



HOW TO HIKE TO BROWNING MOUNTAIN, INDIANA'S STONEHENGE

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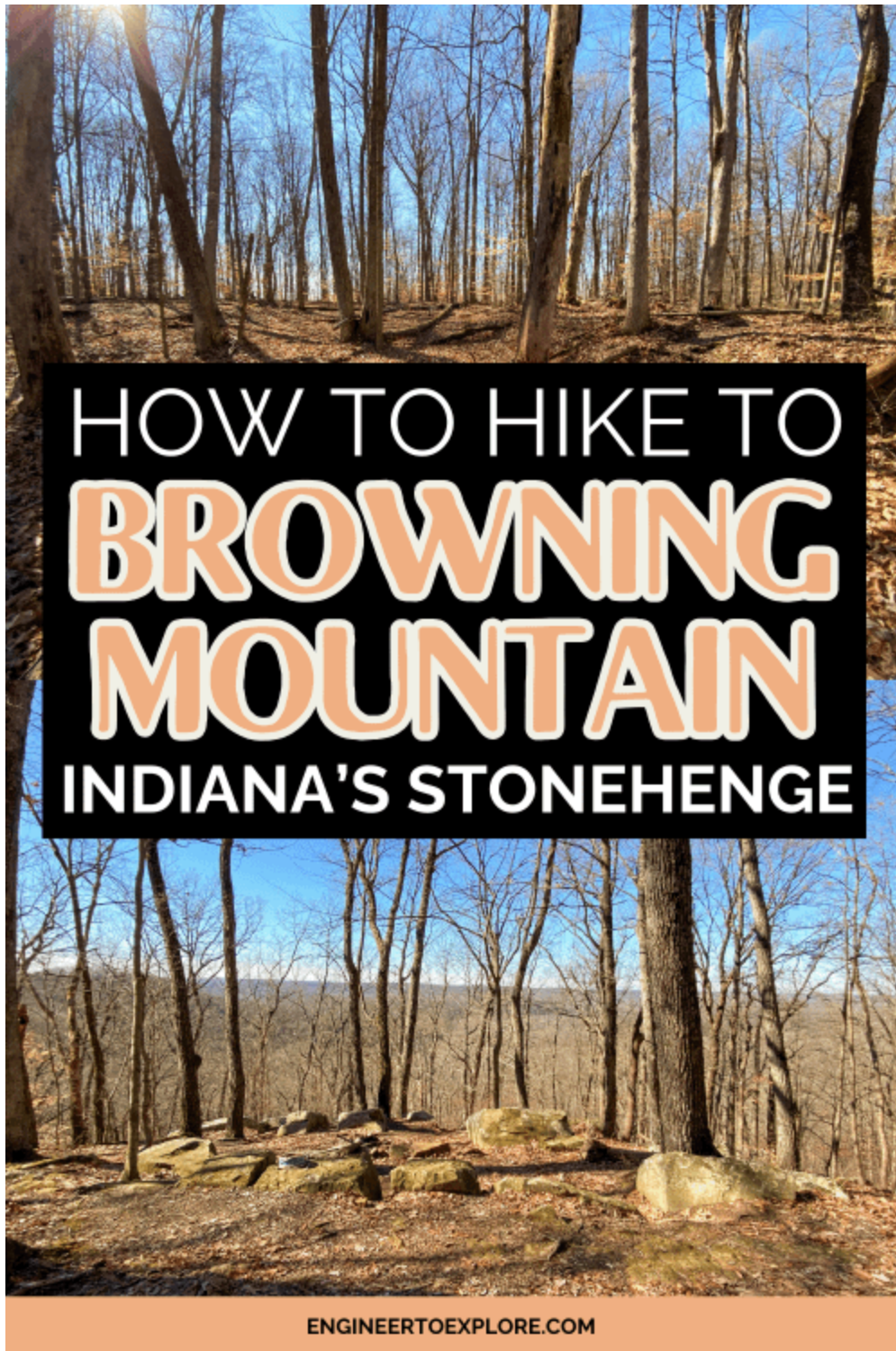
Did you know that southern Indiana has its own Stonehenge? It's true!

Browning Mountain Stonehenge is located in Brown County, Indiana and is known as "Indiana's Stonehenge" due to the mysterious field of sandstone boulders that scatter the peak overlooking the ghost town of Elkinsville. Some of them look like they have been placed in a purposeful, circular position.

You can visit Browning Mountain, Indiana's Stonehenge yourself via a short, steep hike!

My husband and I set a goal to hike at least 100 miles in 2024, and Browning Mountain Indiana's Stonehenge was our first one of the year since it is less than an hour from our house. We went on an unusually warm and sunny Saturday in February and had a great time!

