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UNOFFICIAL FREE PLANNER

Tomaree practical planner

Half-day summit vs full day vs 27 km Coastal Walk · Zenith parking · Samurai 4WD camping · fees split · packing · official NPWS links

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Verify everything officially. Alerts, spit access, track works, camping rules and tour dates change. Use NSW National Parks — Tomaree and local alerts. This is an independent unofficial guide — not affiliated with NPWS or the NSW Government.

No vehicle day-entry listed on Tomaree visitor-info when checked 26 Aug 2026. Walking is free. Samurai camping is a separate product (no camping fee; $6 booking fee on the official page). This planner never sells park camping or entry.

1. Before you leave base

- ☐ NPWS local alerts + visitor-info for your dates
- ☐ Nelson Bay / Port Stephens forecast (heat, wind, fire)
- ☐ Reverse clock written down (Sydney guests: 2.5–3 hrs each way is typical, not a guarantee)
- ☐ Emergency+ installed; NSW Parks app / offline maps on home Wi-Fi
- ☐ Plan B if Zenith is full (Fingal / One Mile / skip Grade 5)
- ☐ If camping: Samurai booked *officially* — 4WD, no facilities, portable toilet
- ☐ Tell someone the plan and expected return
- ☐ Hard turn-around time for summit / Coastal Walk sections

2. Pick one primary path

Half-day Head (most first-timers)

- ☐ Grade 5 summit, 2.2 km return, 1.5–2 hrs
- ☐ Optional Fort Tomaree Grade 3 on the way down
- ☐ Village food; protect the drive
- ☐ Do not add 18 km of Coastal Walk

Full day — one extra only

- ☐ Summit first while legs are fresh
- ☐ Then Fingal flags *or* Shoal–Fingal walk (5 km Grade 3 from Zenith)
- ☐ Stop. Nelson Bay dinner if you want services
- ☐ Not One Mile unless that was the booked plan

Family / mixed ages

- ☐ Skip Grade 5 without shame
- ☐ Fort Tomaree or Iris Moore / Fishermans Bay
- ☐ Swim only between flags (seasonal patrol)
- ☐ Meltdown-free cars beat distance badges

Two-day Coastal Walk

- ☐ Official: 27 km, Grade 4, 2–3 days
- ☐ Day 1 ~18 km to One Mile (7–8 hrs)
- ☐ Day 2 ~9 km One Mile–Birubi (or 7.5 km standalone Grade 3 page)
- ☐ Car shuffle, taxi or Route 130 [VERIFY times]

3. Decision tree

First visit from Newcastle
Half-day summit is enough. Add Fort Tomaree only if energy remains. Fingal flags if you still want a swim.

Sydney day-trip
Treat "half-day on the ground" as a full calendar day. Leave early. Do not invent 27 km after a 3-hour drive.

Zenith car parks full
Fingal start, One Mile, or skip the summit. Illegal verge parking is not a Plan B.

Want the lighthouse
View it from the mainland. Spit currently impassable (visitor-info 26 Aug 2026) — boat only. Ruins closed.

Want to camp in the park
Samurai only. 4WD via Gan Gan Road. Clothing-optional at camp/beach only. Official booking. Never affiliated here.

Whale season (May–November)
Land lookouts first: Fishermans Bay, Iris Moore, Birubi, Barry Park. Summit is still Grade 5. Sightings never guaranteed.

4. Access, fees & works (snapshot, not live)

Do not walk the Fingal spit. Official visitor-info: seawater, deep channels and swell — currently impassable. Access to Fingal Island / Point Stephens is by boat only until further notice. Lighthouse keepers' cottages ruins are closed to pedestrians.

- ☐ Visitor-info (26 Aug 2026): no vehicle day-entry block. Re-check passes-and-fees.
- ☐ Samurai: no camping fee; $6 booking fee; 4WD; no facilities; 7-day max
- ☐ Kingsley Beach track work on NPWS alerts: 17 Aug 2026 → 12 Oct 2026 — detours on the Coastal Walk
- ☐ NPWS ranger coastal walking tour: next listed date 2 Oct 2026 when last checked — book only on official NPWS pages
- ☐ Anna Bay office 02 4984 8200 (Mon–Fri 8.30–4.30); contact centre 1300 072 757 (7am–7pm)

5. Classic day skeleton — summit first

Timing (typical)

- Arrive Zenith before the rush
- Summit 1.5–2 hrs
- Optional Fort Tomaree
- One extra: Fingal or lookout
- Village buffer before the highway

Success metrics

- Whole group finishes with water left
- Nobody treated Grade 5 as a stroll
- Did not walk the spit
- Did not invent 27 km on a first afternoon

6. Packing

- ☐ Water (more than a CBD day)
- ☐ Sun hat, SPF, sunglasses
- ☐ Grip shoes — wet pavement on the summit
- ☐ Snacks / lunch
- ☐ Swim kit only if flags are the plan
- ☐ Emergency+ / 000 plan
- ☐ Offline maps + alert screenshots
- ☐ Simple first aid / blister kit
- ☐ Portable toilet if camping Samurai
- ☐ Wind layer for lookouts

7. Hard nos

- ☐ Do not walk the Fingal spit in any direction
- ☐ Do not treat Samurai as a 2WD picnic overflow
- ☐ Do not swim unpatrolled Zenith / Wreck as if they were flagged beaches
- ☐ Pets: not in the park except certified assistance animals
- ☐ This site does not sell park camping, entry or NPWS tours
- ☐ Clothing-optional rules at Samurai do not apply on One Mile, dunes or bush

8. Heat, surf & comms

- ☐ Heat on heath and steps; fire bans can close the park
- ☐ Strong rips along this coast — flags or stay out
- ☐ Limited mobile reception. 000 needs a signal. Emergency+ before you leave Wi-Fi
- ☐ Emergency: **000**

9. Official links

- Park: https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/visit-a-park/parks/tomaree-national-park
- Alerts: https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/visit-a-park/parks/tomaree-national-park/local-alerts
- Visitor-info: https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/visit-a-park/parks/tomaree-national-park/visitor-info
- Summit: https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/things-to-do/walking-tracks/tomaree-head-summit-walk
- Coastal Walk: https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/things-to-do/experiences/tomaree-coastal-walk
- Samurai: https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/camping-and-accommodation/campgrounds/samurai-beach-campground
- Day-trip checklist: https://www.tomareenationalpark.com.au/downloads/tomaree-day-trip-checklist.html
- Itineraries: https://www.tomareenationalpark.com.au/itineraries/

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