Student Guide

The Mountaineers, Tacoma
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Mountaineering: The Freedom of the Hills is the Required class text.
This handbook is an overview and supplement, not substitute.

Please join our Facebook group to coordinate class events and get last minute information  Class Facebook Group
Tacoma Mountaineers Alpine Scrambling Course Committee

Co-Chair, Manual
Dave Schultz
gdbschultz@gmail.com

Co-Chair and Field Trips
Allan Mass
AMaas@parametrix.com

Record Keeping
Sue Giblin
sisulady@outlook.com

Critical Skills
Open

Field Trips Assistant
Shawn Warwick
warwicsa@gmail.com

Leadership Development
Margot Tsakonas
mvtsonas19@comcast.net

Lectures
Jerrick Linde
lindejs@comcast.net

Publicity
Krys Beard
krysh3@gmail.com

Leadership Development
Royce Poetter
rovcepoetter15@gmail.com

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lectures (7:00 PM – 9:00 PM)</th>
<th>FIELD TRIPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tue, Mar 5, 2019</td>
<td>Lecture 1 – Course Introduction, Conservation Activities, Essential and Critical Skills,</td>
<td>#1 Rock 1 – Spire Rock, Spanaway, No</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equipment and Clothing, 10 Essential Systems, Safety and First Aid (WFA), Conditioning</td>
<td>Parking Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and Nutrition, Knots</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tue, Mar 19, 2019</td>
<td>Lecture 2 – Rock Techniques, Wilderness Ethics, Mountain Weather, Scramble Ratings, Signing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>up for Scramble Trips</td>
<td>#2 Snow 1- Paradise MRNP, MRNP Pass</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat, Apr 6, 2019</td>
<td>Lecture 3 – Avalanche Hazard Awareness, Snow Travel, Ice Ax Use</td>
<td>#3 Rock 2 – Little Si, N. Bend,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Discover Pass</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed, Apr 17, 2019</td>
<td>Lecture 3 – Avalanche Hazard Awareness, Snow Travel, Ice Ax Use</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat, Apr 20, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat, May 4, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue, May 7, 2019</td>
<td>Lecture 4 – Winter/Snow Camping, Snowshoes and crampons, Leadership and Team Responsibility,</td>
<td>#4 Overnight Snow Camping - Bean</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Winter Overnight Preparation - Individual and Group Gear</td>
<td>Creek Basin, outside Cle Elum</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>U.S. NW Forest Pass</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat, May 18, 2019</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>#5 Snow 2 - BullionBasin, Crystal Mtn.</td>
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<td>Sun, May 19, 2019</td>
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<td>U.S. NW Forest Pass</td>
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<td>Tue, May 28, 2019</td>
<td>Final Exam – Review, Final Exam</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat, Jun 8, 2019</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Attendance will be taken at all classes and field trips.
- Arrive at Lectures by 6:45 PM to help set up tables & chairs, turn in quizzes and ask questions.
- All lectures begin at 7:00 PM SHARP and end at 9:00 PM - Please Be On Time.
- After class, help put away tables and chairs.

Location - The Tacoma Mountaineer Program Center (2302 North 30th Street, Tacoma, WA 98403)
Mandatory Requirements for Graduation:

1. Successfully complete a conditioner hike. **NOTE** It is a requirement for Overnight Field Trip.
2. Attend all lectures & submit homework (arrangements can be made with instructors if a lecture must be missed).
3. Attend all field trips (discuss alternatives for missed field trip with the instructors).
4. Pass the final exam.
5. Complete three Mountaineers led alpine scrambles (1 snow, 1 rock, 1 either). When applying for graduation, please list the climbs and dates.
   - **Earn these badges, must be current as of date of graduation**
8. Graduate from Mountaineers approved Wilderness First Aid or equivalent.
9. Earn the Stewardship Credit Badge check Washington Trails Assoc., MRNP Volunteer

When you have completed all these requirements submit the Completed **Graduation Application Form** to Sue Giblin sisulady@outlook.com

To receive your Certificate at this year’s October Graduation potluck submit at least 7 days prior to that date.

**WHAT HAVE YOU GOTTEN YOURSELF INTO?**

It may seem a bit overwhelming as you put your metaphoric pack on your back and start down this trail. Our advice is to take it one step at a time and enjoy where you are right now. Here are a few first steps.

