Boeing Employees Alpine Society

ALPINE CLIMBING CLASS
ACC HANDBOOK

Contents

Revision History
January 2026 | Russell Keck
Extensively updated, rewritten, restructured, and expanded from the 2018 ICC Handbook.

Introduction

The BOEALPS Alpine Climbing Class (ACC) is the ideal class for those who want to learn the skills to lead climb technical rock, snow, and alpine ice in the remote and incredibly stunning high alpine environment! Successful alpine climbing requires a wide array of mountain skills, far more than just physical rock climbing prowess; and the aim of this class is to teach a solid foundation of those skills.

What the class is not – it is not the CCC (Cragging Climbing Class), and it is not the HRCC (Hard Rock Climbing Class). One can be fully successful in the class and never climb anything harder than 5.8, but long hours hiking and scrambling with a heavy pack on approach and descent is mandatory.

The class is for individuals who have completed a basic mountaineering class (or possess equivalent skills) and wish to expand their climbing horizons. The class consists of 12 evening classroom sessions (Monday lectures) with 11 weekend outings (Friday evening after work until late Sunday). Five of the weekend outings will be spent practicing your skills on alpine climbs in the Pacific Northwest. The full class schedule with all dates is found here: http://boealps.org/courses/acc/acc-schedule/

The class provides a very low student to instructor ratio (typically ranging from 1:1 to 3:1). This provides for more latitude when planning climbs, gives students a greater degree of participation, and enables students to attempt a wider range of routes.

The ACC can be an amazing and lifechanging experience for those who have the desire and drive to put in the kind of energy and time needed to really expand their mental and physical limits, and can be a springboard to even greater adventures. Ultimately, what each student gets out of the class is a direct result of their own effort, commitment, and attitude they put into the class.

What to Expect

The goal of the ACC is to impart the requisite technical skills and experience to climb the variety of terrain found on alpine peaks. After graduating this class, students will be able to:

- Choose and plan alpine climbing objectives based on your ability level
- Navigate trails, bushwacking, snow, glaciers, and limited alpine ice to access alpine climbing routes
- Lead traditionally protected rock climbing routes, using gear placement and anchor building skills
- Identify dangers and risks presented by a climb, both objective and subjective
- Understand your strengths and weaknesses as a climber and how to improve

The instruction focuses imparting the 5 key capabilities listed above, building on your current ability levels in a wide ranges of supporting skills. It focuses on you as an individual, where you are at currently, and what your future climbing goals are; it is not prescriptive in terms of climbing grade or objective difficulty. Student assignments in terms of routes, partners, and instructors are tailored to the degree practicable to your demonstrated skills leading up to a given outing.

Students are intentionally exposed to a wide variety of different types of climbs and different climbing partners; to help to build solid breath of skills, experiences, and perspectives so they can tackle a wide range of alpine challenges they may encounter on future climbs. Route types can include simul climbing, carry-overs, steep snow and alpine ice, long approaches, or other variations/combinations of attributes.

Students must spend time preparing for outings; practicing skills, training, doing research on the routes (approach, climb, and descent) for each weekend, creating trip reports, completing homework assignments, and packing/unpacking. Plan to spend 4-8+ hours each week outside of class for these activities. Students who don't invest the time outside of class typically struggle to keep up.

Lead climbing is a central element of the class, and all students are expected to learn how to lead climb which is as much of a mental undertaking as it is a physical one. Mock leading starts with the 3rd outing, with full leading coming in the 4th outing (at a current skill level appropriate grade). Typically about half the class will have had prior leading experience, and half will just be just starting out. If you have not lead climbed before, taking a 1 or 2 day sport leading class is highly recommended before the ACC starts. The mental aspects of leading manifest differently for everyone, they can be simple or complex to manage, and sport leading is great and relatively safer way to explore your own response.

This class is organized and administered by volunteers who love to share their joy of alpine climbing with others. We strive to do our best in climbing and instructing, but please understand that there is always more for us to learn also. We are not professional instructors, so please be patient and measure your expectations accordingly. Don't hesitate to question us if anything gives you pause or concern!

