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Waterfall hikes in ohio

There are few things more spectacular than stopping to watch a beautiful cascading waterfall. Whether it’s a reward after a challenging hike, a perfect spot for a picnic, or a point of interest on a road trip, we firmly believe that yes, you should absolutely go chasing waterfalls. And the good news is that there are plenty of waterfalls near Cleveland, Ohio! If you plan to spend more time in the great outdoors near Cleveland, these are hands down the waterfalls you need to put on your must-see list. (And you can find all these waterfalls plotted on a map if you scroll down to the end of this post!) Best Waterfalls Near Cleveland, Ohio Note: We’ve only included waterfalls here that you can reach or see using established trails and overlooks; we don’t condone going off-trail, no matter how great the Instagram photo might turn out! 1. Brandywine Falls Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Sagamore Hills Brandywine Falls is the most popular waterfall in Cuyahoga Valley National Park (and possibly in northeast Ohio). This 65-foot waterfall is impressive to see any time of year, including during a frosty cold snap when it freezes over, and it’s not surprising that it often attracts a crowd. It also has a long history with early settlers, when they used the waterfall for its water power for several mills. Today this waterfall is really easy to get to from the Brandywine Falls picnic area and parking lot. You can either take the Brandywine Gorge Trail loop to enjoy the scenery of the area before exploring the waterfall, or just take the short MetroPark Bike & Hike trail to the steps down to see it. 2. Great Falls of Tinker’s Creek Gorge Viaduct Park, Bedford Reservation This small but mighty waterfall near Cleveland is located in the stunning Tinker’s Creek Gorge near some incredible old grist and saw mills, and even an old electric power plant. This waterfall is great because it’s usually not very crowded at all – and it looks pretty incredible in the winter when it begins to freeze over. To get there, just park in the Viaduct Park parking lot and take the Viaduct Park Loop trail. RELATED: Where to See Frozen Waterfalls Near Cleveland in Winter 3. Bridal Veil Falls Bedford Reservation, Walton Hills While you’re in the area around Tinker’s Creek Gorge, then you’ve got to stop and see Bridal Veil Falls. Less of a big waterfall and more of a series of tiny waterfalls that flow along Deerlick Creek under a wooden bridge, this place is nevertheless picturesque. Just park at the Bridal Veil Falls parking lot and take the Buckeye Trail for a few short minutes until you reach it. You can also make this a longer hike by continuing on the Buckeye Trail to Tinker’s Creek Gorge! 4. Blue Hen Falls Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Brecksville This is one of the Cleveland waterfalls that cannot be missed. There are a few smaller falls leading up to the big waterfall itself, then it drops into a beautiful pool of water before continuing on its way. The best part about visiting Blue Hen Falls is that there are several ways to get there depending on how much hiking you’d like to do. You can easily see it by parking in a smaller parking lot off of 2001 Boston Mills Road and hiking a half mile to the waterfall. However, if you want to get a little more adventurous, I recommend taking a longer hike via the Buckeye Trail starting at Jaite Trailhead. It’s an 8 mile hike and takes at least 3.5 hours to complete round-trip. Lastly, for a mid-length hike, take the Buckeye Trail from Boston Mills Visitor Center to Blue Hen Falls. This is only a 4 mile hike round-trip and takes at least 2 hours. RELATED: The Ultimate Guide to Hiking the Buckeye Trail Near Cleveland 5. Mill Creek Falls Garfield Park Reservation, Cleveland Looking for a waterfall *in* Cleveland? This is it. Mill Creek Falls, or Cataract Falls of Mill Creek, is a 48-foot waterfall and happens to be Cuyahoga County’s highest waterfall! It cascades over many rock layers in the northern corner of Garfield Park Reservation. To see this waterfall, park in one of two parking lots on Webb Terrace. From there, you can follow the Mill Creek Trail to the main Mill Creek Falls Overlook. 