



On Behalf of the Olympia Mountaineers, welcome to Olympia Intermediate Alpine Climbing Course. You have signed up for what promises to be a unique, challenging, and fun opportunity to increase your climbing skills, challenge your abilities, and find new people to climb with and new peaks to climb.

This is your course. Which means that in addition to being student participants, you will be contributing to the success of the program and each of its modules. You will be assisting in coordinating lectures and field trips. You will begin organizing climbs and activities. You will serve as a primary resource for Basic Alpine Climbing Students as they progress in skills and abilities. That means the success of this program is in your hands. You stand to get a lot out of it, but only if you are willing to put into it your time, energy and commitment.

It is not an easy course. The skills are challenging, the climbs are tougher than at the basic level, and the margin of error is nonexistent. You will be tested more arduously than in the Basic Course, and be expected to be not only a competent party member, but also a leader. It is not uncommon for students to repeat modules in order to get more time on technical terrain before venturing out into the alpine on intermediate climbs. The mental challenges are significant, but, as in the Basic Course, you will have enthusiastic volunteers, and a dedicated mentor, to help you throughout the course.

There are also considerable physical challenges. Strength and endurance become more important than in the Basic Course, as Intermediate climbs are often longer, harder, and far more demanding than those at the Basic level. We will offer advice, suggestions, and a supportive atmosphere, but your conditioning is in your hands. Any leader who feels you are not physically up to any climb can choose not to take you.

This course is designed differently than those that come before it. It is set up in modules, which you may take as you are ready. Some of the modules and requirements are courses offered to all branch members (such as leadership, and sometimes first aid), others are specific to this course (the “modules”), some may require additional independent training (such as avalanche training, or “AIARE”). As you complete modules, let us know how they went, so we can continue to evaluate the course. This feedback can bring helpful change, and your ideas count in this course.

See you in the mountains!

The Olympia Intermediate Alpine Climbing Committee

Olympia Mountaineers – Intermediate Alpine Climbing Committee

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Olympia Mountaineers – Intermediate Alpine Climbing Course

Eligibility for Students

In order to register for the Intermediate Alpine Climbing Course, prospective students must:

- ❑ Be at least 16 years of age when registering for the course.
- ❑ Be a Basic Alpine Climbing Course Graduate or completed ALL parts of equivalency (including WFA/WFR/MOFA, Navigations, etc.).
- ❑ Have a signed release and indemnity waiver on file with the club.
- ❑ Maintain membership in the Mountaineers during the ENTIRE course.

Graduating the Course

Students will have FIVE years to complete the course, unless other arrangements are made with the Intermediate committee.

After completing all requirements on the 'Course Requirements' document, students must submit that document, along with their 'climbs log' to the Intermediate Committee.

The Committee, after reviewing the documentation, may then approve the student for graduation. The Committee may also, at its discretion, add additional requirements for a student to graduate, in order to ensure competence in both skills and judgment.

Intermediate Qualifier
Time and Place TBD
(See course posting online)

You will need to bring all the necessary equipment to complete all 9 stations. You will need to be prepared to perform all required skills with confidence and ease, and also to teach them to climbing novices.

You will be breaking into groups of 2-4 students, with 1-2 evaluators. You will, as a group, complete each of the nine stations.

We will be using the Skills Review Score Sheet on the next page to evaluate your progress.

If there are any issues with your technical skills or general competency at the field trip, the Intermediate Committee will review instructor notes and score sheets and determine whether or not you may proceed with the course. Only competent students who have demonstrated a firm grasp on the skills taught in Basic Alpine Climbing will be passed.

