

INSTRUCTOR HANDOUT

RAPPEL WEEKEND

Guidelines:

- No instructor/assistant soloing.
- There is a first-aid kit and stretcher available in the weekend leader car near the cliff.
- Instructors and students should be anchored on top of the cliff whenever near the edge.
- Students should always be belayed when rappelling. They may be anchored by standing/sitting in a loop in the rope or by clipping into a locking biner. The biner need not be clipped in behind them, but may be in front, next to their belay device
- Be supportive, this can be frightening for beginners.
- Explain the concept of a long descent using one and two ropes. Mention snarls and hang-ups.
- Explain the choices for getting friction - belay device, figure 8, munter, body,
- Explain the choices for backup; none; prussik above device; auto-block below device; belay. Discuss that the backup above the device occasionally gets stuck and that on a long free rappel the ropes can get stuck after twisting.
- Explain fixed rappel anchors and how rappelling off trees eventually kills them.
- Explain safety knots in the ends of the rope, pros and cons.
- Explain "smooth" rappels, protecting the anchors and the ropes.
- Explain how to build a carabiner brake so that they do not need to fumble with loose biners during a multiple rappel.
- Explain hazards such as: falling over backwards (top heavy body types may need chest harness); catching clothes or hair in a belay device; falling rock; stuck ropes; which end of the rope to pull.

Every Student Should:

- Build rappel/belay anchor that is SRENE (Solid, Redundant, Equalized, No Extension).
- Practice joining two ropes together with a knot and throw the ropes.
- Rappel with a belay device.
- Rappel with a carabiner brake.
- Rappel with an auto-block. An auto-block is just 4 or 5 wraps with a sling around the rope below the belay device, connected to the leg loop. It holds the rope like a brake hand.
- Stop midway through the rappel using a leg wrap and an auto-block

Required Station:

- Free Rappel. See separate handout for details.

Extra Credit:

- Body Rappel.
- Munter Hitch Rappel and belay.
- Rappel using slings and belay device rather than a harness and belay device.

Equipment:

- One gear bag per instructor
- Harness(1/person)
- Shoes (optional, 1 pair/student)