6. Chippewa Creek Falls Brecksville Reservation Located near Chippewa Creek Gorge, this waterfall is located under the State Route 82 bridge near the entrance of Brecksville Reservation. This sweet little 10-foot waterfall cascades down through the gorge. To get here, just park at the parking lot at the entrance of Brecksville Reservation and take the Chippewa Creek Falls Trailhead to the Chippewa Creek Gorge Scenic Overlook. You can also hike along the Hemlock Trail for better views of the falls and gorge. 7. Deer Lick Cave Falls Brecksville Reservation Also in Brecksville Reservation, this tiny little waterfall is a beautiful spot to relax. There are also a few ways to get here. The easy way to see it is to park at the small parking lot off of Valley Parkway, take the Deer Lick Cave Loop trail a short ways in, and then you’ll spot the falls. You could also continue the loop, merge onto the Valley Bridle Trial, and merge back onto Deer Lick Cave Loop. This is about a 4 mile hike. Lastly, you could take a 2 mile hike from the Oak Grove Picnic area and take the Buckeye Trail heading southwest. Take that until you can turn right from the trail onto Valley Parkway. Then you’ll be on the small loop trail and you’ll take that around and then come back the way you started. 8. Berea Falls Rocky River Reservation Do you remember those calendars that feature beautiful nature scenes? I’d wager that this waterfall more than earns its spot in one of those. With mini waterfalls flowing along the Rocky River and gorgeous stone bridges in the background, it’s no wonder that this waterfall is a popular spot with photographers. Berea Falls was formed by a post-glacial river that eroded the shale and sandstone underneath, creating these falls. This spot is particularly beautiful in the fall. To get here, park at Berea Falls Overlook and take the trail down. 9. East Falls Cascade Park, Elyria Next to an old deteriorating mill, these 30-foot falls make for a lovely sight. What makes it extra lovely, aside from it being next to the old mill, is the mix between man-made and natural, with the Black River flowing over a dam and then more natural sandstone. To get here, park at East Falls Riverwalk (right behind the police station) and take the boardwalk and steps to a set of overlooks. If you want a better view, take the smaller and less-maintained trail through the forest down to a couple more viewing areas. 10. West Falls Cascade Park, Elyria Located underneath the Lake Avenue bridge, this waterfall is also in Cascade Park. With a height of 35 feet, it is slightly more impressive than East Falls. It also appears to have 3 waterfalls in 1, as there are a few spots where water runs off the Berea Sandstone rocks. To get here, park in Cascade Park’s main parking lot and take the 1.2 mile Waterfall Trail. 11. Day’s Dam Falls Black River Reservation, Lorain Located near both the East and West falls mentioned above, the Day’s Dam Falls are incredible, especially after a rainy day. The craziest part is because of the popularity of the other two nearby waterfalls, this place gets overlooked and isn’t crowded at all! Start at the Day’s Dam Trailhead and take the Bridgeway Trail south for about half a mile until it connects with the Waterfall Trail. This loop trail then goes to the falls. 12. Quarry Rock Falls South Chagrin Reservation No big hiking needed for this waterfall, as it is close to the Quarry Rock picnic area. There is an overlook deck that shows the Aurora Branch of the Chagrin River with its charming cascades flowing along rocks as the water continues down the river. Just park at the Quarry Rock picnic area and wander over to the lookout spot. 13. Chagrin Falls Downtown Chagrin Falls No hiking required for this gem of a waterfall near Cleveland! Just head to downtown Chagrin Falls. Main Street crosses over Chagrin River, and you can take the steps down to get a great viewpoint of the falls. This waterfall also played a part in the history of Chagrin Falls, as it was used to power many mills in the area back in the day. 14. Affelder Falls The West Woods, Novelty Up until 2016, this waterfall wasn’t accessible by official trails. Now, this 20-foot waterfall is reachable via the ¼-mile Waterfall Trail made by Geauga Parks. To get here, park at Affelder House and take the Waterfall Trail from the house. Also, while this waterfall can be quite beautiful, it does dry up a bit when there isn’t much precipitation. To see it in its true beauty, aim to hike to it after rain or a snow melt. 15. Chair Factory Falls Painesville Located near what was an old chair factory that burned down years ago, this spot was actually on private property until Lake MetroParks created a 0.3 mile trail to access the falls. This waterfall near Cleveland is beautiful where the water curves over a rocky cliff and ends in a pool at the bottom. To get there, park at the Concord Township Old Stone School and take the Greenwood Corridor Connector Trail. Continue until you see the Chair Factory Falls path. That’ll lead to the overlook. 