Lastly, given the small class size, modest pool of instructors, and long hours spent tackling challenges together in the mountains; many students also come away from the class feeling like a part of the small but amazing ACC climbing community and having new friends for future adventures to come.

Prerequisites

The extensive snow/glacier skills and rock climbing skills covered in typical 'Basic Mountaineering' and 'Basic Rock Climbing' classes (like the BOEALPS BMC and BOEALPS BRC classes) should be second nature for a prospective ACC student. They are reviewed briefly at the beginning of the ACC, but significant time will not be spent teaching those basic skills. In addition, prospective ACC students should have spent considerable time applying those skills climbing outside of classes getting the real hands-on experience necessary to ensure that those extensive foundational skills are truly mastered.

Knowing how to lead climb is <u>not</u> necessary for an ACC applicant. Basic experience with top rope rock climbing, up to at least 5.8, is required. If your only experience with rock climbing systems and

movement is through a 'Basic Mountaineering' class (like the BOEALPS BMC); it is strongly suggested that you take the BOEALPS BRC (Basic Rock Class), take classes at a local climbing gym, or routinely get outside rock climbing with experienced friends prior to applying to the ACC. These are great ways to gain basic rock climbing skills (physical climbing skills and strength, understanding of climbing systems, lead belaying techniques, how to follow climbs, and much more).

It is impossible to overstate the importance and impact of physical conditioning on a student's overall class experience. **Endurance is by far the most important conditioning prerequisite, and is way more important than rock climbing strength**. Those with excellent endurance typically revel in the class, and those with middling endurance often find it to be grueling. There are no shortcuts to these amazing alpine climbs and they require long hours of high-level exertion for back-to-back days. In addition, moving quickly and staying on the planned timeline are often critical to minimize hazard exposure. Plus having some energy in reserve lets you think clearer, be more observant with better situational awareness, and enables better decision-making in the mountains – which is the most essential ingredient for safety.

Balance is also an essential skill for safety. The bulk of the time on most outings/climbs will be spent on approach and descent in un-roped terrain. Rock hopping over roaring creeks, hiking marginally established climbers trails with considerable exposure at times, crossing unstable scree/boulder fields, pushing up through blocky class 3 and 4 terrain to reach the base of a route, and anytime you have crampons on. In short, lots of time is spent in circumstances where any untimely wobble, stumble, etc could lead to an injury or worse – and access to medical care is many hours or more away. Having your balance dialed to minimize those risks, and boost your chances of a nimble recovery, is key.

Having a good and practiced 'Self Care System' to keep yourself warm, fueled, and hydrated over long hours of high level exertion is an important prerequisite. In addition, a good starting base of 'Rock Climbing Technique' to allow you to move smoothly, delicately, and fully in control over technical climbing terrain is important. Lastly and largely optional, is 'Rock Climbing Strength' which can broaden the number of different alpine climbing routes you could go after and add safety margin; but there are more than enough amazing moderate 5.4-5.6 routes in the PNW to complete the class successfully.

ACC Applicants must be able to demonstrate proficiency in:

- Tying standard climbing knots (figure-8, prusik, water knot, butterfly)
- Harness checks, and standard belay and climb commands
- Setting up a redundant top rope anchor
- Top rope belaying with both an ATC and Grigri
- Top rope climbing up to at least 5.8
- Rappelling on two strands with an autoblock/third hand
- Phone GPS and maps use for mountain navigation
- Ice axe arresting skills
- Glacier travel skills on up to 35-deg slopes (crampon use, rope team setup, etc)

Applicants should have had experience with:

- Map and compass use for navigation
- Crevasse rescue with a team of 3 or 4
- Wilderness first aid (WRFA or equivalent), or have other first aid training

Applicants must be in good physical condition:

- Endurance: able to sustain a steep uphill hiking pace with a 25-lb pack of at least 1,000 vertical feet per hour for 4+ hours, equivalent to taking 3.0 hours to climb up Mount Si (without the Haystack)
- Balance: able to stand on one foot, raise up onto the ball of that foot, and balance with your eyes open without touching your other foot to the ground for 30 seconds

