



Seattle Alpine Scrambling Course 2024 Student Handbook



On the cover
Photograph by Robyn Pryor
Kyes Peak

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Seattle Alpine Scrambling Community! We look forward to helping you successfully complete this course and pursue a lifetime of adventures in the mountains. In this course you'll learn how to safely travel off-trail and scramble to a variety of beautiful mountain summits. Scrambles involve movement through brush and over steep snow and non-technical rock terrain. This course is a program of volunteer-led classroom and field instruction designed to develop your alpine traveling skills and empower you with the experience necessary to safely scramble countless mountains here in the Pacific Northwest and beyond.

What is a Mountaineers Scramble?

- Off-trail travel with the goal of a mountain summit
- Scrambles may involve traveling: through forests with occasional thick brush, on steep snow slopes, and along non technical rock terrain where ropes are not used to ascend any terrain but may be carried by scramble leaders for emergency downclimbing use.
- Trips led by The Mountaineers Scramble Leaders, qualified in leading a group outdoors and off-trail
- Pace-of-travel ranging from slow to fast, varied by trip leader and generally dependent on intended destination
- Participants of scramble trips have completed and passed the required Scrambling Course instruction or are current students who have completed the Snow Field Trip

Learning Outcomes

- **Wilderness skills** – off-trail route finding, mountain weather, avalanche safety and low-impact recreation
- **Snow skills** – ice axe techniques (self-arrest and self-belay), kicking steps, plunge stepping and glissading
- **Rock skills** – three points of contact, friction movements, downclimbing techniques and protected downclimbing
- **Wilderness Navigation** – *separate course offered by The Mountaineers* but required to graduate this course – backcountry and off-trail navigation using a topographic map, altimeter, compass, GPS & emergency communicators
- **Wilderness First Aid** – *separate course offered by The Mountaineers* but required to graduate this course – elementary training for basic medical care in the wilderness using limited supplies and gear to make sound decisions
- **Low-Impact Recreation** – *separate badge offered by The Mountaineers* but required for this course – Understanding and practicing the principles of Leave No Trace to enjoy and share our wilderness areas responsibly

Keys to Success

- **Preparation** – be physically and mentally ready!
- **Commitment** – scrambling requires a positive mental attitude, as well as time and effort
- **Conditioning** – physical fitness is necessary for personal safety and overall enjoyment in the backcountry
- **Leave No Trace** – The Mountaineers is committed to conserving wild places and being environmentally responsible
- **Teamwork** – work and stay together; speak up for yourself and others when adjustments or help is needed
- **Participation** – you are responsible for the safety of yourself and those around you. You will learn from and practice with experienced, volunteer instructors and will become increasingly self-sufficient with practice – speak-up and participate to ensure safety comes first. Remember we are a club, not a guide service.
- **Know your Limit(s)** – sign-up for scrambles appropriate for your conditioning and comfort-level; please connect with the leader when you have any doubt
- **Read Freedom of the Hills** – not all necessary information is covered in the course workshops and field trips; be sure to read the corresponding sections in the textbook: "Mountaineering Freedom of the Hills"
- **Ask Questions** – the course leaders and instructors want you to succeed – seek help and information when needed

Contact Us

- Question about the Seattle Alpine Scrambling Course, then email our team at: Scrambling.Seattle@gmail.com
- Question about another course or activity you're registered for, then email the Leader shown on the activity page
- General Questions about The Mountaineers, then email the club directly at: info@mountaineers.org
- Need to report a formal, confidential complaint for issues dealing with harassment or discrimination then see the "Club Policies" section of this handbook

APPROXIMATE COURSE TIMELINE

February

- Gear Lectures
- Avalanche Awareness Seminar

March

- Tiger Mountain Field Trips

April

- Snow Workshops and Field Trips

May

- Rock Workshops and Field Trips

June

- Experience Field Trips

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Scrambling Course

WORKSHOPS	DATE COMPLETED
Gear	
Rock	
Snow	

FIELD TRIPS	DATE COMPLETED
Tiger Mountain	
Snow	
Rock	
Experience	

SCRAMBLES	DATE COMPLETED / PEAK / LEADER
Snow	
Rock	
Snow or Rock	

Additional Courses and Badges

COURSES	DATE COMPLETED
Navigation	
First Aid	

BADGES	DATE COMPLETED
Stewardship	
Low-Impact Recreation	
Avalanche Awareness	

Graduation Application

- Completed all of the above? Apply for graduation online under My Courses & Programs > Scrambling Course > Course Material > Graduation Application or by following this link: <https://goo.gl/forms/y18p2c5Vi3imYy7d2>
- **October 31** is the deadline but please do not wait until then, apply as soon as you've successfully completed all of the above. Note: it may take us one – two weeks to review and approve the application.

Pending First Aid?

- If your only remaining requirement is Wilderness First Aid, simply notify us within the application that you've completed the Scrambling Course and add the note "Pending first aid"
- Once you have the Wilderness First Aid Course badge on your profile, please follow-up to let us know and become officially graduated

Second-year Extension

- You may request an extension to continue the course for a 2nd year (*at no extra cost*) if you're unable to complete all of the requirements during the 1st year – simply send an e-mail to Scrambling.Seattle@gmail.com
- During the 2nd-year you only need to complete the remaining requirements. Of course, you will be welcome to repeat any of the workshops or field trips as a refresher and we require you to participate in the Snow Field Trip during the 2nd-year since ice axe arrest is an easily forgotten skill
- **Note: the 2nd-year Extension will result in a suspension of your student badge for the season;** as such, you will be unable to participate in any scrambles between the two years, until you're a student again the subsequent season

COURSES AND BADGES REQUIRED TO GRADUATE

Basic Navigation Course

- Separate course offered by The Mountaineers
- **REQUIRED BEFORE EXPERIENCE FIELD TRIP** to continue with the Scrambling Course – there are a limited number of course dates available –**register for it as soon as possible!!**
- Course topics include: backcountry and off-trail navigation using a topographic map, altimeter, compass, GPS & emergency communicators (Personal Location Beacons or PLBs)
- Upon registration for the course, especially through another Mountaineers' branch, make sure the course description says graduates will receive the Basic Navigation Course badge
- Equivalency may be granted. Visit the [Navigation Equivalency](#) webpage to learn more.
- More information: <http://mountaineers.org/learn/navigation>

Wilderness First Aid Course

- Separate course offered by The Mountaineers
- **REQUIRED TO GRADUATE** and continue scrambling with The Mountaineers, beyond the Scrambling Course – there are a limited number of course dates available – **register for it as soon as possible!**
- Course topics include: elementary training for basic medical care in the wilderness using limited supplies and gear to make sound decisions
- Upon registration for the course, especially through another Mountaineers' branch, make sure the course description says graduates will receive the Wilderness First Aid Course badge
- Equivalency *may be* granted if you have one of these certifications: WFR, WEMT, RMAP. Contact the Wilderness First Aid Course Leaders to confirm.
- More information: <http://mountaineers.org/learn/firstaid>

Stewardship Badge

- Day of trail work with an organization such as wta.org – some options are trail work, habitat restoration, tree planting, invasive species removal, etc.
- Find Mountaineer's sponsored events using the website (it must show the "Stewardship Credit" badge): [mountaineers.org > Explore > Find Activities > "Stewardship"](#) search filter checkbox
- Some other volunteering websites:
 - wta.org/volunteer
 - Earthcorps.org
 - Mtsgreenway.org
 - wawild.org
 - <https://www.seattle.gov/parks/volunteer/volunteer-calendar>
- If volunteering through another organization then contact the Seattle Program Center to get your badge upon completing your stewardship. E-mail info@mountaineers.org
- More information: <http://mountaineers.org/learn/stewardship>