Intermediate Alpine Climbing Course

Intermediate Qualifier – Score Sheet

Name _____

Station 1 – Navigation (possible score 10):

Outdoor Problems (5) _____

Indoor Problems (5) _____

Station 2 – Crevasse Rescue (possible score 5):

Z-Pulley Set-up (5) _____

Station 3 – Belays (possible score 20):

Anchor Set-up/Tie-in (2) _____

Sitting Hip Belay (4) _____

Leader Tie-Off _____

& Escaping the Belay (4) _____

Belay Signals (2) _____

Münter Hitch (4) _____

Belay Device (4) _____

Station 4 – Rappels (possible score 15):

Set-up for Device (5) _____

Stopping/Control (5) _____

Technique (5) _____

Station 5 – Knots (possible score 20):

Single Bowline (2) _____

Mule Knot (3) _____

Figure 8 rewoven (1) _____

Double Fisherman (1) _____

Water Knot (1) _____

Bachmann (2) _____

Alpine Butterfly (1) _____

Münter Hitch (2) _____

Figure 8 on a bight (1) _____

Prusik (1) _____

Clove Hitch (1) _____

Girth Hitch (1) _____

Rope Coiling/mgmt. (3) _____

Station 6 – Rock Techniques (possible score 5):

Face Climbing (1) _____

Jamming (1) _____

Chimney (1) _____

Friction Climbing (1) _____

Layback Climbing (1) _____

Station 7 – Snow Belays (possible score 10):

Deadman Anchors (2) _____

Bollards (2) _____

Carabiner/Ice Axe (3) _____

Pickets/Flukes (3) _____

Station 8 – Snow Techniques (possible score 10):

Self-Arrest:

Feet First Front (2) _____

Feet First Back (2) _____

Head First Front (2) _____

Head First Back (2) _____

Moving on Snow (1) _____

Ice Axe Use (1) _____

Station 9 – Ten Essentials (possible score 5):

Map and Compass (1) _____

Extra Food/Clothing (1) _____

Matches/Firestarter (1) _____

Headlamp/Sunglass (1) _____

Pocket Knife/First Aid (1) _____

Total Possible Score: 100 points

Student score: _____ points (80 required to pass, plus proficiency in EACH station)

Station #1 – Navigation

Part 1 - Indoor Problems

Each student gets a page with a map, and a page of questions. All bearings are in TRUE north. Questions involve route finding, map reading, triangulation for location, and bearing and distance estimates.

Part 2 - Outdoor Problems

Each student will get a sheet with several bearings to be taken off visible landmarks on the horizon. All answers should be in TRUE north, and should be accurate to within 10 degrees.

Evaluation –

In order to ‘pass’ this section, a student must show a fundamental grasp of HOW to read a map, how to USE a compass, and how the two work together. Evaluator should be confident that the student could answer the following 3 questions:

1. Could they show you where they’ve been?
2. Could they determine where they are?
3. Could they plot out and get where they are going?

Estimated time: 40 minutes

Station #2 – Crevasse Rescue

EXACTLY taken from the Z-Pulley practice in the basic course Each student should effectively simulate setting up a Z-Pulley system for crevasse rescue, as per (instructions are), and should explain what they are doing as they do it. In this way, each student will show knowledge of the system and how to set it up.

As a guideline for evaluation, each student should grasp both the concepts and details of a rescue system well enough to be able to, working with a team, rescue a fallen climber. No one can do this process alone, and therefore we must evaluate the ability to work in a team as part of this station.

Estimated Time: 15 minutes

Station #3 – Belays

This station is divided into 2 parts, the first focusing on sitting hip belay, munter hitch belay, and anchor set-ups, and the second focusing on belay devices and holding a weighted drop.

Students perform this entire station as partners, with one partner serving as belayer, the other a climber.

Station #3 – Belays Cont.

Part 1

Students begin the first part by setting up the anchor and tying in for belay, explaining what they are doing as they do it. They then demonstrate proper signals and technique of the sitting hip belay. If they are completely at ease and competent, move on to the Munter Hitch. If they are at all unsure or sketchy, make them perform the sitting hip with the other hand.

Next, have them change over and perform the Munter hitch belay again, if they are confident, send them off to the drops area. If not, have them switch hands.

Part 2

Finally, the students move to the drops area, where they will use BELAY DEVICES. They must successfully hold a falling climber with each hand using a belay device and demonstrate the Leader Tie Off & escaping the belay using the Mule knot(s) and they COULD explain that the leg wrap is another method of securing the brake rope. Failure to do this DOES NOT earn a second and third chance... there is simply not enough time for remedial training on this field trip. They know it, or they don’t.