16. Paine Falls Paine Falls MetroPark, Leroy Township Located in what was once known as “Paine’s Hollow,” Colonel Hendrick Paine set up a cabin and started to industrialize the area by using, you guessed it: water power from the falls. He built a sawmill and many other industries started here. Now today it is just a lovely waterfall where Paine Creek flows under a bridge before cascading down in two spots, creating the falls. To see it, park at 5570 Paine Road in Leroy Township. There is a staircase you can take from the parking lot that leads to the overlook. 17. The Little Falls Cuyahoga Falls Located in Cuyahoga Falls, and found as a result of taking down old dams, is the Little Falls. These little waterfalls tumble along the river, giving expert whitewater kayakers a challenge. The easiest way to see it is from the Sheraton Suites hotel. There’s a restaurant and bar here called Beau’s on the River that has floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking this part of the Cuyahoga River. 18. Cascade Falls Nelson & Kennedy Ledges State Park, Garrettsville Standing around 40 feet tall, this skinny waterfall is set amongst some gorgeous ledges in Nelson & Kennedy Ledges State Park. To get here, park in the only parking lot in the park and take the trail to the right. This is a little adventurous to get to, as you’ll have to crawl for a second as you scramble past Dwarf Man’s Pass to continue to the falls. However, it is well worth it. This park also has a 10-foot waterfall called Minnehaha Falls you can visit while you’re there. 19. Lanterman’s Falls Lanterman’s Mill, Youngstown This is definitely the furthest waterfall from Cleveland itself, but if you are planning to take a day trip from Cleveland, this is a great one if you love waterfalls. Located next to the beautiful (and still working) Landerman’s Mill and a covered bridge, you can admire the gorgeous property and waterfalls without hiking – though there are also some walking/hiking trails nearby in Mill Creek Park. After checking out the falls, be sure to pick out some souvenirs at their gift shop, where you can find stone-ground buckwheat, cornmeal, and whole wheat flour. Just park at Lanterman’s Mill at 1001 Canfield Road. The best view of the whole place (seen in the photo above) can be seen from the Canfield Rd. (Route 62) bridge, which you can reach by taking the E Gorge Walk trail from the mill. Here’s a map to help you find all the waterfalls listed here! Which of these Cleveland waterfalls is your favorite? Pin it for later: Share on Facebook Share on Twitter Share on Pinterest Share on EmailKat is a Cleveland transplant and has lived here for over 5 years. She loves to eat, drink, and explore all across the city, and has made it her personal mission to find the best breweries and pizza in Northeast Ohio. She also runs a couples travel blog and podcast called World Wide Honeymoon. We use affiliate links and may receive a small commission on purchases. Learn moreOhio is home to some beautiful waterfalls. There are plenty of places where you can see waterfalls with impressive volumes of water. Most of them are located in state and national parks and can easily be reached on pleasant hiking trails through the wilderness. Many of these trails are suitable for all skill levels. The hiking spots here offer other recreational opportunities like lakes for swimming and fishing, picnic facilities, and waterfalls of course.Below are some of our favorite waterfalls hikes in Ohio. Find your sense of adventure and explore your home state.1. Ash Cave Falls TrailWaterfall Height: 90 feetDistance: 0.5 mileDifficulty: EasyElevation Gain: 111 feetLocation: Hocking Hills State ParkAsh Cave Falls is located in Hocking Hills State Park near Logan, Ohio. The trail features a waterfall and is good for all skill levels. It is primarily used for hiking and nature photography and is best used from April until October. The Falls runs only in the spring and is best seen early. If you want to see the falls, April is probably the best time for a visit. In winters, it freezes and forms an ice column. Ash Cave Falls runs from the rim of Ash Cave, this is one of the highlights of Hocking Hills State Park.Getting to Ash Cave Falls is easy. The