Low-Impact Recreation Badge

- Watch a few very short videos and then take a quiz to achieve the Low-Impact Recreation badge
- For the videos and quiz see The Mountaineers website: [mountaineers.org > Conserve > Low-Impact Recreation Skills](#) > watch videos > take quiz

Avalanche Awareness Badge

- Either an evening in-person seminar or brief online course to achieve the Avalanche Awareness badge

RESPONSIBILITIES AND CLUB POLICIES

Harassment and Anti-discrimination

- The Mountaineers is committed to maintaining an environment that is free of verbal, physical and visual forms of harassment so that everyone can enjoy our club activities in a productive, respectful and fun environment
- The Mountaineers does not allow harassment of any kind by one member towards another including harassment based on: gender, sexual orientation, race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, or marital or veteran status
- The Mountaineers is committed to an anti-discrimination policy in its programs and services
- The Mountaineers does not discriminate based on: race, religion (creed), color, ethnicity, national origin (ancestry), religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, age, disability, veteran status, military obligations, immigration status, or marital status

Alcohol, marijuana and other drugs

- Alcohol and other drugs can affect your ability, judgment and safety – this can also affect group safety
- Alcohol and other drugs are not allowed before or during scrambling activities
- Even though marijuana is legal in Washington State, it is still illegal on federal land which includes most of the mountain areas where you will be scrambling – bringing marijuana on scrambles is not allowed

Firearms

- Firearms or any other items which will impair the safety or enjoyment of others are not to be brought on The Mountaineers premises or taken on any club activities

Additional policies

- The full list of [The Mountaineers' policies](#) is located here: mountaineers.org > search for "board policies"

Reporting an issue

- Use this website form to file a formal confidential complaint about any issues: mountaineers.org > In the top header search for "[Behavioral Complaint Form](#)"

The Mountaineers Climbing Code

This code provides safeguards and helps prevent misjudgments – mountaineering accidents could have been avoided, or their effects minimized, if these simple principles had been followed:

- Leave the trip itinerary with a responsible person
- Carry the necessary clothing, food and equipment
- A climbing & scrambling party of three is the minimum, unless adequate prearranged support is available
- Keep the party together and obey the leader or majority rule
- Never climb beyond your ability and knowledge
- Never let judgment be overruled by desire when choosing a route or deciding whether or when to turn back
- Follow the precepts of sound mountaineering as set forth in books of recognized merit
- Behave in a manner that reflects favorably upon mountaineering, including adherence to Leave No Trace principles

THE MOUNTAINEERS' EMERGENCY PLAN

Overview

- Mountaineers Scramble Trips are planned with safety as the foremost concern; however accidents do happen so please be sure to have an emergency contact person assigned to your Mountaineers' profile
- Occasionally a scramble trip may be very late getting home or may be forced to spend an unplanned overnight in the mountains and not return until the following day – do not promise friends and loved ones that you will be home by a certain time and do not commit to something the same evening following a trip
- On rare occasions things go wrong in the backcountry and The Mountaineers may call your emergency contact person to pass along important updates about your safety and location
- The Mountaineers has an Emergency Line available 24/7 for calling and reporting overdue Mountaineers' trips – your emergency contact person should use this number: (206) 521-6030 to prevent multiple people from calling 911 about the same incident.
 - We repeat: for an overdue trip with The Mountaineers, your emergency contact should **call The Mountaineers Emergency Line first: (206) 521-6030 and not 911** directly
- The Mountaineers Emergency Line will coordinate action with 911 and rescue authorities

Your steps

- Update your emergency contact person on the website – it should not be a person you scramble with
- When going on scrambles with The Mountaineers let your emergency contact person know your latest return time which is always noon the day after your scramble – for example, if you're going on a Saturday scramble then tell them NOT to call the Mountaineers Emergency Line unless you're not back by Sunday at noon
- It's your responsibility to educate your emergency contact person about this procedure and to make sure they know not to call 911 – give them the cutout below, or send them an email
- If you're on a trip and there's a safety incident then you should call 911 – if your cell phone shows that it has no reception, still call 911 since all cell phones will send a boosted signal if it's 911 increasing your chance of reaching them – do not call the Mountaineers Emergency Line in this case
- After your scramble let your emergency contact person know you've returned safely

Your emergency contact person's steps

- If you're not back by noon the day after your Mountaineers Scramble then your emergency contact person should call the Mountaineers Emergency Line open 24/7 at 206–521–6030 – they should never call 911 directly
- The Mountaineers Emergency Line phone number can also be found on The Mountaineers website:

mountaineers.org "Contact Us" link at the bottom of the page ✂



COURSE EXPECTATIONS

WORKSHOPS

GEAR

Objective: Introduction to the Seattle Alpine Scrambling Course and discussions about scrambling gear

What to Expect:

- Introduction presentation to provide an overview and expectations for the course
- Gear Expo set-up so you can wander the room, visit various gear tables hosted by a variety of instructors to view and discuss your gear options

Gear to bring:

None...unless you have existing gear and you are not sure whether it will be appropriate for this course.

Freedom of the Hills suggested reading:

- Chapter 1 – First Steps
- Chapter 2 – Clothing and Equipment
- Chapter 7 – Leave No Trace
- Chapter 8 – Access and Stewardship

SNOW

Objective: Introduction to steep snow travel skills, proper use of an ice axe and crampons

What to Expect:

- Practice walking in-balance, self-belay and self-arrest positions using your ice axe
- Overview of basic avalanche safety ratings and terrain awareness

Gear to bring:

- Ice Axe
- Climbing Helmet
- Clothing appropriate for practicing self-belay and arrest outdoors (i.e. hiking or rain pants/jacket)
- Crampons plus mountaineering boots

Freedom of the Hills suggested reading:

- Chapter 16 – Snow Travel and Climbing: pages 330-353; 360-365
 - Note: we teach the self-arrest grasp, primarily – figure 16-14.a.
- Chapter 17 – Avalanche Safety
- Chapter 27 – The Cycle of Snow

ROCK

Objective: Introduction to rock scrambling skills, protected down-climbing and required gear for scrambling

What to Expect:

- Rotate through stations to practice scrambling on: loose rock, boulders, rock slabs and ledges
- Practice protected downclimbing on rock

Gear to bring:

- Scramble pack, including 10 essentials and required scramble gear
- Clothing appropriate for practicing skills outdoors. Note you will be tying a harness around your waist and legs – pants / leggings are most appropriate. Please do not wear jewelry of any kind.

