north about .2 miles, at which point the trail switches back south and the climb begins. At about .5 miles into the trek, the trail levels out somewhat and begins to run north along the back side of the mountain. Granite rock formations appear on the right (uphill), and more of the Rampart Range is now visible to the west. At this point, the trail turns east (right) again and begins a serious climb to the saddle just below the top of the mountain. Just below the actual summit, is a sheltered area with a fire pit. The town of Monument is visible below, but the top is yet to come. The trail works its way further north another 400 feet. At the summit, the wind indicator flag just below the ridgeline finalizes the position. From here the Palmer Divide is clearly visible as it pokes its finger out onto the plain below. It can be quite breezy up here; so hold onto your hat. Take your time and explore the mountain top. Remember to turn around and look to the west as well!

Camping

The entire trail is within the Pike National Forest. No permits are required. There is a relatively flat area to the left near the beginning of the trail. Heading further up and west on Mt. Herman Road leads farther into the Forest and many camping opportunities. There is a campground in Monument along Mitchell Road, primarily for RVs and campers.