Classroom Sessions

Class sessions are typically on Monday evenings the week before an outing, last from 6:30 to ~9:00pm, and are held in the Boeing 2-22 Building in South Seattle. Students are expected to have done pre-work before arriving at class each week so that meaningful discussions and learning can take place: completing homework, practicing skills, reading sections of 'Freedom of the Hills', researching and collecting beta for assigned routes, and watching the weather and avalanche forecast. Each classroom session will consist of 3-5 of the following elements:

- Debrief from and discussion of the previous outing
- Trip report share outs from the previous outing
- Review and discussion of any homework assignments
- A hands on skills practice activity (cam selection, anchor building, problem solving challenges, etc)
- Lecture topic presented by one or more instructors and/or guests
- Summary of and logistics for the upcoming outing (assignments, potlucks, carpools, etc)
- Climb planning time for Alpine Climbs with your climb team

Weekend Outings

Weekend outings almost always last from Friday evening after work until late Sunday (6pm-8pm return typically for skills outings, 6pm-midnight or later return for alpine outings). Students and instructors need to block out (not make any other plans or commitments) the entire Friday evening through all of Sunday time window for all 11 weekend outings. The only normal exceptions, are that the Snow outing and Ice outing both start (depart from Seattle) early Saturday morning (at ~5am).

For the skills outings (Horsethief, Snow, Rescue, and Ice) students are responsible for preparing all their personal and team gear, practicing skills, and showing up well rested to absorb a mountain of new hands-on information and skills. For the cragging outings (Smith and Squamish) students and instructors will collaborate as a team to research, plan, and execute on climbing their assigned route(s).

On alpine outings (Alpine 1, 2, 3, WA Pass, and Grad Climb) students are expected to be the driving force behind the climbs, with the instructors acting in a "support role" rather than as a guide or leader. With the students doing the bulk of the route research and trip planning in advance, and much of the route finding and decision making on the climb. The instructors provide refinements, adjustments, tips, and course corrections as needed; but the goal is to let the student learn by actively doing, instead of by passively observing.

Attendance and Completion

The class calendar is finalized and published before the application and selection process takes place to enable student applicants to plan their spring and summer schedule commitments around the class (weddings, business trips, vacations, etc). Upon acceptance to the class, be aware that these dates are hard commitments and that make-up sessions/outings are often not acceptable. It is unfair to our volunteers to pressure them into giving up more of their free time to cater to a student's personal schedule. In addition, for the first 3 skills outings (Horsethief, Snow, and Rescue), student attendance is mandatory in order to proceed in the class.

Obviously emergencies and unexpected developments can occur (family crisis, medical concerns, unanticipated mandatory business travel, etc); and in these cases it will be the student's responsibility to inform the head instructor(s) as soon as the conflict arises, work with the head instructor(s) to determine a suitable course of action, and schedule a make-up with a qualified instructor if directed to do so.

The class is structured such that each classroom session and weekend outing builds on those before it, and consequently **attending <u>all</u> the scheduled classroom sessions and weekend outings is critical.** If you foresee schedule difficulty in attending classroom sessions and/or weekend outings, consider that

this may not be the right year for you to take the class. Failure to attend the necessary classroom sessions and/or weekend outings may result in a student being dropped from the class.

To successfully complete the class and graduate, a student must show proficiency in the skills taught. For most students, this is done by leading a graduation climb at the conclusion of the class.

Class Size and Selection Process

Class size is limited order to keep the student to instructor ratio low, to ensure the quality of the class. This limit depends on the instructor commitment for the given class year, but typically is 12-16 students.

The selection process is as follows. The ACC selection panel reviews all submitted student applications, and calls 'Climbing Partner References' for any applicants not known to at least one member on the selection panel. Applicants that do not meet the prerequisites are advised to continue their climbing development and re-apply in a subsequent year; applicants that clearly exceed the target incoming student skillset are offered to participate as Provisional Instructors.