Freedom of the Hills suggested reading:

- Chapter 6 – Wilderness Travel
- Chapter 12 – Alpine Rock Climbing: pages 227–236; 248-251
- Chapter 23 – Safety
- Chapter 28 – Mountain Weather

FIELD TRIPS

TIGER MOUNTAIN

Objective: Try out new gear and demonstrate conditioning to participate in scrambling activities

What to Expect:

- Weekend day hikes, measured to be at least 5 miles and 2,000+ feet of elevation gain
- Opportunity to review gear (including ice axe basics) directly with an instructor
- Travel no slower than 2 mph pace with a full pack to measure conditioning level
- Practice setting up an emergency bivouac
- Use Navigation skills

Gear to bring:

Scramble pack, including 10 essentials and required scramble gear (NO CRAMPONS)

Freedom of the Hills suggested reading:

- Chapter 4 – Physical Conditioning

SNOW

Objective: Practicing steep snow travel skills, proper use of an ice axe, crampons and emergency bivouac

What to Expect:

- Practicing walking in-balance with crampons and glissading using your ice axe, on steep snow
- Practicing each self-arrest position with both hands, on steep snow
- Practicing an emergency bivouac set-up, in snow
- Review of basic avalanche safety and terrain awareness

Gear to bring:

- Scramble pack, including 10 essentials and required scramble gear
- Clothing appropriate for practicing self-arrest outdoors (i.e. rain pants and rain jacket) Extra gloves, to replace if/when yours get wet

Freedom of the Hills suggested reading:

- Chapter 16 – Snow Travel and Climbing: pages 330-353; 360-365
 - Note: we teach the self-arrest grasp, primarily – figure 16-14.a.
- Chapter 17 – Avalanche Safety
- Chapter 27 – The Cycle of Snow

ROCK

Objective: Practice and apply rock scrambling skills and protected down-climbing

What to Expect:

- Practice scrambling on: loose rock, boulders, rock slabs and ledges as terrain allows
- Practice protected downclimbing on rock
- Gear discussion and emergency bivouac

Gear to bring:

- Scramble pack, including 10 essentials and required scramble gear
- Clothing appropriate for rock scrambling outdoors

Freedom of the Hills suggested reading:

- Chapter 6 – Wilderness Travel
- Chapter 12 – Alpine Rock Climbing: pages 227–236; 248-251
- Chapter 23 – Safety
- Chapter 28 – Mountain Weather

EXPERIENCE FIELD TRIP

Objective: An overall assessment of scramble skills acquired throughout the course – including safe movement on steep snow and rock terrain, ice axe self-belay, arrest and glissade skills, crampon use and navigation techniques to demonstrate proficiency and preparation to continue participation in scrambling activities for the season

What to Expect:

- Weekend day scrambles at various locations within the Teanaway River Valley (or equivalent area)
- Demonstrate proficiency in safe travel over steep snow and rock terrain
- Demonstrate proficiency using an ice axe to glissade
- Demonstrate proficiency using an ice axe to self-belay and arrest in each position, using either hand
- Demonstrate proficiency using crampons on hard snow
- Possible stream-crossing, depending on route selection – more info will be shared with you as the field trip approaches

Gear to bring:

- Scramble pack, including 10 essentials and required scramble gear
- Stream-crossing shoes (sandals with straps, not flip-flops)
- Clothing appropriate for practicing self-arrest outdoors (i.e. rain pants and rain jacket) Extra gloves, to replace if/when yours get wet
- (Optional) Small towel to dry your feet after the stream-crossing
- Extra water, if you plan to camp because there is no potable water nearby
- (Optional) Overnight gear, if you plan to camp (i.e. sleeping bag, air mattress, tent, etc.)
 - NOTE: overnight will be dependent on COVID-19 Guidelines

Freedom of the Hills suggested reading:

- Chapter 6 – Wilderness Travel
- Chapter 12 – Alpine Rock Climbing: pages 227–236; 248-251
- Chapter 16 – Snow Travel and Climbing: pages 330-353; 360-365
 - Note: we teach the self-arrest grasp, primarily – figure 16-14.a.

Logistics for an extended, weekend trip (overnight option)

Basic information to help you plan your weekend ahead of time. **Please keep in mind: more specific information will be e-mailed to everyone prior to the field trip and will be entirely dependent on current COVID 19 Guidelines as published by The Mountaineers. These details assume it will be safe to travel freely, in person. Any specific nuances will be shared via e-mail from the Committee.**

- Parking is very limited at the trailhead, a variety of carpool options will be shared in-advance
- Potluck BBQ cookout on Saturday around 6:30pm at the Beverly Campground
- Treat this like a normal field trip and be sure to arrive at the trailhead in the morning then at the end of the day drive home -- or you can camp Friday night and/or Saturday night (see below for overnight camping options)
- Please remember the Teanaway area is approximately 2-2.5 hours drive from Seattle, WA; be sure to check road conditions and the Snoqualmie Pass conditions the night before traveling

Overnight Options

- There are numerous nearby campgrounds available for you to camp Friday and/or Saturday night o The Beverly Campground is a five to ten minute drive from the field trip trailhead, depending which route you've chosen
 - The 29 Pines Campground is a ten to twenty minute drive from the field trip trailhead, depending which route you've chosen
 - De Roux Campground is a five to ten minute drive from the field trip trailhead, depending which route you've chosen
- Cle Elum is the nearest town, if you prefer hotel accommodations

CONDITIONING

Preparation

- Scrambling is a very strenuous activity
- Inadequate conditioning can contribute to a loss of alertness and an inability to respond properly to the demands of the environment: this could prevent a group from reaching the summit or jeopardize party safety. Fitness is safety!
- Be as fit as possible to enjoy the course and maximize your opportunity for success
- Be prepared to carry a 20 to 25-pound backpack for 6–10 miles while climbing 2500–5000 feet in elevation
- People who do a significant amount of running sometimes discover they are not as prepared as they might think for scrambling – runners use different muscles, rarely wear heavy backpacks and do not usually gain as much elevation

Getting started

- Start your conditioning right now. Go out and hike up some local trails: i.e. Tiger Mountain, Tiger Mountain Cable Line, Mount Si, Rattlesnake Ledge, Mailbox Peak (when there is no snow), Mount Washington, etc.
- Get out regularly and look for trails with at least 5-miles round-trip and 2,000-feet of elevation
- Work progressively to build leg and core: strength, agility, flexibility and balance
- Unable to easily get to the mountains? Take advantage of urban locations with lengthy outdoor staircases which you can do laps on while wearing your pack (i.e. Howe Street stairs, Golden Gardens, etc.)
- Unable to get outside? Find a gym and set the treadmill on high incline while wearing a heavy pack
- To increase backpack weight, we recommend you carry containers of water (8.4 pounds/gallon) then dump the water before descending

Goal

- An indicator of whether you are in relative shape is to measure your time up the Mount Si trail to the base of the summit "haystack" (4 miles and 3200 feet of elevation) in 2–2.5 hours carrying a 20–25 pound backpack.
- Build up stamina rather than just racing to the top as fast as you can, not being exhausted on the summit is more important than the amount of time it took to get there
- Work on improving your time to the summit with the same backpack weight, or slowly increasing your backpack weight with the same summit time – both methods are effective but try not to increase two training factors at once.