- When you show up your first night for class, you don’t need any equipment. We’ll show you what you need and give you alternatives. You have time to pull your gear together.
- There is homework! The dog better not eat it. We assign reading and quizzes from the textbook.
- When you registered for the course, you registered for all the classes and field trips. Be sure to **CANCEL** any trip you can’t attend. This allows anyone on a waitlist to take your place.
- Do Not Delay Getting in Shape! The course requires passing a conditioner test to make sure your own physical conditioning allows you to participate in all activities comfortably and safely. Tired climbers slow group progress and they become increasingly faulty in movement and judgment.
- Start looking for a Wilderness First Aid (WFA- pronounced “woof-uh” by cool club members). Mountain Oriented First Aid (MOFA “moe-fuh”) is a course that the club puts on that fills up quickly so sign up now. Navigation (“naav”) class and sign up early. You may sign up with any branch. Scholarships are available.
• You will have to donate one day of volunteer work with any organization that does trail or park maintenance. In addition to accomplishing something significant, work parties are a great way to condition, meet people, and share camaraderie, while you enjoy the beautiful scenery that is part of our wilderness. Look on this requirement not as a chore but as an opportunity! Check Washington Trails Assoc., MRNP Volunteer, Mountaineers.

• Ask questions! Your instructors volunteered to teach this class because we love it. There are no stupid questions.

• This club is inclusive and respectful. What we do out there involves hard work and danger. We face these things together; every trip involves a team of climbers. Respect your teammates. Ask for help, give help, watch out for each other. Know and respect personal boundaries.

What is Scrambling with The Mountaineers? (click and see)

Off trail travel over rock and/or snow.

Off trail may mean a few hundred yards over easy ground or 3 miles up a steep ridge covered in Devil’s Club, downed trees, and rock bands. Read the entire posting before signing up. Leaders post the pace they expect to keep on the trip; only sign up if you can keep that pace. Rock and snow travel come with a technical rating (T 1-5) and a strenuous rating (S 1-5). Students should stay in T 1-3, S 1-3 to start. If you still have questions, contact the leader.

Show up on time with all the equipment you need or may need. Decisions on what to carry are often made at the trailhead. Be ready to carry group gear if needed.

The Mountaineers do not lead guided tours. Safety is your individual responsibility. Just because there is a leader does not mean you can delegate your safety to the leader or you should not ask questions about safety. When on a scrambles trip, you are an active participant in the safety and success of your team. The most effective way to prevent mishaps is to adequately prepare for the trip. Safety should be the priority in all phases of scrambles trips including trip planning and preparation and driving to and from the trailheads. If you are unsure of your ability to meet trip requirements, ask questions. If you need help, be sure to ask for it. You know your limits better than anyone else. You are responsible for preparing and taking care of yourself to minimize risk and prevent mishaps. Bring appropriate clothing and proper equipment. While traveling, stay alert and think about potential hazards and how to get around or avoid them. If you have information and thoughts that might be of value, share them with the party, especially with the leader. You and your fellow climbers share in the responsibility for the scrambles party with which you travel.

Any member of a scramble can call a stop at any time. If you feel like what you are doing is unsafe, over your head, or you just don’t want to do it, speak up!
**ESSENTIAL AND CRITICAL SKILLS**

**Controlled Risk**  Regarding critical skills, we need to have language that is clear to students on what constitutes failure. It is difficult for people to handle subjectivity. Alpine scrambling is a sport of controlled risk. Both objective hazards dependent on the mountain environment and subjective factors dependent on the scrambler must be faced to safely and successfully scramble. The objective hazards such as bad weather and rock fall cannot be controlled. However, the subjective qualities of a scrambler, such as knowledge, skill, conditioning, and judgment, can be developed to overcome or avoid some of the objective hazards encountered while scrambling.

**Essential Skills**

All skills taught in the Alpine Scrambles Course are essential for you to safely and successfully participate in scrambles. Lectures and field trips are designed to help you learn through discussion, demonstration, and practice. All of the skills taught will increase your general knowledge. Many of these skills must be proficiently performed by you in a test (without help from the instructor), or you will not be permitted to continue subsequent field trips or scrambles. Once a skill test has been completed, you are expected to perform that skill proficiently in all subsequent course activities.

**CONDITIONING:** This is monitored at all course activities. The conditioning skill test is to complete a conditioner. Completion of a conditioner is required prior to the overnight snow camping field trip and all scrambles. It is your responsibility to get in shape and to stay in shape. More information on conditioning is found in subsequent sections.

**TEN ESSENTIAL SYSTEMS:** Acquisition of these is checked for reasonable progress at field trips 1 and 2, but a complete set is required by field trip 3 (Rock 2). Ten essential systems must be checked off before participating in scrambles. You may be excluded from field trips and scrambles at leader’s discretion if equipment is not appropriate. More information on the ten essential systems is found in subsequent sections.

**NAVIGATION:** Navigation is an essential skill for scrambling that is taught in a separate course, available through the Tacoma or other Mountaineers branches. You must hold a current Navigation Card to graduate.