The remaining applicants are then divided into BOEALPS Members, and BOEALPS Guests buckets. 2/3^{rds} of the available student slots are then allocated to the best qualified BOEALPS Members. Remaining BOEALPS Members are then combined with the BOEALPS Guests, from which the remaining 1/3rd of available student slots are selected. Applicants are selected based on those that are likely to benefit the most from the class (not overly skilled, not under skilled, and have good alignment of climbing goals), are likely to give back to the class, and are the most stoked about the class.

It is essential that each prospective student completely fill out the application to the best of their ability. The more information you provide the selection panel, the a better they can understand your current ability level and what you are looking to get out of the class.

Please note: while couples may take/participate in this class together, we don't assign students in a couple to climb together with their significant other during skills outings or on climbs.

Class Fee and Refund Policy

The class fee is as follows and is due at the first classroom session:

- $450 – for Boeing Employees, Retirees, or Family Members
  (BOEALPS membership must be current by the first classroom session)
- $490 – for BOEALPS Guests (not a Boeing employee, retiree, or family member)

Students shall receive a full refund of the class fee paid if they drop out or are cut before the first weekend outing (Horsethief). The refund amount will decrease by 1/3rd of the total class fee after each weekend outing. The reason for leaving the class does affect the refund amount.

Refund schedule details:
Before Weekend Outing 1: Full refund
After Weekend Outing 1: 2/3^{rds} of class fee is refundable
After Weekend Outing 2: 1/3rd of class fee is refundable
After Weekend Outing 3: No refund

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Equipment

Students should not by new equipment until after the first classroom session!

Students are expected to procure for themselves all of the following equipment as and when required for the respective outings. The list is comprehensive, but not fully exhaustive. Note that the BOEALPS Gear Locker has select equipment which can be borrowed (e.g. avalanche gear and ice climbing gear).

Equipment you should have from your 'Basic Mountaineering' that likely will work as is for ACC:

- □ **10 Essentials!**
- □ **Backpack**. Small and lightweight enough to climb with, but big enough to hold gear for a weekend. 35-45 liters is ideal
- □ **Climbing Helmet**. UIAA approved.
- □ **Mountaineering Boots**. Boots should have a half to full shank and be compatible with crampons. Plastic boots are not recommended, use them at your own risk.
- □ **Crampons**. Twelve points, and fit tested with your boots.
- □ **Rain Gear**. Gore-tex or similar, it's the Pacific Northwest!
- □ **Down Puffy**. Lightweight and warm!
- □ **Climbing Clothing**. Synthetic or wool, NO cotton.
- □ **Headlamp**. With an extra set of batteries.
- □ **Prusiks.** At least 3 of 6mm diameter and 13.5in length (or longer) when tied. 5mm are only for use on thin glacier ropes (and are not allowed at Rescue outing). 7mm are too large to grip single strand ropes reliably.

Equipment needed by the Horsethief Outing:

- □ **Climbing Harness**. 4 gear loops. Adjustable and comfortable to walk and hang in, you will be spending a lot of time in it.
- □ **Personal Anchor.** Prefabricated and dynamic, or a dedicated double length nylon sling.
- □ **Belay Devices.** ATC with "guide mode", and a Grigri assisted braking device. Or equivalents.
- □ **Carabiners.** At least 4 locking (one large and HMS rated with the Ⓗ symbol) and 4 non-locking.
- □ **Pulley.** The Micro Traxion is highly recommended.
- □ **Slings.** At least 2, can be either single or double length.
- □ **Cordelette.** 16-20ft long of 6-7mm cord tied in a giant loop.
- □ **Climbing Water Bottle.** Clipped to your harness to be accessible all day. Or CamelBak.

Equipment needed by the Snow Outing:

- □ **Bivy Sack**. Lighter than a tent and fits on small ledges.
- □ **Sleeping Bag**. Should be small and lightweight. Around 35 deg for summer, 20 deg for spring.
- □ **Sleeping Pad**. Lightweight and insulating.
- □ **Ice Axe**. Lightweight general purpose glacier axe, with a steel pick.
- □ **Waterproof Gloves.** The Showa 282-02 Gloves are recommended.
- □ **Compass.** With declination dial.