CONDITIONING LOG

Date	Destination	Miles	Elevation	Weight	Time
	Totals:				

CHECKLISTS

PRE-COURSE

- Register for The Mountaineers Wilderness Navigation Course, must attend and complete before June
- Register for The Mountaineers Wilderness First Aid Course, must attend and complete before November
- Complete Low-Impact Recreation badge activity, through The Mountaineers, before November
- Complete a Stewardship badge activity, through The Mountaineers (or another organization), before November
- Purchase (or check out from the library) “Mountaineering Freedom of the Hills”
- Update your Mountaineers profile for:
 - The name you prefer to be called (i.e. Steve instead of Steven or Rory instead of Lorelei)
 - (optional) add a photo
 - Carpool preferences
 - Emergency Contact Information
- Discuss The Mountaineers Emergency Plan with your emergency contact
- (optional) Follow “Mountaineers Seattle Alpine Scrambling” on Facebook
- (optional) Follow “Mountaineers Marketplace” on Facebook, for buying / selling gear
- Read the "FAQ" section of this handbook

PRE-TRIP

Before every workshop / field trip or scramble, be sure to:

- Review the “Course Expectations” outline and “FAQ” sections of this handbook
- Read associated chapters from “Freedom of the Hills” to get better acquainted with the material and expectations
- Reference the packing list to ensure you have everything
- Read the Leader Notes corresponding specifically to the upcoming activity, on the Mountaineers website
- (Optional) Arrange carpooling the week prior using the roster tab on the activity page (adhere to COVID-19 Guidelines)
- Check the mountain weather and any recent trip reports, specific to where you are headed

GEAR

SCRAMBLE PACKING LIST

- Pack the **10 Essentials** and **Required Scrambling Gear** for every trip, unless explicitly told otherwise
- Plan to pack, at least, the minimum gear you would need to spend an unplanned overnight in the mountains
- Consider the route: check avalanche and weather conditions, research recent trip reports and follow leader recommendations when deciding which Suggested Gear to bring.

10 Essentials

- Navigation (altimeter, compass, map, GPS, PLB plus charger)
- Headlamp (plus extra batteries)
- Sun Protection (sunglasses, protective clothes and sunscreen)
- First Aid Kit
- Knife plus Repair Kit
- Fire (matches, lighter and tinder, or stove)
- Emergency Shelter (lightweight bivy or tarp)
- Extra Food
- Extra Water
- Extra Clothes

- Overnight gear for multiday scrambles
- Sit pad / insulation pad
- Sock liners
- Sun hat
- Snowshoes
- Traction Devices
- Trekking poles
- Umbrella
- Water filter
- Waterproof sacks or backpack water barrier
- Whistle

Required Scrambling Gear

- Backpack
- Mountaineering Boots
- Climbing Helmet
- Ice Axe
- Protected Downclimbing Kit
- Crampons (*as required by leader*)
- Clothes / Food / Water

Car Kit

- Carpool Money
- Trailhead Parking Pass
 - America the Beautiful
 - Discover Pass
 - Northwest Forest Service
- Bag for Boots and extra shoes
- Extra clean clothes

Suggested Gear

- Gaiters – strongly recommended
- 2nd headlamp
- Altimeter
- Approach shoes
- Bandana / Buff
- Bathroom Kit
- Camera
- Hand warmers
- Ice Axe leash
- Insect protection

Other

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

10 ESSENTIALS

1. Navigation

Compass

Ideally you've already taken the Wilderness Navigation Course and own a compass, if not then reference the [PDF published by the Seattle Navigation Committee](#) containing a detailed list of required compass features and a list of recommended compass models

Topographic map

- Keep it protected from the rain, gallon ziploc bags work great
- Use maps with 40 feet contour lines, such as USGS 7.5" quad maps and some special Green Trail maps. Regular Green Trail maps are 80 feet so they aren't detailed enough
- Even if you have a GPS unit you should still bring a paper map
- A couple of websites from which you can print your own maps:
 - caltopo.com
 - mappingsupport.com
 - store.usgs.gov

GPS

- Not a substitute for a paper map
- Standalone units aren't necessary; phone apps such as GAIA are fine
- Bring a protective case for phones and for non-weather proof GPS units
- Bring backup batteries/charger since battery levels can drop quickly, especially in cold weather

2. Headlamp (or Illumination)

- Headlamp
- Bring extra batteries
- Make sure batteries are fresh

3. Sun Protection

Sunglasses

- Needed in snow to prevent getting snow blindness
- Should block out most or all UV light
- Side shields are nice on sunny days in the snow – homemade removable side shields can be formed from folded over pieces of duct tape with small holes in the middle

Sunscreen

- Has an expiration date
- Necessary in snow – sun will reflect up so apply under your chin, inside your nostrils, etc.

4. First-Aid Kit

- You'll learn which items to include during the Wilderness First Aid Course
- Small frequently used items can be in a ziploc bag near the top of your backpack (ibuprofen, blister care, band aids, etc.)
- Infrequent items can be at the bottom of your backpack (gauze, tape, triangle bandages, SAM splint, emergency blanket, paper, pencil, etc.)

5. Repair Kit with knife

- Small pocket knife or multi-tool for first aid and emergency use
- scissors
- Duct tape wrapped around something like a trekking pole or a water bottle
- A sleeping pad repair kit might be useful for overnight trips
- Some trips have a long mountain bicycle approach, so bike/tire repair kits are useful

Some useful miscellaneous items:

Zip ties, extra shoelace, safety pins, cords/straps, etc.

6. Fire

- Lighter
- Waterproof matches with a dry striker
- Firestarter

7. Emergency Shelter

- Protects you from the elements, especially rain and wind
- Examples: Plastic tube tent, bivy sack, small tent, emergency blanket (not a space blanket), etc.
- Emergency blankets are thick and strong whereas space blankets are thin, shred easily and deteriorate over time
- Should be something you don't plan on using unless there is an emergency

8. Extra Food

- Additional food you don't plan to eat until you spend an unplanned overnight in the mountains
- This food should require no cooking, be lightweight, and high in calories (bars, cheese, nuts, etc.)

9. Extra Water

- Bring extra water if there is no water on the route, check with the trip leader if in doubt
- Pump and gravity fed filters sterilize water and remove non-harmful particulates but are bulky
- Chemical-based sterilizers, like iodine tablets, kill pathogens but do not filter non-harmful particulates

10. Extra Clothes

- Required if you get wet and must survive the long, inactive hours of an unplanned overnight
- Clothing appropriate for the weather and conditions:
 - Extra base layer set (top and bottom)
 - Stocking cap (a thick one)
 - Extra hiking socks
 - Extra gloves
- Extra jacket (fleece or puffy)

REQUIRED SCRAMBLING GEAR

Mountaineering boots

- This is the single most important piece of gear since you'll be wearing them all day!
- It's critical to your comfort and safety that you don't try to cut corners by using inadequate footwear
- For scrambling you want 3-season (light to medium duty) mountaineering boots or heavy-duty backpacking boots. They should not bend under your body weight with only your toes on a ledge. Light-duty backpacking boots are not stiff enough and make scrambling difficult. Heavy-duty mountaineering boots can be too heavy, warm, and uncomfortable for scrambling. Trail running shoes are not allowed in this course or on actual scrambles.
- Stiff toes are very important to allow you to kick steps in snow
- Stiff soles with a shank or partial shank are required for edging on rock, hard snow and to accept crampons
- Allow adequate time in a store to try on and walk around in multiple boots
- Your toes should never be able to touch the front of your boots
- Keep in mind that hiking socks are usually on the thicker side and some people wear sock liners for blister prevention. When trying on boots at the store, make sure to wear your thick hiking socks.
- Try to scuff your feet firmly forward, ideally on a downward slope, to make sure your toes never touch
- Some factory insoles do not provide adequate arch and heel support, so select good replacement insoles and use them when trying on boots as they can drastically alter the fit of the boot
- Consider insulation. Feet can get very cold in boots on warm days in snow
- To clean muddy boots just let them dry then use a clean brush, don't use hot water to clean them
- At the Gear Workshop, you will be shown how stiff the boots need to be, and you will see examples of boots appropriate for scrambling
- Don't buy new boots before the Gear Workshop

Backpack

- 30L-40L capacity for day trips
- 50L-60L capacity for multi day trips
- Make sure there's a specifically designed method for attaching your ice axe to the outside
- If you can't decide which backpack to get, fill them with weight and select the most comfortable one

Food

- Food is energy!
- Plan to snack throughout the day, not just one big lunch on the summit
- Bring food you like to eat for sometimes you won't have an appetite but you still need to consume calories
- Bring more than you anticipate you will eat, there should be extra food at the end of the scramble
- It will take some trial and error to figure out the quantities and the types of food that will work for you
- Food provides calories and calories generate heat, so keep eating to stay warm

Water

- Bring at least two liters
- On hot days in the summer you'll want more than two liters or a water filter
- Some people like bottles whereas other people prefer bladders with drinking tubes
- Start hydrating the night before a scramble and continue drinking water in the morning during your drive
- Bladder drinking tubes easily freeze on very cold days; when you're done drinking blow air back into the tube to remove all the water
- On really cold days storing water bottles upside down keeps the opening from freezing

Clothing appropriate for the weather and conditions

ABSOLUTELY NO COTTON!!