main parking is well-signed and it is off of SR 56. It is a five-minute walk from the parking area to the falls. The trail goes behind the falls and up to the brink. If you prefer, continue on the Grandma Gatewood Trail. This is a segment of the Buckeye Trail, for 3 miles to reach Cedar Falls.Ash Cave is the largest recess cave in the entire Eastern United States. It is 700 feet long, 100 feet deep and 90 feet tall. The name “Ash Cave” came when settlers first came across this cave in the 1800’s they found a pile of ashes nearly 100 feet wide and three feet deep within the cave. Plan your visit after heavy rain if you want to see Ash Cave its best.2. Cedar Falls TrailWaterfall Height: 50 feetDistance: 0.9 mileDifficulty: EasyElevation Gain: 157 feetLocation: Hocking Hills State ParkCedar Falls is located in Hocking Hills State Park near Logan, Ohio. This is an impressive 50 feet waterfall that features a lake and is good for all skill levels. The waterfall looks much bigger in person than in pictures. The water slides down a massive chunk of sandstone, splits in the middle and then meets up again before plunging into a pool, creating a rather unique looking waterfall.Cedar Falls and the area surrounding the falls provide great satisfaction and relief from civilization. The falls can be more beautiful with an early morning hike after a good amount of rain. You can continue to explore the trail up the gorge enlightens all of the senses, the smell of the dusky hemlocks, the babbling creek, soaring intricately eroded cliffs and so much more.Getting to Cedar Falls is easy. It is one of the 6 main spots Hocking Hills. This is a well-maintained and well-marked area so finding the trailhead shouldn’t be too difficult. Once there, go left out of the parking lot. Remember, the trail is about half a mile long (one way). It will take you down to the creek-level and then follow the creek up to the falls. Enjoy the beautiful site with an easy hike and take some good photos because there’s plenty to see. A worthy hike!3. Brandywine Falls TrailWaterfall Height: 62 feetDistance: 3.8 mileDifficulty: ModerateElevation Gain: 534 feetLocation: Cuyahoga Valley National ParkStanford House to Brandywine Falls is a 3.8-mile scenic and loop trail near Northfield. It is one of the impressive waterfalls of Cuyahoga Valley National Park. The falls can be reached from Stanford Road. The hike is rated as moderate and it is primarily used for hiking, walking, trail running, and nature trips and is accessible year-round. The trail is accessible year-round. Dogs can use this trail but must be kept on leash.The waterfall offers some breathtaking views and it is best viewed after a decent amount of rain. The hike is even better because you don’t need to hike far. It is within 200 yards of the parking. Remember, the parking lot is not designed to park tons of vehicles so finding a spot is tricky! You may encounter issues with people parking right up on your vehicle.The hike has a few difficult parts like hiking up and down the hills, but it is rewarding. You walk in the beautiful forests (about one hour) and it has some flat terrains. You will hike a gradual uphill, well-marked trail through fields and then beautiful forests for about a mile and a half. The hike back is a lot easier, as it is more downhill. Do yourself a massive favor, plan on getting here first thing in the morning or wait until later in the afternoon.4. Buttermilk Falls TrailWaterfall Height: 20 feetDistance: 0.8 mileDifficulty: EasyElevation Gain: 16 feetLocation: Cuyahoga Valley National ParkButtermilk Falls is located in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park near Cleveland, Ohio. The hike features scenic views and it is rated as an easy hike. The trail can be used for hiking, nature trips, and is good for all skill levels. The trail is best used from March until October. Dogs are also able to use this trail but must be kept on leash. The hike to the falls is a 20-minute walk and you will pass the small Blue Hen Falls on the way.This is an easy hike and a nice spot for people who can’t do trails. Begin by parking in the lot right across the street from the trailhead and in less than 20 minutes you are looking at pretty nice falls. The view of the waterfall from its base is much better and it isn’t too difficult to get down to. It is perfect to add to any day trip.In summer, if you’re willing to get your feet wet, you can frolic in the pool at the bottom of the falls. That’s where crayfish play hide-and-seek in