Estimated Time: 60 minutes

Station #4 – Rappels

As each student goes through this station, they need to be explaining how and what they do at each step. Students will rappel with a device. Halfway through the rappel, the student should stop, and explain to the evaluator how to stop, maintain control, and how the body should be positioned during the rappel. Each student should discuss and demonstrate the use of a safety backup for each rappel (belay, prusik, and/or fireman backup).

Estimated Time: 60 minutes

Intermediate Alpine Climbing Course

Intermediate Qualifier “Guidelines for Instructors”

Station #5 – Knots

Students should tie each knot on the listing, without hesitation or problem. As the student finishes each knot, they should explain important points in tying it and its appropriate uses.

Estimated time: 30 minutes

Station #6 – Rock Techniques

Students should discuss efficient, effective, & balanced rock climbing, including:

- ☐ Balanced climbing
- ☐ Static climbing – 3 points of contact
- ☐ Testing holds
- ☐ Face climbing
- ☐ Jamming/Crack Climbing
- ☐ Chimney/stemming
- ☐ Friction climbing
- ☐ Laybacks
- ☐ Use of rock shoes vs. boots

Estimated time: 10 minutes

Station #7 – Snow Belays

Here the student should briefly describe and demonstrate, as if teaching the skill, the various snow belays, beginning with a discussion of anchors.

Anchors – they should discuss the need for multiple anchors on snow, the importance of backing up anchors, and the need for dynamic stops. They should explain the use of pickets and ice axes as both ‘Deadman’ anchors and simply driven in spike first. They should explain how to create a bollard, as well as how to place a fluke (OPTIONAL). They should also know and discuss the need to equalize multiple anchors.

Standing Ice Axe Carabiner belay – they should explain how to set this belay up and when to use it. Use your downhill foot to secure the runner or sling. The climber’s rope should: Run up your downhill leg (the one on the runner), pass into the control carabiner attached to your belay loop, wrap around your waist for added friction and control. Primarily this is used when setting up a standard belay is inconvenient, when you are belaying multiple climbers across a short section.

Estimated Time: 20 minutes

Station #8 – Snow Techniques

Here the student should briefly explain to the instructor the techniques of snow travel, starting with SELF ARREST.

They should begin with the standard arrest position, with feet downhill and body facing in, discussing the importance of driving in the pick of the axe, maintaining control of the axe, and using the feet as 2 additional points of friction. They should comment, however, that the feet are NOT used when crampons are being used. The climber has 3 points of contact with the snow, the toes of each foot, and the ice axe.

Next, they should explain how to arrest with feet down, but on your back, by rolling over and driving the pick into the snow. Which direction should they roll, over the spike or over the head of the axe? This is always a great discussion point at basic field trips, and the answer is... it depends. If there are rocks or cliffs or other objective hazards, you may HAVE to roll in one direction or the other, regardless of the position of the axe, so you should practice rolling both directions.

When falling head-first-face-in, the student should explain the importance of driving in the pick, and not the feet, utilizing the axe as a pivot point and allowing the body to pivot around the axe into standard arrest position.

When falling head-first-face-out, the student should explain the process of sitting up, reaching out, and driving the pick in above and to one side of the legs, again creating a pivot point that draws the body into standard arrest position.

Students should also be able to briefly discuss moving on snow, including the ideas of: self-belay, rest step, kick step, traversing, when to use crampons, plunge step, and proper technique and methods of glissading.

Finally, students should show the various uses of ice axes, as an anchor, a tool for arrest, and proper methods of carrying and stowing the axe.

Estimated time: 15 minutes

Intermediate Alpine Climbing Course
Intermediate Qualifier “Guidelines for Instructors”

Station #9 – Ten Essentials

For this station, the student must present the ten essentials, and understand the uses and importance of each. Failure to know the ten essentials will result in a loss of all points for the station.