Waterproof jacket and pants

- This can be important even on blue sky days, it protects from the wind – soft shell jackets are much lighter and protect from the wind but aren't waterproof
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof pants, many types to choose from but use a pair you can put on and take off while wearing your mountaineering boots
- Look for a jacket with a hood large enough to fit over your climbing helmet
- Note that some have a physical water barrier like Gore-Tex and some are a waterproof coating Mid layers
- Jackets (fleece, down, softshells, windbreakers, etc.)
- Shorts and pants (some are stretchy for big steps, some have nice pockets, etc.)
- Think in terms of layers since it gives you more combinations to regulate your temperature
- Down is great but it must stay dry from rain and sweat to be effective
- Wool works great for multi day trips since it doesn't retain odor, but it can be bulky – always wash wool in cold water and on delicate to prevent it from turning into hard felt
- Lots of options, figure out what works best for you

Base layer

- Usually a thin, form-fitting layer that is designed to wick sweat
- Your choice of short sleeves, long sleeves, long underwear, etc.

Hiking socks

- Wool works great – always wash wool in cold water and on delicate to prevent it from turning into hard felt
- Liner socks to help wick sweat (some mountaineers find that liner socks accelerate blistering)

Gloves

- Think about bringing more than one pair since they usually get wet
- Mittens are warmer than gloves, but you lose dexterity on scrambling terrain
- Some are touch screen compatible, some have pockets for hand warmers, etc.
- Lots of options, figure out what works best for you (material, thickness, waterproofness, etc.)

Stocking cap and balaclava/facemask

- A thin stocking cap is nice for when you're hiking, thick ones are nice for an unplanned overnight

Climbing helmet

- Must be UIAA or CE approved for climbing
- Unacceptable types are bicycle, kayak, motorcycle, snowboard/ski and other non-climbing helmets
- Provides some protection in the event of a fall and protects against rockfall from above
- Climbing helmets also have clips around the side to help secure your headlamp strap
- Adjustable enough to fit over stocking caps

Ice axe

- The ideal axe is a general purpose alpine axe with a straight shaft and an adze
- Specialized ice climbing tools and ultralight trekking axes are not suitable
- It is important for the axe to be the correct length; when holding the axe with the self-arrest grip, the tip of the spike should be level with the ankle bone
- For most people the correct length is between 60 cm and 75 cm
- At the Gear Workshop, you will learn what the correct length is for you; your instructors will have you hold axes of different lengths until they determine what is the right size for you
- Too often, retail workers will try to talk you into buying an axe that is too short; please ignore their length recommendation and follow the guidance you received at the Gear Workshop
- Do not buy a new ice axe before the Gear Workshop
- The pick and spike of an ice axe are dangerously sharp, so when you are not using it, you need to attach it to your pack so that it is secure and so that those dangerous points are unlikely to come close to your fellow scramblers
- Even when your axe is securely attached, you need to be aware of others, especially behind you, when putting on or taking off your pack so that the pick and spike don't swing too close to anyone
- For extra protection, it is recommended that you buy pick and spike protectors
- Spike protectors are especially recommended because the spikes on new ice axes are very sharp; also, spike protectors are cheap

Protected downclimbing kit

- Contents:
 - 1/2 inch webbing to make an emergency harness – once it's tied don't untie it, to resize just loosen it
 - Locking carabiner
 - 5mm cord for connecting to a rope
- It's for emergency use only and scramble leaders carry a rope for emergency use only
- This will be given to you at the Rock Workshop

Crampons (if required by trip leader)

- Used in the spring and summer on hard snow and ice and on wind-blown slopes in the winter
- They are required for the Snow Workshop, Snow Field Trip, and the Experience Field Trip
- If you're not sure whether you should bring them on a scramble then check with the scramble leader
- You can rent them from various outdoor stores for the workshop and two field trips they are required for, see retailer list
- Be sure to take your boots with you when shopping for crampons to ensure a proper fit
- Crampons with 10+ points, including 2 horizontal front-points, work great
- Lightweight aluminum crampons are ideal for scrambling and accepted for The Mountaineers Basic Alpine Scramble Course; steel crampons are also acceptable but generally heavier than aluminum
- Full straps for the heel and toe make them more versatile and are cheaper. If your boots have crampon grooves you can buy a set with metal bars which lock into the grooves
- Purchase crampons that allow you to adjust the length without a screwdriver
- Anti-balling plates can be a nice feature in certain types of snow conditions but they aren't required
- New crampons are extremely sharp
- There are several ways to carry crampons on your backpack and to keep the points from cutting your backpack and other gear: sandwiching a thick foam rectangle, a tyvek bag, or a special crampon bag (costs money and weighs more). Talk with your instructors to figure out what works best for you.

CAR KIT

Car kit for the drive home

- Comfortable clean shoes and socks
- Water – for drinking after your trip and for washing your hands and face
- Dry clothes so you're not wet and stinky on the drive home, especially if you are carpooling
- Wet gear bag for muddy boots and wet clothes, especially if you are carpooling

Parking pass (if driving)

- Most trailheads require a parking pass for each car: daily ones are expensive so annual passes are much more cost-efficient
- If you do not have one then you can choose to carpool with someone who does
- Buy them online and at stores such as Fred Meyer, REI, Big 5 Sporting Goods, etc.
- The 3 passes we use the most are:
 - America The Beautiful Pass– National Parks entry and National Forest trailheads
 - Northwest Forest Pass – National Forest trailheads (not needed if you have an America The Beautiful Pass)
 - Discover Pass – for State Parks trailheads (Tiger Mountain, Mailbox Peak, Mt. Si, etc)

Carpool money (if carpooling)

- Carpooling is always optional
- If you choose to carpool then bring cash to pay your driver, be generous
- What you pay is not just for gas, it is also for the convenience of not having to drive home when you are tired and it is dark, for the wear and tear to the driver's vehicle, for the dirty mess left in the driver's vehicle, for the risk of theft and damage at the trailhead, etc.