**Critical Skills**  *Refer to the Appropriate Field Trip Packet for list specific skills being tested*

A few of the essential skills have been identified as not only essential to successful scrambling but critical to safety. These critical skills are:

**KNOTS:** Knots are demonstrated and practiced at Rock 1 and further practiced as time allows. It is recommended that you practice on your own or request a mentor for additional assistance prior to critical skills testing at Rock 2 field trip. Knots need to be demonstrated without help at the test.

**ROCK SKILLS:** These are demonstrated and practiced at Rock 1 and 2 field trips. These critical skill are tested at Rock 2 and need to be demonstrated without help. If you encounter difficulty at Rock 1, it is recommended that you request a mentor for additional assistance prior to critical skills testing at Rock 2.

**ICE AX ARREST:** This is demonstrated and practiced at Snow 1 and Snow 2 field trips. If you encounter difficulty at Snow 1, it is recommended that you request a mentor for additional assistance prior to critical skills testing at Snow 2.

**Corrective Action**

If you did not pass a Critical skill test the instructor or field trip leader will contact the Critical Skills person; you will not be permitted to participate in subsequent field trips or scrambles which require that skill. You should contact the Critical Skills person as soon as you are notified of a skill deficiency. From that point on, it is your responsibility to correct your skill deficiencies before continuing in the course.

You will work out a plan to correct your deficiency with the Critical Skills person. (This may have to happen the following year.) You will be advised to contact a mentor or the ASC Committee, depending on the situation. You must then pursue corrective action such as further practice of the skill with a mentor before any retest, if appropriate.
CONDITIONING TEST STANDARD

1. An outing involving at least 2500 ft of elevation gain with at least 2 hours of sustained strenuous uphill hiking, Mt Si trail for example. Complete within 2.5 hours (one way) in most cases.
2. Carry a pack containing ~20% of your weight (25 lbs. min., 40 lbs. max.). We suggest you carry water rather than gear, so you can dump it and save your knees going down.
3. Must be completed prior to participation on Snow Overnight field trip.

Conditioner hikes allow the student and the Scramble Committee to determine if the student is in sufficient condition physically to participate in a scramble. If you have to struggle to barely pass, your outlook for successful scrambles is doubtful without dedicated physical conditioning exercises. Students can and are encouraged to sign up for as many conditioner hikes as they like.

THE TEN ESSENTIAL SYSTEMS

At a minimum, you need to carry sufficient equipment and clothing to be able to survive in the event of an emergency. Be ready to spend the night in the worst conditions imaginable, and plan for it. Remember, you want to survive, not necessarily be in comfort. Carry the Ten Essential Systems with you on ALL field trips and scrambles.

The Ten Essential Systems

1. Navigation
2. Sun protection
3. Insulation (extra clothing)
4. Illumination
5. First aid supplies
6. Fire
7. Repair kit and tools
8. Nutrition (extra food)
9. Hydration (extra water)
10. Emergency shelter

KNOTS ([www.animatedknots.com](http://www.animatedknots.com))

Better to know a knot and not need it, than need a knot and not know it. -Gary Zink

While scrambling does not involve extensive rope handling, ropes and webbing are often used as an aid in getting around difficult or hazardous locations. Therefore, it is critical for scramblers to know how to tie key knots correctly and to be able to recognize correctly tied knots. The knots you need to know are:

- Overhand knot
- Girth hitch
- Water knot
- Prusik knot
- Klemheist
- Figure 8 loop (Figure 8 on a bight)
- Rewoven Figure 8 (Figure 8 Follow Through)
- Double Fisherman’s knot (Double Fisherman’s Bend; Grapevine Knot)

Dressing Knots: This term refers to the practice of ensuring that the rope or webbing used to tie a knot is correctly positioned. The knot material lies cleanly and in correct position in relation to other strands in the knot. The sign of a correctly tied knot is a well-dressed knot. It also increases the likelihood that you will be able to untie the knot later. A poorly dressed knot is weaker than a properly dressed one. (Even properly dressed knots decrease rope strength up to 50% or more.)

Practice tying knots around large and small items (e.g., your waist, a tree, table leg, etc.) as well as tying knots to things (e.g. other pieces of rope or webbing, to eye-bolt openings, etc.). You will be expected to tie all of these knots under the close scrutiny of your instructor! Your knots will be inspected for good dressing. PRACTICE! PRACTICE! PRACTICE!

