

Soghdiana (2880m) – Ganchdara (2900m)

Distance: 12km

Ascent: 1540m

Descent: 1520m

Trail: very hard –rough steep and up and down the pass no trails

Accommodation

Camping

Before writing up this description, it is a good idea to use your GPS or mapping app to find the route all the way to the next camp. This is the hardest stage in the first two sections in terms of terrain and navigation.

From the camp at Soghdiana, cross the flat-ish part towards the northeast for a few hundred metres. From here it goes down steeply, without a real trail. Try to contour the slope and head down to the bottom of the valley. From there you head up the ridge in front of you, a dry steep climb with some livestock tracks. Aim for the lowest part of the ridge. From there, gradually descend towards the northwest. At some point you'll come across a clear path, used by shepherds. Follow this for about 1.5km until you reach the upper valley floor, where you cross the permanent snowfield that fills the valley. The path continues on the other side, heading now in to the east and staying pretty much at the same altitude. The path comes and goes. Shortly after you'll enter the Diamalik Valley.

As you ascent the Diamalik Valley stay on the true right, passing a shepherd camp. After this camp the path fades away. It's a long climb on at times rough terrain until the bottom of the final approach of the pass. You will see a permanent snowfield filling the gully straight north. At the end of the season, a small rocky ridge may separate the snowfield in two or three parts. Ascend this very steep gully. When the snow is hard you will need an ice axe. Walking poles with big tellers are recommended in softer snow. Before you reach the highest point you head west for the final 200 metres of climbing on very steep and rocky terrain. It's easy to kick down loose rocks so either stay very close together or give each other enough space. On the top of the pass is a cairn and small rock walls to could serve as a wind shelter. This is possibly the hardest section on the Pamir Trail.

Once on the Dushokha Pass (3820m), it's a more mellow and gradual descent on the glacier. Stay slightly on the valley floor on the small glacier. After, turn west on the left side of a ridge. There's another small glacier here. You can walk on it, staying on the right side. When it gets steeper, step off the glacier on steep, rocky terrain until you reach the glacial lakes. After the lake, keep west until you see a small pass and go down until you

reach a third glacier. Follow it until a ridge appears on the right. Go on the ridge until the streams. From here 1km further down you can find a reasonable place to pitch your tent.