SUGGESTED GEAR

Gaiters – Strongly Recommended

- Used to keep snow/rocks/dirt out of your boots
- Although we don't require gaiters, you will definitely want them
- On the Snow Field Trip and early season scrambles, if you don't wear gaiters, it will be impossible to keep snow out of your boots, resulting in cold feet and a miserable experience
- When buying, make sure they fit properly – need to be large enough to wrap around your mountaineering boots, but tight enough around the bottom to prevent snow from getting pounded up inside them
- Tall gaiters are great in the snow – if only buying one pair then buy tall ones
- Short gaiters are nice in the summer
- Wear them under crampons to help prevent accidentally snagging your pants as you take high steps

2nd headlamp

- Can be nice if yours breaks or if someone else forgets theirs
- Two small headlamps can be better than one big one – when hiking down a trail you can see better if you wear one on your head and carry one in your hand, the contrasting shadows show the rocks and steps better
- Having two small headlamps can be more reliable and flexible than one large headlamp

Altimeter

- Very useful for navigating and route finding
- Some inexpensive altimeter watches work great
- You can also use a smart phone with a free GPS altimeter app installed, there are many to choose from – there are a couple documents on The Mountaineers website comparing the accuracy of the different apps: mountaineers.org > In the top header search for "altimeter apps"
- Bring backup batteries/charger since battery levels can drop quickly, especially in cold weather

Approach shoes

- Especially useful when there's a very long trail before the scramble begins
- Before wearing them get approval from the trip leader
- They should have grippy soles such as Vibram or equivalent

Bandana/Buff

Bathroom kit

- Toilet paper
- A couple "blue bags" and/or multiple ziploc bags – blue bags are provided at some of the field trips
- Hand sanitizer
- Hygiene products

Camera

Hand and Toe warmers

- Have an expiration date
- Great for emergencies such as an unplanned overnight
- Great for people whose extremities get cold easily
- Some gloves have slots for hand warmers

Ice axe leash

- Used on steep snow or any place where dropping your ice axe would result in its loss
- Some people use a long one, some people use a short one and some people don't use them at all. However, you need to *have* some form of leash available on actual Club scrambles, even if you ultimately choose not to use it – “use” and “have” are two different things.
- Talk with a few instructors about why they prefer their method
- You can make one from 1/2 inch webbing, or you can buy a specifically designed leash

Insect protection

- Repellents with DEET work great but might have a health risk – other products contain picaridin or lemon eucalyptus oil instead
- Head nets can be a lifesaver during peak insect season – they pack small and weigh next to nothing

Overnight gear for multi day scrambles

- Some gear you can share such as a tent, stove, water filter, etc.
- Camping gear you'll probably want: sleeping bag, sleeping pad, dinner, spoon, etc.
- Camping gear you can share with others in your group: tent, stove, water filter, etc.
- Read the trip's online Leader Notes and the email from the trip leader for specific overnight gear and logistics

Sit pad/insulation pad

- Important insulation barrier between you and the ground, especially on snow
- Very useful for an unplanned overnight
- Can be used as a splint for injured limbs
- Some backpacks have a removable pad which doubles as an insulation pad

Sock liners

- Wick sweat to help prevent blisters

Sun hat

- Keeps the sun off your head and possibly your neck
- Instead some people prefer thin jackets with hoods
- Baseball hats work but don't protect your neck

Snowshoes

- Get very aggressive snowshoes with large crampon teeth and lateral teeth on both sides
- Some types have a heel lift which can be useful when ascending snow
- Avoid tube-frame styles since those usually don't have lateral teeth
- Snow in our local mountains isn't usually dry powder, so you don't need long snowshoes based on the manufacturers' weight recommendations – usually you want the shortest ones. Shorter ones are also much safer when descending
- Talk with a few instructors about the type they prefer

Traction Devices

- Used to travel along icy trails.
- They need to be rugged, so inexpensive Yaktrax won't work

Trekking poles

- Some people use two poles, some people use one, others use none and others prefer an ice axe instead
- Helpful for balance and support on steep ascents and reducing impact to knees on descents
- Useful for stream crossings
- Poles which collapse into two or three sections minimize brush snags when attached to your backpack
- Some have component parts which are replaceable when they break

Umbrella

- Great when you know you'll be on a trail for a long time in the rain

Water filter

- Needed on some long scrambles, check with the trip leader
- Iodine tablets are great for emergencies but are slow to sterilize
- Some filters requiring pumping, some requiring squeezing and some let gravity do the work (great for camp)
- Be aware that some lakes or streams shown on maps may be seasonal or inaccessible

Waterproof sacks or backpack water barrier

- Most backpacks are not waterproof, so you need to come up with a solution to keep the contents dry
- Needed in the rain and when setting your pack down in the snow
- A couple different ideas:
 - Pack covers fit on the outside, heavy rain still gets in, make sure it fits over your ice axe
 - Pack liners line the inside of your backpack, trash compactor bags from the hardware store work well
 - Large ziploc bags work well to keep specific items dry

Whistle

- For emergency signaling (three blasts)
- Some backpacks have built in whistles but often they are quiet and inaudible in rugged terrain

PURCHASING GEAR

Shopping tips

- Do not buy new gear until after you've attended the Gear Workshop since you will receive a lot of information at the Gear Workshop to help you make better buying decisions
- Read chapter 2 ("Clothing and Equipment") in the course textbook "Mountaineering Freedom of the Hills"
- Some gear can be rented: crampons, ice axe, climbing helmet, snowshoes
- There are many options for each piece of gear so decide what works best for you based on multiple factors such as cost, weight, availability, features, etc.
- Ensure proper fit and comfort since you may wear this gear all day
- Members of The Mountaineers receive [special discounts and benefits](#)

Some stores (this is not an endorsement; also, discount amounts may change)

Store	Website	Notes	Member Discount
Arc'teryx	arcteryx.com	Seattle	
Ascent Outdoors	ascentoutdoors.com	Seattle, Surplus, Rentals	
Backcountry	backcountry.com		15% most items
Bentgate	bentgate.com		
Big 5 Sporting Goods	big5sportinggoods.com		
Campmor	campmor.com		
Eastern Mountain Sports	ems.com		
Eddie Bauer / First Ascent	eddiebauer.com		
Feathered Friends	featheredfriends.com	Seattle, Rentals	10% in store
Federal Army & Navy Surplus	gr8gear.com	Seattle, surplus	
Fjallraven	fjallraven.us	Seattle	20% in store
Hilleberg the Tentmaker	hilleberg.com	Redmond	
McHale Custom Backpacks	mchalepacks.com	Seattle	
MEC	mec.ca		
Miyar Adventures	miyaradventures.com	Redmond	15-20% in store
Moosejaw	moosejaw.com		
Mountaineers Marketplace	facebook.com/groups/377304859047281	The Mountaineers, Used	

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Mountain Hardware	mountainhardwear.com	Seattle	15% in store
Nate's Surplus Army/Navy		Seattle, surplus, 206-767-4950	
North Face	thenorthface.com		
Outdoor Research	outdoorresearch.com	Seattle, Rentals	15% at Seattle Store
Patagonia	patagonia.com		
Play It Again Sports	playitagainsports.com	Used	
Pro Mountain Sports	promountainsports.com	Seattle	
REI	rei.com	Rentals	
REI Used	rei.com/used	Used	
Sierra Trading Post	sierratradingpost.com		
Steep & Cheap	steepandcheap.com	Clearance	
Summit Hut	summithut.com		
Tarptent	tarptent.com		
Wilderness	wildernessoutdoorstore.com	Bainbridge Island	
Zpacks	zpacks.com		

Some repair shops (this is not an endorsement)

Chick's Shoes	chicks-shoes.com	Mercer Island, boots
Dave Page Cobbler	davepagecobblers.com	Seattle, boot and shoes
Rainy Pass Repairs	rainypass.com	Seattle

