



Boeing Employees Alpine Society

Basic Rock Class (BRC)

The BOEALPS Basic Rock Class (BRC) is for individuals who have completed the BOEALPS Basic Climbing Class (BCC), a basic mountaineering course, or show adequate mountaineering experience. Perspective students are looking to learn or increase their rock climbing skills, prepare for the Intermediate Climbing Class (ICC), and/or instruct the BCC.

Course Objectives:

- ✓ Teach the students how to follow on moderate rock climbing routes that are bolted and/or naturally protected (trad).
- ✓ Teach the students the skills needed to begin the ICC that are not covered in the BCC
- ✓ Educate students with the necessary skills to create anchors and set topropes
- ✓ Expose students to multi-pitch climbing in the alpine environment
- ✓ Encourage students to become more independent trip planners

The course consists of 4 evening seminars (lectures) with 4 corresponding weekend outings. One optional skills outing will also be available for students to increase their rock climbing skills.

The class provides a very low student to instructor ratio (ranging from 3:1 to 1:1). This provides for more latitude when planning climbs, gives students a greater degree of participation, and will enable students to climb more difficult routes.

The best way to learn to climb is to climb, and climb hard! This course can be very worthwhile and memorable experience for those who have the desire and willingness to put forth the kind of energy needed to push mental and physical limits, and to expand personal horizons. Ultimately, what each student gets out of the class is a result of their effort, commitment, and attitude towards the class.

What to Expect

This class is organized and administered by volunteers who love to share their joy of mountaineering with others. We strive to do our best, but we are learning too. We are not professional instructors, so please be patient and don't hesitate to ask questions.

Students must spend time preparing for outings, and doing research on the goals for each weekend. Evening class sessions begin with a discussion of the previous outing, followed by an informal presentation followed by time for questions and answers. These discussions allow many different viewpoints to be heard and help students to gain a more personal insight into the topic being covered.



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Our instruction focuses on you as an individual and your personal abilities and goals. Students will be assigned climbs, partners, and instructors for all except the graduation climb with a focus on having you climb with as many different students and instructors as possible. While couples or climbing partners may take this class together, please be aware that close personal relationships infuse complexities into the learning environment that, as volunteers, we don't necessarily have the awareness of or skills to deal with them. For those reasons, we generally don't assign couples to climb together during skill outings or on the alpine outings.

Class Meetings

Class sessions last from 6:30 to 9:00 PM on the Monday night before an outing. They start with a discussion of the previous outing. Next, a seminar topic will be presented by one or more instructors and/or guests, and the topic is discussed in depth. Finally, there is time for making plans for upcoming climbs, carpools formed, and routes discussed. Students are expected to have done some research and have read class handouts concerning the topic prior to the class so that meaningful discussions can take place during the session.

Weekend Outings

Students should help plan weekend outings lasting from Friday night until late Sunday night. This will not always be the case, but it should be planned for. When on an outing it is always all participants' responsibility to state when they believe it is unsafe to proceed, and to work as a team through the situation.

Upon completion of each outing, instructors will provide constructive student evaluations that will be shared with their student(s). This feedback is important as it allows students to 1) review their progression through the BRC, 2) help students learn from their experiences, 3) expand their knowledge of rock climbing, and 4) allow follow-on outings to concentrate on aspects that will enhance the students climbing skills.

Equipment

Students will be expected to provide all of the following equipment when required for the outing. Following is a list of the typical items needed for the course. Students should not buy equipment until after the initial evening class, unless they have consulted with a class administrator.



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- ✓ **Applicable BCC Gear** (See [BCC website](#))
- ✓ **Belay device w/ teeth and guide mode** (Petzl Reverso, ATC Guide, etc)
- ✓ **2 Locking Biners**
- ✓ **Rock Shoes:** Do not get these too tight. Flat, non-aggressive, comfortable for all day, non-velcro
- ✓ **Nut Tool:** The Wild Country Pro Key Nut Key is nice
- ✓ **UIAA Approved Climbing Helmet**
- ✓ **Personal Anchor:** Pre-fabricated “personal anchor” (such as Metolius PAS) or double sling which is unique in color to all other slings on the student’s harness
- ✓ **Cordelette (17’-25’):** Preferable size: 6 millimeter
 - ✓ 4 biners (1 large locking, (3) non-locking)
- ✓ **Rescue gear**
 - ✓ Small knife, (2) short prusiks, (1) pulley, (1) locking biner

This list is only approximately what will be needed for an enjoyable BRC experience. Anything less would decrease comfort and reduce safety.

Optional

- ✓ **Chalk and Chalk Bag**
- ✓ **Tape for making tape gloves**
- ✓ **Crack climbing gloves**



Prerequisites

This course is aimed at people who have all of the basic mountaineering skills and who have the desire and drive to learn how to climb. The ideal student is someone who has applied the basic principles of mountaineering by going out on their own to experience and learns beyond their basic mountaineering instruction.

Applicants must be competent in:

- ✓ Map and Compass Use
- ✓ Ice Axe Arresting
- ✓ Glacier Travel
- ✓ Belaying and Rappelling
- ✓ Standard knots (figure-8, bowline, prusik, water knot, butterfly)
- ✓ Crevasse Rescue

Applicants must be in good physical condition. It is difficult to overstate the importance of physical conditioning on a student’s overall class experience.