Equipment needed by Rescue Outing:

- □ **Rock Shoes**. Make sure they are comfortable and don't get them too tight. You will be climbing in them all day; will do lots of walking in them; and may want to wear socks with them on cold days or on Alpine Climbs.

Equipment needed by Smith Rock Outing (do not buy until after the rescue outing):

- □ **Rope**. 60-70 meters, UIAA approved as a single rope, less than 4 years old, and in good condition. Diameter of 9.0-9.6mm is preferred.
- □ **Nuts.** At least a set of 10. BD stopper sizes 4 thru 13 is a good size range.
- □ **Cams.** At least a set of 6. BD cam sizes .3 thru 2 is a good start (finger to hand size). BD Camalot C4, Z4, and Ultralight are all good and popular; but can be any certified brand.
- □ **Alpine draws.** At least a set of 10. 6 double length, 4 single length.
- □ **Nut Tool.**
- □ **Crack Gloves.** Prefabricated, or tape gloves.
- □ **Approach Shoes.** Optional, but recommended.

KEY INFO FOR ALL ACC PARTICIPANTS

Danger and Risk in Climbing

by Ken Johnson, Founder of the BOEALPS ACC

Climbing, by its very nature, can be a risky and dangerous sport. The terrain that we climb on is constantly changing due to erosion, and is often in places where a slip will lead to a long fall if protection is not used. While there are ways to protect ourselves from the consequences of accidents and mistakes, there is no way that the risk of bodily injury or even death can be completely eliminated.

There are generally two types of danger encountered while climbing: objective and subjective. Objective danger is danger that exists independent of the climbers, such as avalanches, rock fall, loose holds, storms, lightning, etc. We can protect against these only by avoidance and preparation. Common sense, good route finding, knowledge of snow and weather conditions, and experience can provide a climber with the tools needed to make a rational judgment about the objective dangers of a given route. This judgment needs to be used to choose alternate routes, to turn back if conditions warrant, or to minimize the danger if the route is to be climbed. But even the most experienced climber cannot predict exactly when and where objective hazards will present themselves. In this light, we will be protecting ourselves by wearing helmets and practicing good belay techniques whenever possible and practical.

Subjective hazards are those presented by the climber. These include improperly placed anchors, inattention while belaying, poor climbing technique, inexperience, mental, emotional and physical fatigue, abrasive attitudes, and poor judgment. These are much harder to protect against since the climber tends to get into trouble while doing what he or she thinks is best. Experience is the best prevention, but even experience can lead to overconfidence which will contribute to poor judgment. Good protection technique, double checking anchors, and keeping a close eye on your companions will help, but again it is impossible to completely eliminate the risk.

Climbers must be aware of the combination of objective and subjective dangers. A case in point would be the climber on Denali who lets ambition drive him to climb too high too fast and is then caught in a storm. The climber gets pulmonary edema due to his rapid ascent and dies because he cannot retreat through the storm. Closer to home, consider a group of climbers who get off route on a climb and get into a loose gully that regularly sees rockfall activity. While climbing the gully one climber knocks some rock down on his partner, breaking his leg. Or the group is caught in a sudden thunderstorm and neglects to double check their rappel anchors on the descent. You get the picture.

On the other hand, sometimes it is necessary to take risks. Such a case is climbing an avalanche chute to approach a climb. This should be done early enough to ensure that the route will be completed and descended before the slopes warm up enough to begin avalanche activity. Or in crossing a moat between snow and rock. These can be very hard to protect and are usually hard to climb, but they must be dealt with in to order to start the route. Again, judgment and good technique will go a long way towards limiting the risk.

Be aware of risks and hazards while climbing. Do not dwell on them excessively, but do consider your actions and their possible consequences. Being alert to the possibilities gives you a chance to cut down the risk. Be alert for a series of little things going wrong – they can quickly snowball into a major problem.