FAQ

Scramble Categories

Snow scrambles:

- Traditionally begin on or after April 1 during early Spring and Summer seasons
- Involve significant snow travel
- Require an ice axe and climbing helmet
- Not to be confused with “winter scrambles”; a snow scramble can be on a sunny 70°F day in June or July Note: students can register for snow scrambles with their student badge; however, the date of the scramble must be after the Snow Field Trip -- register as soon as possible after completing the Field Trip since the snowpack may be unpredictable

Rock scrambles:

- Traditionally begin after the mountain snow melts and end on October 31 before Winter season
- Involve significant off-trail travel over rock (scree, boulders, blocky outcroppings, low angle slabs, etc.) Note: students can register for rock scrambles with their student badge; however the date of the scramble must be after the Rock Field Trip

Winter scrambles:

- Traditionally begin on or after November 1 and end around March 31; otherwise known as the Winter season
- Eligible for Scrambling Course graduates only
- Involve colder weather and significantly shorter daylight hours which are more challenging to deal with
- Avalanche safety is generally a higher concern
- Backpack weight is significantly higher (snowshoes, crampons, warmer clothes, more emergency overnight clothes, shovel)

Strenuous (S) and Technical (T) Scramble Ratings

Strenuous and technical difficulty ratings on the website range from 1 (easier) to 5 (challenging). This does not correspond to any other popular rating or class. This is a separate rating created by The Mountaineers specifically for rating scrambles

(S)trenuous Level:

- An objective rating based solely on trip mileage and elevation gain
- Does not take into account the pace, terrain, temperature, etc.
- Most scrambles list the mileage and elevation gain, so you may be better off referencing those instead
- Examples:
 - An S3 scramble on a 100 F degree day may feel like an S5 trip
 - A really fast paced S3 scramble may feel like an S4 trip

(T)echnical Level:

- A subjective rating based on the combination of the technical movement difficulty and the exposure
- Does not consider the route conditions (wet rocks, snow level, wind, visibility, ice, etc.)
- A fall with low exposure would not be serious, but a fall with high exposure would be disastrous
- One T4 scramble may seem easy to you but another T4 scramble may scare you
- Examples:
 - A T3 rock scramble may be rated T4 if the rock happens to be wet
 - A T4 rock scramble could have hard technical moves 5 feet off the ground (high difficulty, low exposure)
 - A T4 rock scramble could be an easy trail along a very narrow ridge (low difficulty, high exposure)

Register for a Scramble

- Search for scrambles on The Mountaineers website:
 - mountaineers.org > Explore > Find Activities > "Scrambling" checkbox > On the trip listing click "Register"
- Each year there are 250–300 scrambles listed on the website
- Only sign up for scrambles within your level of ability
- Only sign up during the sign-up window, each trip listing will tell you when the window opens and closes
- Read the trip's online Leader Notes since some scrambles are only for specific participants
- You are able to sign up for scrambles with other Mountaineers branches
- Some trips fill up quickly, so if there's a trip you really want to do then put a reminder in your calendar for the sign-up time
- If a scramble is full then you can join the wait list, very often participants will cancel and you'll get on the scramble, see the "FAQ" section of this handbook on waitlists
- Check the website often since scrambles are added daily and often with only a week's notice, see the "FAQ" section of this handbook on new trip email notifications
- Occasionally a scramble will be "Leader Permission Required" meaning you can't sign up until after you have written approval from the scramble leader: click the "Request Leader's Permission" link to send an email

Canceling from a Scramble

- Cancel off a trip as soon as possible, especially if there is a waitlist
- Canceling at the very last minute is inappropriate; only cancel last minute when absolutely necessary
- Never be a no-show, otherwise everyone will be waiting for you at the trailhead – multiple no-shows may jeopardize your future scramble sign-ups
- Cancel off a trip if you're sick or have an injury which could limit you on the scramble, otherwise you may slow down the group too much or cause a group safety issue
- If the sign-up window is still open then cancel yourself by clicking "Cancel" on the trip listing
- If the sign-up window has closed then contact the scramble leader

Waitlists

- If a scramble is full then you can join the waitlist; very often participants will cancel and you will get on the scramble
- If you are on the waitlist then be prepared to go on the scramble because you may get onto the scramble at the very last minute
- If you're on a wait list but can no longer go on the scramble, or you want to make other plans instead, then please cancel off the waitlist as soon as possible as a courtesy to the participants after you on the waitlist
- Check where you are on the waitlist in the Activities section of your profile
- If the scramble you want to get on is full then look for other scrambles happening on the same day, a peak you have never heard of may turn out to be a wonderful adventure

New trip email notifications

- Be among the first to know when a scramble leader lists a new scramble on the website by signing up to receive notifications
- The simplest way to do this is to edit the "Alerts & Notifications Preferences" section of your "My Profile" page on the Mountaineers website
- This can be especially helpful when you want to be alerted about trips that are scheduled on short notice

Carpools

- The Mountaineers offers tools to help you set up carpools but it's always optional
- Obviously carpooling is good for the environment, but it's also beneficial for us since some trailheads have

limited parking

- Scrambling Course field trips have large groups, so carpooling is even more important and you will receive emails before your field trips detailing specific carpooling logistics
- If you are a carpool rider then make sure to bring money for your driver, see the "Required Scramble Gear" section of this handbook about paying your fair share for carpools

Weather and road conditions

- Mountain weather forecasts:
 - <http://mountain-forecast.com>
 - <http://weather.gov> – tip: on a scramble listing click "full route/place details" then "weather forecast"
- General weather forecasts:
 - <http://accuweather.com>
 - <http://wunderground.com>
 - <http://windy.com>
- Avalanche forecasts:
 - <http://nwac.us>
- Trail and forest road conditions:
 - <http://wta.org>
 - <http://www.fs.fed.us>
 - <http://peakbagger.com>
- Road conditions and cameras:
 - <http://wsdot.com/traffic/passes>
- Mountain cameras:
 - Mt Rainier has an entire webcam page from all around the park
 - Mount Si live video feed: <http://146.129.248.180/northbend.html>
 - Check ski resorts, etc.

Frame of mind while on scrambles (expedition behavior)

- Scrambling is a team activity, you will need to work together and rely on each other. Be committed to the group's goal
- Be humble and approach situations assuming you may learn something and improve
- Arrive at the trailhead prepared – research the route ahead of time, bring all the necessary equipment, be in good physical condition, and be mentally prepared for the day
- You are an active participant since The Mountaineers is not a guide service – that means always speak up if you have a concern, make safety your number one priority, make sure everyone in your group is accounted for, help someone if you see them struggling or bring the difficulty to the leader's attention
- You are responsible for your own safety and wellbeing at all times – if you think something is unsafe then please speak up
- If your pace is a lot faster than the rest of the group then resist going far ahead of everyone, instead stay with the team and offer to help slower scramblers by taking some of the weight out of their backpacks, or stay in front and help with route finding or kicking steps
- When you get to the summit you should still have 50% or more of your energy remaining, otherwise you may not have the energy needed to get back safely which could compromise group safety – monitor your own physical and mental state and its impact upon the group
- Do not make summiting your goal, that way you won't be tempted to sacrifice safety just to reach the summit
- A successful scramble does not mean you reached the summit, successful means everyone made it home safely and had a good time – focus on the success of the group

Low-impact recreation reminders

Pack it in, pack it out

- Toilet paper and feminine hygiene products – always pack it out, never bury it
- Solid human waste above tree line – always pack it out, never bury it
- Solid human waste below tree line – either pack it out or bury it in a small hole dug 6–8 inches deep in dirt (not snow) and at least 200 feet from water, campsites and trails – never bury toilet paper or feminine hygiene products – ice axes work great for digging holes
- Pack out all trash and leftover food (includes fruit and vegetable peels, seeds, etc.)