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We recommend that students have taken a MOFA (Mountaineering Oriented First Aid) or American Red Cross Wilderness and Remote First Aid (WRFA) class.

Class Size and Acceptance Criteria

The BRC is limited to 12 students in order to keep the student-to-instructor ratio low providing the highest quality of the course. This class size also keeps the class safe and enjoyable. The BRC advisory board will determine the acceptance criteria.

Course Attendance and Completion

To successfully complete the course, a student must show proficiency in all the skills taught, usually by conducting a graduation climb. The class is structured such that each class session and outing builds on those before it, therefore: **attending the scheduled evening sessions and weekend outings is vital.** In the case of the first three skill outings, student attendance is mandatory and non-negotiable. For all other outings, exceptions may be allowed at the discretion of the chief instructor for cases of family crisis, medical concerns, business travel, etc. In cases of exceptions, it will be the student's responsibility to schedule a make-up with a qualified instructor.

Course Fees and Refund Policy

The course fee is as follows and is due with your application:

- ✓ \$170 Members
- ✓ \$200 Non-members

Refund Amounts:

- ✓ Before Leavenworth Outing: 100%
- ✓ After Leavenworth Outing: 0% (No refund)

Course Rules

1. Only currently registered students and instructors of the BOEALPS Basic Rock Class may participate in class sessions and field trips. All participants must have signed a current BOEALPS Liability Release Form.



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Friends, relatives, climbing buddies, and pets CAN NOT participate. On car camping field trips, friends and family are welcome to join us in the camping area after climbing activities are finished for the day.

2. Students and instructors will be prepared physically and mentally, and will have researched the plan by the designated meeting time. Do your homework!
3. Alcohol, illegal and recreational drugs are not allowed during class sessions and field trips. Do not show up or participate in any outing under the influences of mind-altering substances. On car camping outings, there will be two designated non-drinking instructors. Except for these individuals, students and instructors may consume alcohol at the camping area after climbing activity is complete.
4. Proper clothing and equipment are required for students to participate in outings.
5. To participate in a scheduled field trip, students need to be on time and present when the class leaves the parking area.
6. Students should plan on each weekend outing lasting from Friday afternoon until late Sunday night. Students should not make evening plans following field trips. Parties are not overdue until noon Monday. In the event a party is overdue, students must inform their families and friends not to call Mountain Rescue, the County Sheriff, the National Park, Boeing or Instructors. There will be a designated "call in" instructor, which all parties need to call when they return from their outing. Be sure to give family the "call in" instructor's number to contact if concerned.
7. Harassment in any form (sexual, ethnical, or other) will not be tolerated and will result in immediate dismissal from the course.
8. Anyone violating the foregoing or acting in a manner that may endanger themselves or others is subject to immediate dismissal from the course.
9. Students MUST adequately complete the skills field trip, or get equivalent experience with an BRC instructor.
10. Everybody participating in the BOEALPS Basic Rock Course must wear a climbing helmet during outings approved by the International Union of Alpine Associates (UIAA).





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Instructional Guidelines

Most of us are not professional teachers, but have a strong knowledge base and a willingness to volunteer time and energy to pass that knowledge on to others.

Here are a few tips from the teaching perspective to keep in mind.

1. Be patient. Things that look simple to you, an experienced climber, aren't so simple to a new climber.
2. 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 them ahead of time.
3. Understanding the purpose of a skill, not just how to do it, enhances memory. Don't just show how to make a butterfly knot, talk about when and how you might use it.
4. Memory is also enhanced when new knowledge is connected to old, personal knowledge. Ask if they know any knots, when they used them, problems they had. Build on their past.
5. The goal is NOT your teaching – it is their learning. Ask questions to confirm and probe understanding. Listen. After you answer a question, ask “Did this answer your question?”
6. Build on strengths. Point out things they are doing well, limit things to learn to about two overall things. Be direct about the positives and negatives.
7. Maintain trust between the students and you as the instructor. This is a very valuable relationship and needs to be based in honesty and openness to questions. Admit if you don't know. It role models that it is okay not to be an expert in everything.
8. Demonstrate, and then let them do it. Allow them to do the whole procedure through before critiquing. Don't interrupt unless safety is an issue. They can often correct their own mistakes - which makes for better learning. Don't grab the gear from them to demonstrate. Remember #1 – be patient!
9. Praise in public. Criticize in private.
10. Avoid the word “But”. It's amazing how it can create unnecessary control issues. Try “and”. There is an amazing power to yes.
11. FOR EXPERIENCED INSTRUCTORS WORKING WITH A NEWER INSTRUCTOR:
 - a. Let the newer instructor teach the parts they feel comfortable with. Only correct what is essential.
 - b. Add your points after the other instructor is finished.
12. FOR NEWER INSTRUCTORS:
 - a. Have trust in yourself. Don't worry if you don't know everything. Not so many of us are equally skilled in all aspects of climbing – you still have valuable experience and support to offer.
 - b. Set yourself up for success by:



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- i. Reading Freedom of the Hills to review skills
- ii. Ask others to review skills or goals with you beforehand
- iii. Be sure you have done the research on a climb before an Alpine climb