For the BOEALPS Alpine Climbing Class <u>you</u> will personally assume all risks! Instructors are not guardians of your safety, rather they are partners in a team including <u>you</u> that will work together to minimize and mitigate hazards. Everyone, students and instructors, staying “on point” – situationally aware and constantly observing, evaluating, sharing, and discussing the array of risks and hazards while climbing; plus proactively and intentionally making decisions to avoid, mitigate, or assume those risks – is the best approach to reduce (but not eliminate) the odds of an adverse outcome.

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BOEALPS Alpine Climbing Class Rules

1. All students and instructors must have signed the 'BOEALPS Release of Liability' for the current year. The 'BOEALPS Release of Liability' acknowledgement of understanding, agreement to, and signatures are collected and documented within the student and instructor application forms.
2. Only currently registered students and instructors of the class may participate in class sessions and outings. Friends, relatives, climbing buddies, and pets cannot participate.
   - On car camping outings, friends & family are welcome to join us in the camping area after the class is done for the day.
3. Students and instructors must be prepared physically and mentally, in good health, and be ready and capable to perform during all outings. They must have studied/researched the climb, route, plan, and outing details in advance. Do your homework!
4. Alcohol, illegal drugs, and recreational drugs are not allowed during class sessions and outings. All students and instructors must be clear headed, free from the influence of intoxicants or mind altering substances (including free from hangovers or other lingering effect), and rested enough to think clearly and perform physically during all class sessions and outings for their full duration.
   - On car camping outings, students and instructors may consume alcohol in moderation at the camping area after the class has been officially dismissed for the day by the head instructor(s).
5. Proper equipment and clothing are required for students and instructors to participate in outings. All life safety critical equipment is required to be UIAA certified; including all helmets, ropes, harnesses, carabiners, and other technical climbing gear. Helmets must be worn by students and instructors during all climbing activities and in all overhead hazard areas.
6. To participate in a weekend outing, students and instructors need to be on time and present when the class leaves the parking area or trailhead.
7. To participate in any of the Alpine Outings, students must first complete all of the following outings, or get equivalent experience with an ACC instructor:
   - Rock fundamentals (Horsethief Outing)
   - Rescue fundamentals (Leavenworth Outing)
   - Snow fundamentals (Snow Outing)
   - Multi-pitch climbing (Smith Rock / Squamish Outing)
8. Students and instructors should plan on each weekend outing lasting from Friday afternoon until late Sunday night. Do not make any other plans for Sunday evening following outings. Teams are not considered overdue until noon on Monday (unless otherwise specified in the teams Trip Plan).
9. There will be a designated "call in" instructor for each outing, which all teams must call when they return from their outing; and who will be responsible to contact and coordinate with rescue services and authorities (Mountain Rescue, County Sheriff, Nation Park, etc) as necessary.
   - Students and instructors shall provide the "call in" instructor's phone number to family and friends to contact if they are concerned. They must also inform their family and friends not to contact rescue services separately, as it can delay or hinder the effective execution of a rescue (through duplicate, confusing, conflicting, or incomplete information; or from contacting the incorrect authorities or jurisdiction).
10. If a participant experiences a significant impact to the head, neck, and/or back, regardless of the presence or appearance of injury, the activity shall be suspended and all available effort shall be directed towards safe "evacuation" of the participant. Upon safe evacuation, the participant shall be advised to seek medical attention.
11. Class outings shall be conducted in full compliance with the regulations of all protected wilderness areas, national parks, state parks, or national forest areas visited; and shall be conducted in accordance with "Leave No Trace" principles and guidelines.
12. Harassment in any form (sexual, racial, physical, verbal, or any other) will not be tolerated and will result in immediate dismissal from the class.

Anyone violating the rules or acting in a manner that may endanger themselves or others is subject to immediate dismissal from the class as deemed necessary by the head instructor(s)!

Alpine Climb Guidelines

Safety is your #1 goal.

1. **Be Conservative.** Especially when selecting climbs for the team or changing the original plan for the weekend.
   - Don't fall in the Alpine. Climb well under your grade limit.

2. **Create a Trip Plan.** If you change plans before departure, notify both the outing coordinator and the head instructor(s).

3. **Understand your team members capabilities.** In terms of climbing ability, fitness level, and experience. If you need more info, just ask the head instructor(s) or outing coordinator.

