



Narragansett Chapter Intermediate Rock Climbing Course

Welcome

Welcome to the AMC's Narragansett Chapter Mountaineering Committee's Beginner rock climbing course. The AMC has had a very active climbing community dating back to the 1930's as documented in a 1935 *Appalachia* article entitled *Rhode Island, the Rock Climbers' Paradise*. Some may argue about the "climber's paradise" but there is a large number of climbers in this little state. There are 175 climbers who subscribe to the ClimbRI email group (www.climbri.com). The rock climbing classes have been offered every year for over 25 years turning out hundreds of climbers.

Who We Are

Everyone involved in teaching these classes is an unpaid volunteer attempting to give back to the larger climbing community. Without them we could not offer these classes. All of the instructors have gone through these classes at some time and have many years of experience. Many recent graduates of the course return to help out as assistant instructors.

Course Costs

AMC Member \$60, Non-member \$100. Student Discount--AMC Member \$40, Non-Member \$80.

(NOTE: It is a better deal if you join the AMC. An individual AMC Membership is \$50, a family membership is \$75, and under 30 membership cost \$25. There are many savings that an AMC membership gives you: 20% off at EMS two times a year and discounts on lodging at AMC facilities and activities, priority if we have to limit participants on a trip, etc. The \$50 membership with the \$60 class fee equals \$110; only ten bucks more than if you take the classes as a non-member so essentially you are getting AMC membership for ten bucks. If you have a couple of family members it is even a better deal and you are getting AMC membership for less than the class cost a non-member. For AMC membership information go to the Narragansett Chapter web site.

(http://www.amcnarragansett.org/our_chapter/join/join_amc.shtml)

We do not make a profit on these courses. Most of the money goes toward buying equipment such as the new ropes we buy every year.

Please send in a check for the class fee so we don't have to take time to bother with finances at the first class. You should send them made out to: Joe Vaglio, 2 Fink Road, Milbury, MA 01527.

Feedback

We hope you enjoy the classes. If you have any suggestions or comments to improve the instruction please let us know.

Course Overview

The goal of the Intermediate course is to produce "seconds" who can safely belay and follow an experienced leader on a traditional-style multi-pitch climb. Graduates of the course are invited on the AMC climbing trips scheduled each month where they are matched with experienced climbers. Instruction will include learning how to tie and use various climbing knots, belaying, rappelling, ascending, seconding and learning the basics of placing protection.

Rock climbing involves certain inherent risks. These are minimized where possible, but climbing requires vigilance from all class participants. Each participant is responsible for his/her own safety and for the safety of those around them. Understand the risks involved. Course participants are required to sign an AMC waiver acknowledging these risks.

Minimum that all Beginner students must know to participate in the Intermediate Course:

- How to SAFELY belay
- How to communicate: climber/belayer commands and pre-climb checklist
- How to tie basic knots: (see below)
- How to set up a top-rope anchor using fixed anchors (trees, bolts, rocks)

Class Times

Classes run from 9:00AM until about 5:00 PM. All of the climbing locations are far into Connecticut so it is imperative that we LEAVE the car pool locations at 7:30 AM sharp so arrive in plenty of time to check in and arrange car-pooling and gear. Car pool locations are located at: <http://www.climbri.com/AMC/DirectionsClasses.htm>

Weather

We teach rain or shine. We expect you to show up for the day you signed up for. In some cases of torrential downpour we may ask students if they want to switch to the next day (Sunday) and if we get a consensus we may switch.

Course Material

There are course hand-outs located on the web at:

<http://www.climbri.com/AMC/Instruction/AMC-Class-Handouts.htm>

Please study these materials online or print them out yourselves. Get a small length of rope and practice the knots until they are wired in your brain.

AMC Gear

Ropes and helmets are provided by the AMC.

Personal Gear

It is required that you have a harness, rock shoes, belay device, three locking carabiners, a nut tool, one 2 ft and one 4 ft nylon sewn slings, and two prusiks. (See the Recommended Gear for specifics.

(http://www.climbri.com/AMC/NarragansettChapter_files/GearRecommendations.htm)

It is early spring, so the weather can change dramatically. Dress appropriately for the conditions. Everyone should bring a rain jacket, rain or wind pants, hat, gloves, a couple quarts of water, lunch, and snacks, all contained in a small pack.

Program Rules

Listen to what your instructors say. If you are confused or not sure of something, speak up! Check the gear and the knots of your climbing partner, and make sure she or he checks yours. Never approach the edge of a cliff unless you are tied in.

Course Specifics and Locations

1st class Rattlesnake Mountain, CT—Basic Self-Rescue

- Belay Escape

- Passing the Knot

- Ascending the Rope

- Students second leaders on single-pitch climb

- Knots: Euro Death Knot, Double Fisherman's, Auto-block, Munter,

2nd class Ragged Mountain, CT – Seconding

- Students second leaders on multi-pitch route

General Information

Knots

Intermediate climbers need to know how to tie some basic types of knots/hitches before embarking on this class. These include:

- Retied Figure-Eight

- Figure-Eight on a Bight

- Fisherman's (for tie-in backup)

- Double Fisherman's

- Water Knot (AKA tape knot)

Additional knots used in the Intermediate class include:

Prusik
Bachman
Mule Knot
Munter Hitch
Mariners Hitch
Clove Hitch

Belaying

Most important thing in climbing! Students coming into the Intermediate class should have belaying down pat. Belaying from above will be taught in the Intermediate class.

Climber's Checklist

- ✓ Have all Harnesses and Helmets and Shoes are properly buckled –double backed and fitting properly.
- ✓ Check that hair is tied up, jewelry removed e.g. rings and clothing tucked in.
- ✓ Tie proper figure-eight knot (making sure that knots have a 4"tail) knots need to be neatly dressed with back-up knots fitting snugly to top of figure-eight knot.
- ✓ Check that knots are tied through appropriate loops on Harness.
- ✓ Double check that buckles are doubled back.
- ✓ Belay carabineer is LOCKED. Belay Device is Attached Correctly to Anchor or Harness- Belay Loop.

Climbing Commands

On belay...belay on....off belay...belay off...climbing...climb
on...take...slack...lower... Say each others name when using commands. Helps reduce miscommunications. *Speak clearly and wait for response.* Climber begins this conversation. Belayer always has the last word. Yell "ROCK" really loudly if you should dislodge a rock. People at bottom get close to cliff to avoid rock and don't look up.

Recommended Books

Mountaineering: The Freedom of the Hills. Petzl catalog (free at climbing shops). *Yankee Rock and Ice: A History of Climbing in the Northeastern United States* by Laura Waterman, Guy Waterman and S. Peter Lewis.

Where Do you Go from Here?

AMC Trips

Graduates of the Intermediate class are invited to go on AMC rock climbing trips that are held every month June through October.

Weekend Climbing

Just about every weekend during the climbing season climbers meet locally to climb. These are not AMC sponsored events but ad hoc meetings organized through the ClimbRI email group. (www.climbri.com).