Estimated time: 10 minutes

Intermediate Alpine Climbing Course

Intermediate Qualifier “Guidelines for Instructors”

Intermediate Qualifier – Guidelines for Grading

At each station, the student should both know the required skill AND be able to teach the required skill, as if instructing at a basic field trip. A minimum score of 80 points is required to successfully complete the field trip. In addition, proficiency at each station is required, regardless of point value. Proficiency will be determined at the discretion of the Intermediate Committee.

- ❑ **Station #1 - Navigation** – Problems will consist of taking bearings, traveling along bearings, estimating distance, map reading, and triangulation to find location.
- ❑ **Station #2 - Crevasse Rescue** – Students will need to successfully coach a team in properly setting up a Z-Pulley system, as learned in the Olympia Basic Alpine Climbing Course.
- ❑ **Station #3 - Belays** – Students must set-up and properly perform belays using each listed method, at the same time explaining the procedures as an instructor.
- ❑ **Station #4 - Rappels** – Students must set-up and properly perform rappels using each listed method, at the same time explaining the procedures as an instructor.
- ❑ **Station #5 - Knots** – Students must not only be able to tie knots. They must also be able to teach them, and recognize incorrect knots.
- ❑ **Station #6 - Rock Technique** – Students must demonstrate or explain (in the absence of rock features) each listed method, at the same time explaining the procedures as an instructor.
- ❑ **Station #7 - Snow Belays** – Students must set-up and properly perform snow belays using each listed method, at the same time explaining the procedures as an instructor.
- ❑ **Station #8 - Snow Technique** – Techniques will be described, but practice will likely be limited due to lack of snow.
- ❑ **Station #9 - Ten Essentials** – Score here is either a 5 or a 0. Failure to have any essential loses all points for the station, and shows non-proficiency in the station

Olympia Mountaineers – Intermediate Alpine Climbing Course

Policies Regarding Course Requirements

- ❑ Successful completion of the “Skills Review” or “Qualifier” field trip is a prerequisite for participation in all future intermediate activities.
- ❑ All Students must obtain or have a current Mountaineering Oriented First Aid (MOFA) card, Wilderness First Aid (WFA) card, or Wilderness First Responder card (WFR) within one year of registering for the course.
- ❑ All Students must obtain a Leadership badge, this is a prerequisite for becoming a climb leader as well. If an Olympia Branch specific course is available at the time you fulfill this requirement please take Olympia's course. Otherwise, BOTH Foundations of Leadership & Instruction (eLearning) will fulfill this requirement.
- ❑ All Students must attend any corresponding Lecture prior to participation in any Field Trip. These Lectures most often occur on a weekday evening prior to a Field Trip.
- ❑ The field trip or climb leader is the final authority during the course of any field trip or climb. Students will be accepted on activities only with the permission of the leader, regardless of qualifications or field trip experience. No one shall leave a field trip or climb without permission of the leader.
- ❑ Rock Module(s) both two-day Rock field trips must be completed in the same calendar year. "Passing" the rock module requires that participants must attend at minimum one field trip, demonstrate sufficiency with a fallen follower rescue scenario, other self-rescue skills, and pass a check climb (multi pitch climb 5.6 or higher) in the same year. Passing any module requires participation in any applicable field trips for that module and demonstration of learned skills successfully. Success will be determined by the Field Trip Leader(s), Field Trip Instructor(s), and/or the Intermediate Climbing Committee. Example, "Passing" the rock module requires that participants must attend at least one field trip, demonstrate sufficiency with a fallen follower rescue scenario, other self-rescue skills, and pass a check climb (multi pitch climb 5.6 or higher) in the same year.
- ❑ The Hard Snow field trip must be completed prior to Ice Climbing field trips.
- ❑ Both two-day Ice Climbing field trips must be completed in the same calendar year.
- ❑ No one will be considered to lead Intermediate winter overnight trips until passing the Winter Mountaineering or "Winter Overnight" module.
- ❑ Students must pass a Module to sign up for that type of climb (i.e. - Rock Modules must be passed to sign up for Intermediate Rock climbs e.g.).
- ❑ One climb can be used for satisfying only one requirement. IE – no “double counting” climbs towards graduation requirements.
- ❑ Of the eight required intermediate climbs, no more than two may be intermediate mountaineering (IM) climbs. The other six must be Intermediate Rock or Intermediate Alpine Ice climbs.
- ❑ To get credit for an intermediate climb, the student is expected to: swing leads (when applicable), participate in route finding, assist in evaluation of climbing hazards, and obtain

the leader's approval. No credit is earned unless the student completes the scheduled objective.