4. **Keep the party together.** A team member should never be left behind to catch up – not on the approach, climb, descent, or hike out.
   - Always in Communication. Rope teams stay within ear shot, or use radios.

5. **Stay on point.** Alert and constantly observing, evaluating, sharing, and discussing risks/hazards, conditions, and situations encountered for the duration of the outing (including the approach, climb, descent, hike out, and the drive to and back home after the outing).
   - Stay on route. Know route beta and be attentive to small route clues (lichen).

6. **Don't let good judgement be overruled.** Don't let desire or someone's personal goals skew team decision making when it impacts safety. When consensus cannot be reached within the team, choose the more conservative option.

7. **Feel free to abort a climb.** if you are not able to control any situation that affects the safety of the party. Those situations might include weather, route conditions, fitness of a party member, or even personality conflicts on the team.
   - Summiting in optional, returning safely is required.

Outing Debrief Questions

For Alpine Outings and within Climbing Teams on Crag Outings; once back at the trailhead, both students and instructors share:

1. **One thing you would do differently.**
2. **One thing you learned.**
3. **When you were or felt least safe.**
4. **Your favorite part of the outing.**

Group outings use a subset of the above questions for a full group debrief.

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KEY INFO FOR INSTRUCTORS

Instructional Guidelines

Key teaching tips for instructors!

1. **A positive attitude prevails.** Keep the tone and interaction positive, constructive, and supportive; and reserve being firm and direct only for safety critical corrections.
2. **Adapt/adjust your teaching style** to best fit your current students learning style. Some students learn best by watching a demonstration, others by trying it themselves, some like getting corrections right when a misstep occurs, others need to time to try and work through it themselves, some thrive on being challenged, and others need to take it step by step. The right approach is the one that works best for that student, and no one approach works best for all students.
   - For some the following sequence works well: instructor demonstration, student attempt with pointers along the way, then a 2nd student attempt without feedback until the end.
   - For some leading or open ended questions that prompt them to reassess work well, like: "pause and take look closer" or "now that you completed X, then next step is?"
   - The best approach is to simply ask the student directly what teaching style works for them.
3. **Keep the focus on their learning, not on highlighting your skills and expertise**. Avoid the temptation to show how much you know, or expand the discussion into more advanced skills or solutions for corner conditions.
4. **Openly share if you don't know something**. It is always OK to ask another instructor, and doing so role models for the student that it is OK not to be an expert in everything. Trying to project a façade of knowing everything can often create real and serious safety risks.
5. **Be patient.** Things that seem simple/obvious to you, often are not so simple to a new climber.
   - Don't grab gear from students to demonstrate when they get stuck. Point and gesture, or use your own gear instead.
6. **Be clear about the goals and the schedule** for the day/weekend. If one of the goals is efficient and effective use of time, tell the student that explicitly ahead of time.
7. Memory is enhanced by understanding the purpose of a skill, not just how to do it. Talk about when and how you might use a skill. Memory is also enhanced when new knowledge is connected to existing knowledge. Build on their past experiences and existing skills.
8. Ask questions to confirm and probe their understanding. After you answer a question, ask "Did that answer your question?"
9. Build on strengths. Point out things they are doing well first, and then things the can improve on. Limit things to learn to minimum necessary, until they are mastered. Be direct about both positives and negatives, without being harsh.
10. Maintain trust between the student and you as the instructor. This is a very valuable relationship and needs to be based in honesty and openness to questions.
11. **Praise in public! Criticize in private**.

FOR EXPERIENCED INSTRUCTORS WORKING WITH A NEWER INSTRUCTOR:

- Let the newer instructor teach the parts they feel comfortable with. Only correct what is essential.
- Add your points and refinements after the other instructor is finished.

FOR NEWER INSTRUCTORS:

- Have trust in yourself and don't worry that you don't know everything. Everyone has different strengths and weaknesses in their knowledge of climbing – and your input is valuable.
- Set yourself up for success by: reading 'Freedom of the Hills' to review skills, asking others to review skills with you, and by doing your own research on the route before an Alpine Climb.