The trailhead is out in the middle of nowhere and can be tricky to find. **This post will explain all you need to know about hiking Browning Mountain Stonehenge, how to find the trailhead, and if this hike is worth doing!**

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HISTORY OF BROWNING MOUNTAIN

Browning Mountain looms over the ghost town of Elkinsville, sitting 928 feet tall (*the 53rd tallest peak in Indiana*). The top is filled with a **circular field of giant**

rectangular boulders that are a mystery, giving it the nickname "Indiana's Stonehenge."

Elkinsville used to be a thriving trading post and small farming community back in the 1800's because it was situated on the only road that connected Columbus to Bloomington back in the day.

In 1964, **Elkinsville was evacuated by eminent domain to build the Lake Monroe Reservoir.** Over 3500 people were displaced and many homes and businesses were destroyed.

Because of this, many believe that Browning Mountain has an "aura" about it and is filled with bad spirits. Some say there have been UFO and Bigfoot sightings here.

There are a few explanations for how the boulders got there, but none are confirmed. Some hypothesize that the glaciers left them, others believe it to be a Native American ceremony site or ancient ruins, and some believe that the area was an abandoned stone quarry.

Some scientists believe that the stones are natural sandstone, while others believe it is limestone from a quarry over 90 miles away and was brought here.

A lot about this site remains a mystery, which adds to the fun of the hike!

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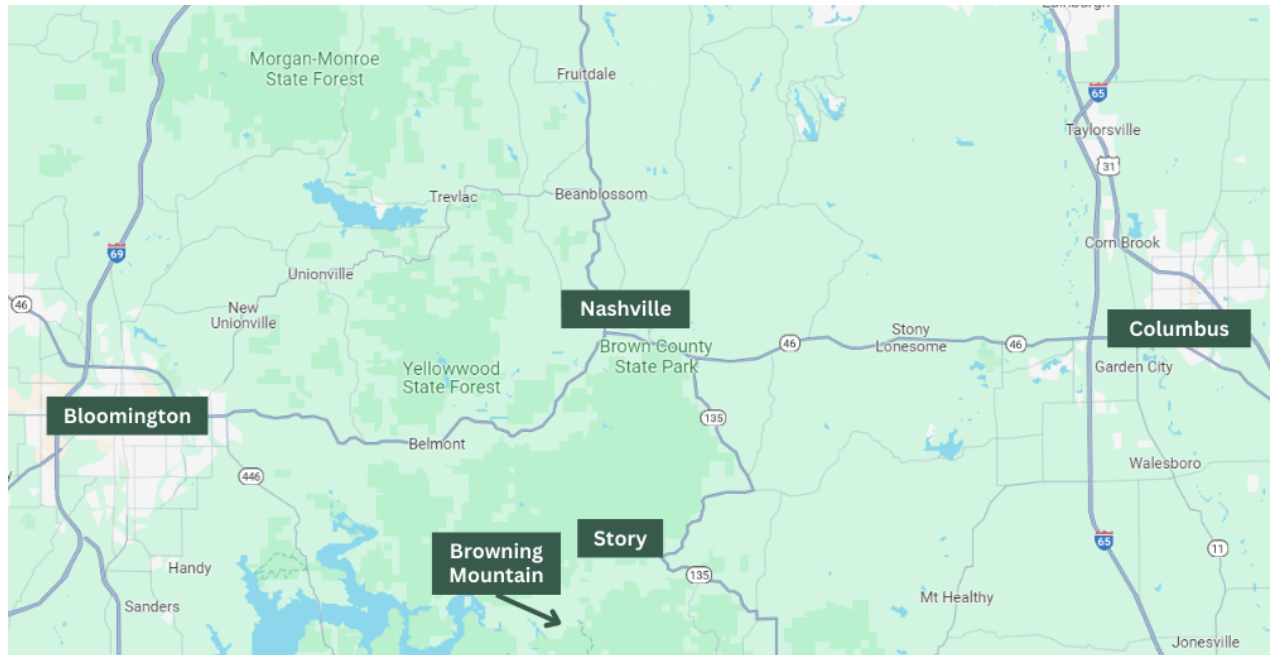
WHERE IS BROWNING MOUNTAIN?

Browning Mountain is located in Brown County, Indiana near the village of Story. It's south of Brown County State Park and partially located in the Hoosier National Forest.

The whole area is designated as a "special management area" by the US Forest Service to protect the old-growth forest that covers it.

Browning Mountain is about 30 minutes south of Nashville, an hour east of Bloomington, and an hour west of Columbus.

Related: [13 Top Things to Do in Brown County, Indiana \(From a Local!\)](#)



BEST TIME TO HIKE BROWNING MOUNTAIN STONEHENGE

The best time to hike Browning Mountain Indiana's Stonehenge is in the fall. Brown County is magical in the fall, and the hills are covered with orange, red, and yellow colors.

You can do this hike year-round though (*we did it in February when it was 45 degrees!*). Winters in southern Indiana are relatively mild and we don't get much snow.

If you go in the summer, make sure to bring bug spray and lots of water because it will be hot!

I would also recommend choosing a dry day to hike because the trail gets really muddy.