- ❑ Private climbs may be submitted for credit if they are done in line with the Mountaineers climbing code, and were completed AFTER passing of the relevant/related module. ALL climbs must adhere to the club wide minimum standards, and branch standards for activities.

Olympia Mountaineers – Intermediate Alpine Climbing Course

Electronic version:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/14SpY02ift410jdXScaZd98ph_xSsGoCOpocW2wZq9Nw/edit?usp=sharing

Course Requirements

Student's Name:

MODULE ONE – PREREQUISITES

- ☐ Be a Basic Alpine Climbing Course Graduate or Equivalency (Date of graduation _____)
- ☐ Hold or obtain a current MOFA, WFA, or WFR card (Expiration Date _____)
- ☐ Successfully complete the Intermediate Skills Review ("Qualifier") Field Trip (Date _____)

MODULE TWO – ROCK SKILLS

- ☐ Attend Intermediate Lecture 'Rock and Self-Rescue' (Date _____)
- ☐ Attend Intermediate Lecture 'Rock II' (Date _____)
- ☐ Attend and successfully complete Field Trip 'Rock One' (Date _____)
- ☐ Attend and Successfully complete Field Trip 'Rock Two' (Date _____)
- ☐ Complete the Take-Home Exam for the Rock Module (Date and Score _____)

MODULE THREE – SNOW SKILLS

- ☐ Attend Intermediate Lecture 'Hard Snow and Glacier Travel' (Date _____)
- ☐ Attend and successfully complete Field Trip 'Hard Snow and Glacier Travel' (Date _____)
- ☐ Attend Intermediate Lecture 'Steep Snow and Vertical Ice I' (Date _____)
- ☐ Attend and successfully complete Field Trip 'Ice I' (Date _____)
- ☐ Attend Intermediate Lecture 'Steep Snow and Vertical Ice II' (Date _____)

- ☐ Attend and successfully complete Field Trip 'Ice II' (Date _____)
- ☐ Complete an AIARE I Training' (Date _____, Instructor _____)
- ☐ Attend Intermediate Lecture 'Winter Mountaineering and Expeditions' (Date _____)
- ☐ Attend and Successfully complete Field Trip 'Winter Mountaineering' (Date _____)
- ☐ Complete the Take-Home Exam for the Snow Module (Date and Score _____)

MODULE FOUR – TEACHING SKILLS

(To be Completed after Module One)

- ☐ Complete a Mountaineers Leadership Course (Course Date _____)
- ☐ Instruct at Intro To Climbing - Basic Skills Workshop (Date _____)
- ☐ Instruct at Intro To Climbing – Belay Practice (Date _____)
- ☐ Instruct at Intro To Climbing – Snow I (Date _____)
- ☐ Instruct at Basic Alpine Climbing Glacier Field Trip – Snow Weekend, both days (Dates _____)
- ☐ Instruct at Basic Alpine Climbing Glacier Workshop – Z-Pulley Practice (Date _____)
- ☐ Instruct at Basic Alpine Climbing Glacier Field Trip – Glacier Travel (Date _____)
- ☐ Instruct at Basic Alpine Climbing Rock Field Trip – Rock Fundamentals (Date _____)
- ☐ Instruct at Basic Alpine Climbing Rock Field Trip – Rock Weekend, both days (Dates _____)

MODULE FIVE – CLIMBS

To be completed after Module two or three, depending on climb type:

- ☐ Become Basic Climb Leader (Date _____)
- ☐ Serve as Climb Leader on a Basic Experience ROCK Climb (Date _____)
- ☐ Serve as Climb Leader on a Basic Experience GLACIER Climb (Date _____)

Summit not required for credit as a Leader on a Basic Climb.

