

## **Rock Climbing Checklist**

(Beginner and Intermediate)



### **THE TEN ESSENTIALS**

1. **Navigation:** Map, Compass (GPS optional)
2. **Hydration:** Water, Hydration Pack, and Treatment Method
3. **Nutrition:** Extra Food for emergency (extra nutrition bars)
4. **Sun Protection:** Sunscreen, Sunglasses, Hat, Lip Balm
5. **Insulation:** Hat and Gloves, Light weight jacket, Extra layers
6. **Warmth:** Lighter/Matches, Fire starter or Stove and Fuel
7. **Illumination:** Headlamp/Flashlight, Extra Batteries
8. **First Aid (for self and gear):** Bandages, Knife, Medicine, Duct Tape, Zip Ties, etc
9. **Shelter:** Tarp, Blanket
10. **Safety:** Harness, Helmet, Whistle (For emergency signals)

*Remember: Rock climbing can be a very dangerous sport if you are not prepared with the right gear or experience. Be sure to climb with a guide, and always climb with two or more people, in case of emergency.*

### **Clothing:**

*(Prepare with layers; Make sure all clothing is easy to move in, and something you don't mind getting dirty or torn!)*

- Hiking Boots (also known as "approach shoes")
  - *(Often you will need to hike a great distance to get to the Crag)*
- 2 pr Socks (one wearing, one dry)
- Sandals
  - *(You'll want something easy to slip off and on, as you do not want to wear your climbing shoes when of the wall)*
- Wicking T-Shirt/Tank top
- Light weight durable pants (avoid jeans and shorts)
- Fleece/Long sleeve shirt
- Light weight jacket or vest
- Hat and gloves (especially during colder seasons)
- Trash bag/Rain poncho (also to cover pack in rain)

### **Gear:**

- Rock Climbing Harness
- Rock Climbing Shoes *(most climbers do not wear socks, but bring thin socks if you want)*
- Rope
- Quick Draws/Trad Gear
- Belay Device/Chalk
  - *(If you're a beginner climber, your guide will have all of the above items)*
- Day Hiking Pack
  - *(You'll need space to carry all your food, water, gear, and clothing)*

- Water (1.5 to 2 liters minimum)
- First Aid Kit (personal)
  - Mole skin
  - Duct tape or sports tape
  - Bandages, balm, antiseptic wipes, triple antibiotic ointment
  - Pocket knife/Rope
  - Individual Medical Needs (inhalers, prescriptions, etc)
- Personal Hygiene Needs
  - Toilet Paper/Paper Towel/Feminine Hygiene Products
  - Handkerchief/Tissue Paper (*keep in mind no garbage is to be left on the trails*)
  - Deodorant, small amount of soap
- Extra Batteries (make sure non-battery operated devices are fully charged)
- Extra Zip Lock bags
  - for water damageable items (cell phones, papers, tissues, electronic devices)
  - to store trash items
  - used to line inside of shoes on wet trails
- Bandana/Hair Ties (good multi-purpose items)
- Camera (Optional)
- Bug Repellant (optional depending on season)
- Book or Cards (Optional)

### **Meals:**

*(Rock climbing consumes a lot of energy. Do not underestimate the amount of food you will need)*

- Snacks (Power Bars, Cliff Bars, Granola, Trail Mix, Jerky, Powder Drink mix, fruit, etc)
- Lunch (Pouched Tuna/Chicken/etc, Sandwiches, Dried Fruit, Boiled Eggs)

### **ROUTE RATINGS**

*Each route is rated along a 5 point scale. This is part of the Yosemite Decimal system.*

- 5.1** Walking on flat ground
- 5.2** Walking on a steep incline
- 5.3** Walking on a steep hill in which balance is challenging
- 5.4** Walking up a steep slope in which one grabs branches and rocks for assistance
- 5.5** Climbing up something similar to a ladder
- 5.6** Climbing up something similar to a ladder that is missing some steps
- 5.7 through 5.9** are more technical climbs in which the climber creatively finds ways to get up the ladder-like route
- 5.10+** Routes above a 5.10 then have letters attached to them (ie. 5.10a, 5.10b) and the “5” is commonly dropped (ie. 10a, 10b). Letters go up to “d” then go to the next number sequence (ie. 10d, 11a). These routes are very technical in nature and require complex movements.

