

The Severn bore

One of the great sights of the Bristol area is the Severn bore. This is beginning of the tide coming in and forming a wave that can be a metre high, followed by a train of undulations, and, pulled up-river by the moon's gravity. The more familiar tides at the seashore are less spectacular because their rise and fall occurs gradually, over several hours. What makes the Severn different is that it narrows over a long distance, so that the tide wave, whose top travels a bit faster than its bottom, can steepen and break into a fairly sharp front. My favourite moment - especially if the bore is disappointingly low, as can happen sometimes - is just after the bore has passed. Then the river rushes backwards, that is upstream towards Gloucester. It gets higher for about an hour as the rest of the tide comes in. I like to see the bore at night. As it approaches, the effect of the distant and then growing roar is magical - and there is plenty of light from Gloucester and/or the moon.

There are many places to see the bore along the river near Gloucester. Below I give information about four of them, including UK postcodes (good for Google maps directions) and the grid references (on the UK Ordnance survey map sheet 162: Gloucester and Forest of Dean)

Minsterworth Church GL2 8JJ, grid SO772169: on the north side; easy to park by the church and walk along the river (off Church Lane off A48); bore arrives 10 minutes before it passes Weir Green

Weir Green, GL2 3WG, grid SO792153: easy to park by the river, and walk away from people, formerly a fine view, but now somewhat obscured by trees overgrown on the bank; bore arrival times below

Over Bridge, GL2 8BZ, grid SO816195: park on the westbound side of A40, pulling in slightly west of the bridge, and walk up onto the bridge; it's the old Telford Bridge, with a fine view of the bore and the newer railway bridge; bore arrives 25 minutes after it passes Weir Green

Maisemore Bridge, GL2 8ES, grid SO816211: a fine view of the bore's arrival before it dies on the weir just upstream, park on Bridge Farm, off A419, or in the White Hart Inn and enjoy a drink and a Nepalese Curry; bore arrives 30 minutes after it passes Weir Green

Dates and times of Severn Bore 2026

These times are (to within 20 minutes) when the bore passes Weir Green. To be safe, leave plenty of time and arrive early; it's worth waiting.

Data based on Arrowsmith's Bristol Channel Tide Table, obtainable from
www.arrowsmith.co.uk and bristolchanneltidetable@blueyonder.co.uk

*biggish bore **(no very big bores in 2026)** In summer add 1 hour to get British summer time

January no bores	February Tuesday 3, 21:21 Wednesday 4, 09:35, 21:58 Thursday 5, 10:11	March Tuesday 3, 07:58, 20:22 Wednesday 4, 08:37, 20:59 Thursday 5, 09:13, 21:32 Friday 6, 09:45 Friday 20, 08:49, 21:08 Saturday 21, 09:25, 21:42 Sunday 22, 10:00
April Wednesday 1, 19:56 Thursday 2, 08:11, 20:31 Friday 3, 09:45 Friday 17, 20:04 Saturday 18, 08:23, 20:43 Sunday 19, 09:03, 21:21 Monday 20, 09:43	May Monday 18, 08:45, 21:04	June no bores
July Thursday 16, 21:31 Friday 17, 22:14	August Thursday 13, 20:33 Friday 14, 09:00, 21:15* Saturday 15, 09:39, 21:54* Sunday 16, 22:27	September Thursday 10, 19:33 Friday 11, 07:58, 20:14* Saturday 12, 08:37, 20:52* Sunday 13, 09:13, 21:27
October Friday 9, 19:09 Saturday 10, 07:32, 19:48 Sunday 11, 08:09, 20:24 Monday 12, 08:43, 20:58 Monday 26, 20:00 Tuesday 27, 08:20, 20:40 Wednesday 28, 08:57	November Wednesday 25, 07:58 Thursday 26, 08:41	December Friday 25, 08:31, 21:01 Saturday 26, 09:18, 21:48 Sunday 27, 10:04