Intermediate Climbs are to be completed AFTER the appropriate Intermediate Field Trip, and with leader's permission. A minimum of two

Rock and two Glacier/ Ice climbs are required, remaining climbs may be any type but only two may be "Intermediate Mountaineering."

- ☐ Complete eight (8) Intermediate Climbs. List on a "climb log."
- ☐ Lead or assist in leading at least one overnight winter trip – ski, snowshoe, or climb (Date_____)
- ☐ Participate in a conservation or trail maintenance project (Date_____)

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Climbs Log

- ☐ Climb Leader –Basic Rock Climb-

Peak: _____
Climb Leader: _____

Date: _____
Summited: _____

- ☐ Climb Leader –Basic Glacier Climb-

Peak: _____
Climb Leader: _____

Date: _____
Summited: _____

- ☐ Intermediate ROCK Climb-

Peak: _____
Climb Leader: _____

Date: _____
Summited: _____

- ☐ Intermediate ROCK Climb-

Peak: _____
Climb Leader: _____

Date: _____
Summited: _____

- ☐ Intermediate Glacier/Ice Climb-

Peak: _____
Climb Leader: _____

Date: _____
Summited: _____

- ☐ Intermediate Glacier/Ice Climb-

Peak: _____
Climb Leader: _____

Date: _____
Summited: _____

- ☐ Intermediate Climb (circle one: Rock Glacier/Ice Mountaineering/Alpine)-
 Peak: _____ Date: _____
 Climb Leader: _____ Summited: _____
- ☐ Intermediate Climb (circle one: Rock Glacier/Ice Mountaineering/Alpine)-
 Peak: _____ Date: _____
 Climb Leader: _____ Summited: _____
- ☐ Intermediate Climb (circle one: Rock Glacier/Ice Mountaineering/Alpine)-
 Peak: _____ Date: _____
 Climb Leader: _____ Summited: _____
- ☐ Intermediate Climb (circle one: Rock Glacier/Ice Mountaineering/Alpine)-
 Peak: _____ Date: _____
 Climb Leader: _____ Summited: _____
- ☐ Winter Experience Trip:
 Peak: _____ Date: _____
 Climb Leader: _____ Summited: _____

No more than two of the eight required climbs may be 'Intermediate Mountaineering' (IM)

When you have completed all requirements, submit the electronic form (preferred), or this form to the Intermediate Alpine Climbing Course committee chair.

Olympia Mountaineers – Intermediate Alpine Climbing Course

Proactive Mentorship for Intermediate Students

An Intermediate Course mentor can significantly accelerate your progress by helping with coursework, skills development, conditioning, climb selection, and leadership placement. Mentors are not automatically assigned; you must proactively seek out and build a relationship with a preferred mentor. This is a relationship you initiate, not an assignment from the committee. Your mentor can also explain policies, relay feedback, and act as your advocate.

The Mountaineers Climbing Code

Freedom of the Hills – 10th Edition

- Leave the trip itinerary with a responsible person.
- Carry the necessary clothing, food, and equipment- The Ten Essentials (see The Mountaineers' Ten Essentials in Chapter 2).
- Wear a helmet to minimize your risk of traumatic brain injury from rockfall or other hazards.
- Rope up in exposed areas and for glacier travel. Anchor all belays. Always double-check a rappel setup before you trust it with your life.
- Keep the party together, and obey the leader or the majority.
- Challenge yourself, but do not climb beyond your ability and knowledge without a trusted mentor and/or guide.
- Do not let desire overrule your judgment when choosing a route or deciding whether to turn back.
- Follow sound mountaineering principles as set forth in books of recognized merit.
- Behave in a manner that reflects favorably upon mountaineering- for example, by exercising caution when climbing, paying attention to other parties, and adhering to the Leave No Trace seven principles.
- Carry effective communication devices that meet the needs of the trip (see Chapter 5 for details).
- Be prepared to care for an injured climber.
- Consider purchasing global rescue insurance. Not all jurisdictions provide free evacuation and/or rescue services.

Note: The interpretation of this code will be at the discretion of the climb leader and the Intermediate Committee.