Harness: In addition, you will learn how to set up and use a quick self-rescue system called a hasty harness and prusik loop, consisting of a 20 to 25 foot long or longer (depending upon your girth) 1-inch tubular webbing, a pear-shaped locking carabiner, and a loop made with a 8 feet long 5 mm. perlon cord. A climbing harness is optional, ask the leaders for suggestions. The system should be carried in your pack for scramble trips along with the ten essentials systems. When a need arises to use a fixed line for safety, you construct a harness with the webbing or put on the climbing harness, attach the carabiner to the harness, attach the prusik loop to the fixed line using a prusik knot, or Klemheist and then clip your carabiner to the loop.
How to construct a Hasty Harness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Diagram</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grab the webbing in the center (mark the center) and hold it on one hip. While holding it there, take a strand and tuck a loop into the waistband in front. Drop the two webbing ends down making a loop at the waistband.</td>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass both ends back between the legs, around the outside of the upper thighs. As you wrap the ends around your legs, keep them low and tight near your butt cheeks.</td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bring the webbing ends to the front and through the tucked loop.</td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tighten up the lines, pulling the webbing from its tucked position so that it is tightened between the two loops. Bring the webbing ends back around the waist</td>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bring the webbing ends back and around waist once (or more, if you have a lot of extra loose ends) ending at the hip where you placed the mid-point of the webbing.</td>
<td><img src="image5" alt="Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Securely tie the two ends with a water knot making sure the fit is snug. It is easiest if the initial part of the water knot is placed on the front strand of webbing. A square knot can also be used. It must have half hitches on both sides to lock it.</td>
<td><img src="image6" alt="Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back up the knot by tying each tail around the wrap-around strand with an overhand knot. There should be at least 2–3 inches of tail. Clip in a large locking pear-shaped carabiner through the loop and the strands wrapped around the waist.</td>
<td><img src="image7" alt="Diagram" /></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
RESPONSIBILITIES AND CLUB POLICIES

HARASSMENT AND ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

- The Mountaineers is committed to maintaining an environment which is free of verbal, physical and visual forms of harassment so that everyone can enjoy our club activities in a productive, respectful and dynamic 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 and marital status

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"

Additional policies
The full list of The Mountaineers policies is located here: mountaineers.org > search for "board policies"

CARPOOLING

- 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
- If you choose to carpool then bring cash to pay your driver, be generous $0.12 to $0.14 per mile roundtrip may be a good starting point for each passenger – calculate the amount the night before at home so you have appropriate dollars
- 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 drivers vehicle, for the risk of theft and damage at the trailhead, etc.

Our Motto:

Safe – Mandatory
Fun – Encouraged
Summit - Optional
MOUNTAINEERS CLIMBING CODE

The climbing code is a standard of judgment based on many years of mountaineering experience. In risky or doubtful situations, following this climbing code increases the margin for safety and success. It is a guide both for veteran and novice alike and a key to safe and sane climbing. Follow it religiously until its precepts become second nature.

1. A climbing party of three is the minimum, unless adequate pre-arranged support is available. On glaciers, a minimum of two rope teams is recommended.

2. Rope on all exposed places and for all glacier travel. Anchor all belays.

3. Keep the party together and obey the leader or majority rules.

4. Never climb beyond your ability and knowledge.

5. Never let judgment be overruled by desire when choosing a route or turning back.

6. Always carry the necessary clothing, food, and equipment.

7. Leave the trip schedule with a responsible person.

8. Follow the precepts of sound mountaineering as set forth in textbooks of recognized merit.

9. Behave always in a manner that will reflect favorably upon mountaineering.
## Clothing and Gear - Backpack Check before Overnight Trip at Lecture 4

Version 3, 3/12/18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>R1</th>
<th>S1</th>
<th>R2</th>
<th>S O/N</th>
<th>S2</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Clothing</strong> (adjust for weather)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shirt, base layer</td>
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<td>Socks, boot</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gaiters</td>
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<td>See pg 8 Lecture 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shoes, camp/river</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Navigation</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun Protection &amp; sun glasses</td>
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<td><strong>Insulation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fire</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Repair kit, tools</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Group Day Gear</strong> (Coordinated by Leader)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tent with ground cloth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sleeping bag</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ground pad (2 for snow)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stove &amp; fuel</td>
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<td>Cooking pot, cup, utensils</td>
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<td>Water container</td>
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<td>Filter, water or tablets</td>
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<td>Toiletries, medication</td>
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<td>Garbage bag</td>
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| *Strongly recommend having dry clothes to change into*
THE MOUNTAINEERS’ EMERGENCY PLAN

Overview

- The 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 to call the Mountaineers Emergency Line if you're not back by Sunday at noon
- It's your responsibility to educate your emergency contact person of this procedure and 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

×
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.
- 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 (they teach ice ax arrest 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
- 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 ax 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