## **KNOW THE LANGUAGE**

**Crag:** Section of cliff line that offers climbing routes (also referred to as the “Bluff”)

**Belay:** The action of properly holding the rope that the climber is attached to. The “belayer” will have a “belay device” which the rope is threaded through, creating friction to stop the fall of a climber, when held correctly

**GriGri:** A special type of belay device that will automatically stop the rope when abrupt tension is applied, like a seat belt

**Figure 8 Knot:** The knot used most often in climbing.

**Lead Climb:** The act of climbing the route with the rope below you. The “lead climber” is the first person up the route who will then attach the rope to the top of the route for other climbers.

**Top Rope:** The rope is already looped in at the top of the route

**Anchor:** The area at the top of the route that the rope is fastened to. The anchor could be bolts driven into the rock itself, or it could be a tree

**Carabiner:** Commonly referred to as a “beaner.” This is the gear that clasps into the bolt.

**Quick Draw:** Two carabiners connected by a strap of strong fabric. One carabiner clasps into the bolt and the climber’s rope is fed through the second carabiner.

**Sport Route:** Routes that have bolts along the way that can be clipped into with quick draws

**Trad Route:** Stands for “traditional,” in which there are no anchors on the rock. These routes are most commonly found along large cracks in the rock, which special gear is placed into.

**Beta:** Information about the route (for example, where the really good holds are, or special moves that will help the climber get past a hard section of the route)

**Crux:** The most difficult section of the route. Routes are rated based on the single hardest move on the entire route.

**Smearing:** The act of placing your foot in front of you, with no good foot hold, relying only on friction

**Flagging:** Extending a leg out like a flag on the opposite side of the body to gain or recover balance on the other side of the body

**Traverse:** To move from side to side along the route

**Jam:** When the climber sticks a body part (fist, finger, knee, foot) into the crack of the wall

**Drop Knee:** This is when the climber drops one knee down and brings their hip closer to the rock wall in order to gain a few inches of upward reach

**Hold/Take:** The climber will often shout this just before they fall. It instructs the belayer to take up as much of the rope as possible so the climber will not fall far from their position on the route.

## NOTES AND TIPS

1. Try indoor rock climbing before going on an outdoor trip.
2. Have a safety plan in place before climbing. Know who you should call in case of emergency and have a group first aid kit. If someone falls from a height greater than their own, and becomes unconscious you must assume that person will have head and neck injuries, until you find out otherwise. Do not move this person except to get them away from falling rocks or water. Support their head and neck when moving them. Otherwise, do everything you can to block direct sun exposure or inclement weather, and find immediate emergency help.
3. On the approach trail, socks that are too loose will cause blistering, so make sure you have good tight socks and liners, and good hiking boots.
4. Bring proper forms of identification (drivers license/state ID, insurance card, ID bracelet, etc. Provide any medical information in a sealed envelope to keep on you, only to be opened if you should need medical assistance)
5. On the trail, take note of landmarks in case something goes wrong and you have to backtrack. Also, be sure to know where your start and end locations are (i.e. trailhead names, road names, town names) in case you get separated from the group and someone outside of the group is trying to assist you. Keep an accurate map of the trail with you.
6. Keep in mind basic leave-no-trace guidelines. Trail etiquette is not just “don’t leave trash behind.” An easy one to remember *always step on durable surfaces (rocks, roots) whenever possible*, instead of dirt, moss, etc. It's not just a don't-hurt-the-plant-life thing, but it helps keep down erosion of the trail.
7. Be sure that at least 2 other people, not in the group, know where you are and when you expect to back. Also be sure that your trip leader has your emergency contact information, any known allergies and medical conditions, and a list of prescription drugs that may be needed to save your life on the trail.
8. Finally, know your group members’ names, and never be afraid to ask the group to stop for a rest or to slow down during a hike.