

Piazza Rock, Appalachian Trail, Sandy River Plantation

The hike to [Piazza Rock](#) – an extraordinary slab of stone balanced like a drawbridge from the side of a mountainside – is really quite easy after the first initial push uphill. The 450-foot climb is over before you know it, and then you have a mostly flat walk through woods to the rock, which you can climb onto – although it's somewhat scary for those scared of heights. From below the rock, the slab kind of resembles an extraterrestrial space ship. Or it did to me.

The side trail to Piazza Rock comes slightly before the side trail on the right to a lean-to and camping area. The caves are slightly beyond the lean-to. If you keep going on the AT here, you'll end up at Saddleback Mountain, with a one-mile stretch above tree level. (So I hear...sounds nice!)

A tad further along the path you'll come to the caves – essentially, an enormous pile of huge rocks that long ago tumbled down the slope. There is a blazed trail through these boulders – literally taking you underneath them, over them, and mostly up them. This short climb up might be a touch frightening for people with a fear of heights and rock scrambles. The trail ends at a level spot with a scanty view.

Directions: The parking for Piazza Rock is off Route 4, 30 miles north of Farmington and 9 miles south of Rangeley. The parking area is on your left if you're coming from Farmington, and the trail head is across the road. Take care crossing this busy, fast road.