the cool and shady shallows. Be sure to pack a hearty snack and enough water to enjoy down there because it’s a steep climb back up!The trail is also ideal for those hikers who are getting acquainted with a new pair of boots or testing their relationship with a heavy pack before a camping trip.5. Blue Hen Falls TrailWaterfall Height: 15 feetDistance: 0.5 mileDifficulty: Easy to ModerateElevation Gain: 78 feetLocation: Cuyahoga Valley National ParkBlue Hen Falls is a small yet scenic waterfall in Northeast Ohio. It is known to be one of the most beautiful waterfalls in Cuyahoga Valley National Park. Blue Hen Falls is located barely a half-mile from the parking lot trailhead off Boston Mills Road. There are a few parking lots available at the given address but there is an overflow lot right across the street. The parking usually fills up early in the morning. It is recommended to arrive early if you would prefer to park at the trailhead.The hike is rated as easy to moderate and it is enough for families with young children, folks with unhappy knees, or couch potatoes just relearning the art of more strenuous activity. Nature lovers, photographers, and artists are going to love it, too. You stop at the falls, gawk at its glory, and then turn around and return to your car.Blue Hen Falls is a modest torrent of water and getting to it is easy. The trail has a wooden footbridge crossing Spring Creek that ultimately leads you to the sandstone-and-shale waterfall. Remember, the area beyond falls containing a sensitive riparian habitat. Please be respectful and stay on the trail. Overall, it is a great little hike with a waterfall and amazing views. You can stand on top of it and even go behind the waterfall. It is a peaceful and nice walk.6. Charleston Falls LoopWaterfall Height: 37 feetDistance: 1.8 mileDifficulty: EasyElevation Gain: 134 feetLocation: Charleston Falls PreserveCharleston Falls Preserve is the most visited Park District property in Miami County. The park is beautiful and the place is good for wildlife sightings. The trail to Charleston Falls is a 1.8-mile loop trail located near Tipp City, Ohio. Charleston Falls also known as “Miniature Niagara” because its rock strata are the same as Niagara Falls. Originates from small underground springs, stream creating the falls plummets 37 feet then continues its meandering journey to the Great Miami River.Charleston Falls is very pretty with some amazing views. If you prefer, there’s a wooden stairway that can take you down to the bottom of the falls and back up to the other side. Getting to the falls is easy with little to no hills. After a rainfall, some of the sections of the trail can get pretty muddy but for the most part, they keep the mud to a minimum with gravel.Be sure to bring your GPS or a good map with you. There is no brown attraction sign for Charleston Falls on either I-75 or I-70. Parking is free in the large lot and there are restrooms at the trailhead. The park can be visited only in daytimes and closing time posted each day. If you leave your car in the parking lot after closing time, your car will be towed. So no one is allowed to begin a hike 30 minutes or less before the posted closing time.7. Dundee Falls TrailWaterfall Height: 15 feetDistance: 2.1 mileDifficulty: EasyElevation Gain: 252 feetLocation: Dundee-Wilmot Road Northwest, DundeeDundee Falls Trail is a 2.1-mile out and back trail located near Dundee. It features an amazing waterfall and other numbers of activities. The trail is accessible year-round and it is suitable for all skill levels. Dogs are also able to use this trail.There is a parking lot available off Dundee-Wilmot Road. The trail can be accessed via a primitive leading off a small parking area adjacent to Dundee-Wilmot Road, the short path. The area, where the Falls is located contains its fair share of the beautiful scenery typical of Ohio. Unfortunately, it’s hard to focus on the splendor of the forest and meandering stream due to an excessive amount of litter. If they could patrol it at all, it would surely help prevent all the litter. Out of all the Ohio Parks, this was by far the most littered wildlife area ever. This is so sad. It could be cleaned up and turned into a high tourist area.Overall, Dundee Falls is a great and scenic trail. It is a very pretty and easy hike down to a nice little grotto with a waterfall. If you prefer, take about a 10-minute walk, follow the river and see what else is past the falls!

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