Related: [The Ultimate 7-Day West Virginia Road Trip Itinerary \(Full of Hiking and History\)](#)

HOW TO GET TO THE BROWNING MOUNTAIN STONEHENGE TRAILHEAD

Finding the Browning Mountain trailhead can be a little tricky since **it isn't marked and there isn't an official parking area**. The trailhead is also right next to private property, so you want to make sure you aren't disturbing the homeowners!

To get there, first **make your way to Story along IN-135. Make a slight right onto Elkinsville Road and follow it for about 4 miles.**

This road turns to gravel and dirt only, so be aware that your car will get really dirty! You'll be fine in any vehicle, our 2WD Ford Escape did just fine.



Dirt Road to Browning Mountain

You will pass an official trailhead parking lot followed by a sharp, uphill hairpin turn. This NOT the trailhead, so keep going!

You will eventually reach Combs Road. **Make a left turn and prepare to park your vehicle shortly after you pass a grey house with a fence lining the road.**

The trailhead starts right at the end of the fence line and before the creek/dip in the road. **You should see a well-trafficked path through the woods and up the hill.** Look for the yellow survey marker and park along the side of the road.



Browning Mountain Stonehenge Trailhead



Dip in the Road Past the Trailhead

Searching "Browning Hill" in Apple Maps brought us to the correct location and it seems that "Browning Mountain Trailhead" in Google Maps is correct as well.

Make sure you do not park on private property! Park behind the yellow survey marker and not along the fence. There isn't an official parking area, so please do not disturb the homeowners that live next to the hill!

HIKING THE BROWNING MOUNTAIN STONEHENGE TRAIL

The Browning Mountain Stonehenge Trail is 1.6 miles roundtrip with 367 feet of elevation gain. It took us about 50 minutes to hike to the peak and back, which

included a 10-ish minute break at the top.

Don't let the shortness of this hike fool you- **it is a steep incline most of the way up!** We had to stop and catch our breath multiple times, but other than that it wasn't too bad.

I recommend wearing hiking boots as the trail can be muddy and leaf-covered, making it slippery in some places.

The trail up is easy to follow. **The only confusing part is a fork at the summit of the hill- make sure you take the path to the right.** You'll reach Indiana's Stonehenge shortly after this part!



Turn Right When You Reach the Top of the Hill

When you get to the top, you might notice that some of the stones have strange markings on them and look like they had been quarried. There is also an area for a fire in the middle of the circle.

Someone had left a bowl of crystals on one of the rocks when we did this hike, adding to the ritualistic aura of the area. **I personally did not “feel the spirits” or experience any haunting feelings that you may have read about online regarding this place!**

I will admit that the placement of the rocks did look intentional! I wish there was more in-depth research about Browning Mountain and the source of the rocks. There has to be a logical explanation and I’m sure the history is absolutely fascinating!

Take a few moments to take in the view from the top and ponder the mystery of the stones for yourself.

We had this trail all to ourselves. **Browning Mountain is one of Brown County’s best-kept secrets so it’s a great way to experience nature without seeing a ton of other people.**



The Top of Browning Mountain Indiana's Stonehenge

IS THE BROWNING MOUNTAIN STONEHENGE HIKE WORTH IT?

We definitely thought the Browning Mountain Stonehenge hike was worth it! The mystery of the rocks was too intriguing to pass up.

Rocks aside, **there is a nice view of the valley from the top of the hill.** It is partially obstructed by trees so it is probably harder to see in the spring and summer, but the view would be absolutely gorgeous in the fall!

However, I am biased since I live so close to Brown County and the trails here are accessible to me at any time. There are a ton of great things to do in Brown County (*check out [this post for the ultimate Brown County travel guide](#)*), so I

don't know if this hike would be first on my list compared to some of the other trails in Brown County State Park.

If you have at least a weekend to spend in Brown County, I think it is definitely worth taking a couple of hours to do this hike. But if you're only here for a day, I would probably skip this trail and opt for a hike in Brown County State Park instead (*Ogle Lake and Strahl Lake are both more scenic trails in my opinion!*).

I have no regrets about hiking this trail and thought it was a great way to spend an afternoon. If you're in the area and up for a lesser-known adventure, this trail will be significantly less popular than trails in the state park.

Related: [10 Best Places to Visit in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan](#)



Rocks at the Top of Browning Mountain

What is your leading theory about how the giant rocks made their way to the top of Browning Mountain? Do you plan to hike the Browning Mountain Stonehenge Trail? Let me know in the comments below!

-Megan

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



MEGAN RYNEARSON

Megan is an automotive engineer turned financial planner from Indiana.

She's been to 4 countries, 30 US States, and 15 National Parks (and counting!). Realizing that most people can't quit their jobs and travel full time, she loves to help others plan epic trips that fit into their allotted PTO without breaking the bank. Megan is insanely type-A and loves planning trips almost as much as going on them!

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