Leave no trace

- Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them – do not add rock cairns or flagging
- In popular areas – use trails and never cut switchbacks, also walk in the middle of trails even when muddy
- In pristine areas – when off-trail spread out to prevent the creation of a new trails

Graduation – which scrambles count?

- You need three (3) scrambles to graduate:
 - One snow scramble
 - One rock scramble, and
 - the 3rd scramble can be rock or snow
- Experience Field Trip summits do not count
- Reaching the final destination is generally required, if you turn around 200 feet below your destination for any reason then that summit doesn't usually count (the leader has some discretion here) – usually the destination is the summit of a peak but there are a few exceptions, such as Camp Muir
- Scrambles must be led through The Mountaineers, private scrambles do not count
- Conditioning Hikes do not count
- Multiple summits in a single trip count as only one summit (other branches of The Mountaineers may count them as multiple summits but not the Seattle branch)
- All three scrambles must be completed in a safe and competent manner

How do I know whether my scramble was rock or snow?

Your scramble leader will decide if there was enough snow to qualify as a snow scramble or enough rock to qualify as a rock scramble. Usually the leaders will list it as rock or snow in the description. Some scrambles may not be a snow scramble or a rock scramble in which case it could still count as your 3rd scramble as it may be off trail over brush and heather.

Coursework Makeups for workshops and field trips

- You need to attend all workshops and field trips to graduate
- There are at least two offerings of every workshop and field trip, so please make sure one of each of them works with your schedule
- Makeup options are very limited
- If you're unable to attend any dates for a workshop or field trip then let us know as soon as possible by emailing scrambling.seattle@gmail.com

Logging trips on peakbagger.com

- There are many ways to keep track of the scrambles you've done, but one of the neatest methods is to create an account and record your trips on: www.peakbagger.com
- The website has all of the summit lists (like the 100 peaks in MRNP, the Snoqualmie 20, etc.) and as you log your summits it will display your progress within all the summit lists
- This is also handy as a type of climbing résumé, allowing you to send a link to your peakbagger profile to trip leaders so they can see if you're a good match for their trips – some people even put a link to their peakbagger profile on their Mountaineers profile

POPULAR SCRAMBLES

- This is a small sample of the popular scrambles which may be a good starting point for your adventures
- Each year there are 250–300 scrambles led through The Mountaineers
- Scrambles are offered by other Mountaineers branches, not just Seattle – you can sign up for any of them unless the leader has specified otherwise
- Begin with a moderate scramble and slowly build up to increasing difficulty
- Many summer scrambles can be snow or rock, it depends on the conditions, see the "FAQ" section of this handbook on categories of scrambles
- Scrambles on the website are rated with S & T ratings for strenuous and technical difficulty, see the "FAQ" section of this handbook on S & T rating
- Read about every Mountaineers scramble destination in more detail (mileage, difficulty, etc.) at: mountaineers.org > Explore > Find Routes & Places > filter on "Scrambling"

Moderate:

Mt Ararat	Snow or Rock
Bean Peak	Rock
Camp Muir & Anvil Rock	Snow
Copper Mtn & Iron Mtn (Mt Rainier)	Rock
Cowboy Mtn	Snow
Earl Peak	Snow or Rock
Mt Ellinor (route 1)	Snow
Esmeralda Peak (west peak)	Rock
Hawkins Mtn	Snow or Rock
Humpback Mtn	Snow or Rock
Iron Peak & Teanaway Peak	Snow or Rock
Lichtenberg Mtn	Snow or Rock
Mt Pilchuck (East ridge)	Snow or Rock
Putrid Pete's Peak	Rock
Snoqualmie Mtn	Snow or Rock
Vesper Peak	Snow or Rock

Difficult:

Barrier Peak & Tamanos Mtn	Rock
Cashmere Mtn	Snow or Rock
Grindstone Mtn	Snow or Rock
Gothic Peak	Snow or Rock
Hibox Mtn	Rock
Kaleetan Peak (South ridge)	Rock
Mt Ruth (Mt Rainier)	Snow
Silver Peak & Tinkham Peak & Abiel Peak	Rock
Wedge Mtn	Rock

Challenging:

Mt Baring (Northwest ridge)	Snow or Rock
Del Campo	Rock
Governors Ridge & Barrier Peak	Rock
Merchant Peak	Rock
Mt Stuart	Snow or Rock
Volcanic Neck	Rock

WHAT'S NEXT

When you've graduated from the Alpine Scrambling Course there are many paths you can follow based on your interests

Go on trips in the Summer

- **Scrambles (April–October)** – continue enjoying these!
- **Hikes** – everyone can sign up for these

Go on trips in the Winter

- **Winter scrambles (November–March)** – these are very different from Summer scrambles, there may also be a Winter Scrambling Seminar hosted in November/December to help get you started: see the "FAQ" section of this handbook on the Winter Scrambles
- **Snowshoeing trips** – Scrambling Course graduates are qualified to sign-up for any snowshoeing trips – these range from Basic trips ending at a frozen lake to Backcountry trips with snowy peak destinations requiring ice axes (*ice axe arrest is taught in the Backcountry Snowshoe Course*)

Take additional courses within The Mountaineers to advance your skills

- **Ropes & Anchors** – modules offered throughout the year (ropes & anchors, emergency overnights, etc.); taking these will help prepare you to become a scramble leader
- **Basic Alpine Climbing Course** – an involved course learning how to belay, climb glaciers, second/follow on rock
This course can also be taken as three separate smaller courses:
 - **Scrambling Course** – congratulations, you're already done with this component
 - **Glacier Travel Course** – see below
 - **Introduction to Alpine Rock Course** – see below
- **Glacier Travel Course** – this is a component of the Basic Alpine Climbing Course, you will learn how to safely climb glaciers while roped up and have the opportunity to climb Mt Rainier and Mt Baker, amongst others
- **Introduction to Alpine Rock Course** -- this is a component of the Basic Alpine Climbing Course, you will learn how to be a second/follow on rock climbs
- **Winter Camping Course** – this course will teach you how to build a snow cave and spend the night in it
- **Avalanche & AIARE courses** – there's a short course on avalanche awareness and a much more advanced AIARE Level 1 course

Instruct/Volunteer

- The Mountaineers always pairs up new instructors with experienced instructors
- To sign up just find the course you want to help with and sign up as an instructor
- Scramble Course instructor – next year you can instruct at any of the field trips; this helps cement the skills you learned as a student
- Scrambling Committee – join the committee to help shape the direction of future Scrambling Courses
- Snowshoe Course instructor – instruct at the field trips; it is also a great way to practice ice axe arrest again
- Wilderness Navigation Course instructor – help at the workshop or the field trip; doing both renews your Basic Navigation Course badge for an extra three years
- Wilderness First Aid patient – be one of the accident victims for the scenario part of the Wilderness First Aid Course
- Leadership – The Mountaineers offers a great Outdoor Leadership Workshop, it is open to all and strongly recommended for anyone possibly considering becoming a trip leader within The Mountaineers

NOTES & CONTACTS