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INTRODUCTION

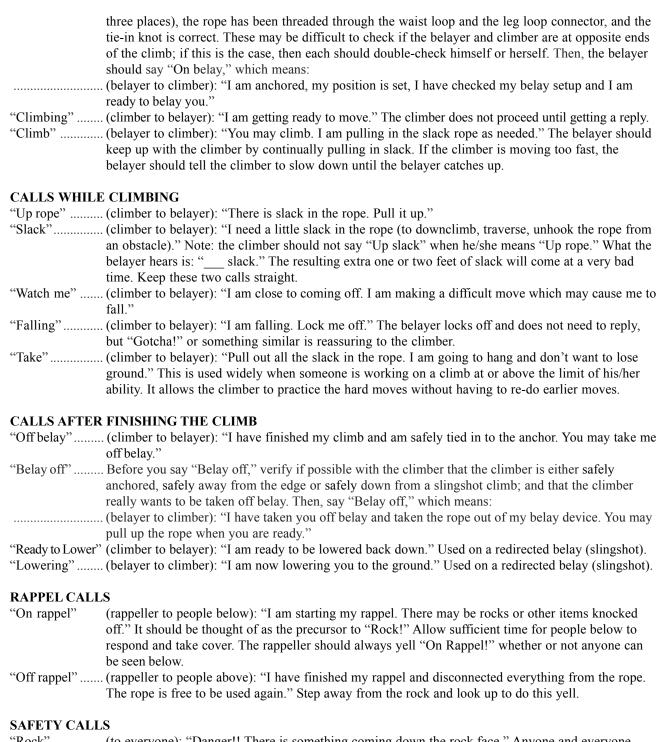
You need to communicate effectively with your climbing partner. When you are both on the ground, several feet apart, this is fairly easy. When you (the belayer) are on the ground and your climber is 150' above you, it is much harder, and it may become almost impossible under windy or bad weather conditions. It is easiest to understand specific, commonly used climbing calls instead of sentences. These calls are almost universally recognized, so you can climb with new acquaintances more quickly than if you have to develop a new system.

CAUTIONS ABOUT CLIMBING CALLS

- **Keep the calls loud and clear.** Stick to the established calls and avoid sentences. When calling to someone above you, tilt your head back and yell upwards. If you are talking to someone below, yell down. If a rock wall is across the canyon, there is an echo effect that can garble your calls. In such an area, space your words.
- Use your partner's name as part of the climbing call (e.g., "Tom, climbing" or "Susan, climb"). When you are in a school situation, or a crowded climbing area, there will be several climbers and belayers in close proximity, yelling similar calls. Call your partner by name first to get his/her attention.
- Buy and carry a whistle. If you know you will not be able to hear each other on a particular climb, take a whistle. Buy the flat, orange, underwater type that is small and less than 3/8 inch in thickness. Carry it on a keeper string on your harness. These are designed for rescue and emergency work, and are incredibly loud for their size. Agree with your partner beforehand what each signal means. Two blasts is "Ready," three is "Climb on," etc. (or whatever you decide, since there is no established standard as with calls). Some people have had luck with a system of tugs on the rope, but that is not always reliable, as drag can prevent one partner from feeling the tugs.
- Yell "Rock!" as loudly as you can when something is falling. Although covered in detail below, this is an emergency call that deserves special attention. It doesn't matter how big the object is. A tiny object can put out an eye, and a small object falling from a great height can injure or kill you. When you hear the call "Rock!":
 - Do not look up to see the rock, exposing your face and eyes.
 - Do not put your arms over your head to protect it, exposing your arms. That is why you have a helmet.
 - Do not look straight down, exposing your neck.
 - **Do** move close to the rock (usually) as rocks (usually) bounce outward, or move to the side.
 - Do try to let your helmet absorb the shock, not your body parts.

PRE-CLIMBING CALLS

Ready"(climber to belayer): "I am tied in to the rope." If the belayer is at the top of the climb, the climber
should step up to the rock face immediately after giving the call, and should realize that there is
sometimes a lag between saying ready and feeling the belayer haul up the rope. Once the belayer has
hauled up the slack rope, the climber yells
That's me" (climber to belayer): "You have pulled up all the slack rope. You are now tugging on me."
On belay" Before the belayer says "On belay," the climber should always check four things: that the belayer's
harness is doubled back, the belay biner holding the belay device is locked and correctly oriented,
the belay device setup is correct, and the belay anchor is good if a belay anchor is being used. The
belayer should always check three things: that the climber's harness is doubled back (sometimes in



"Rock"	. (to everyone): "Danger!! There is something coming down the rock face." Anyone and everyone
	yells this upon hearing, seeing or feeling a rock break loose, or anything else that may be falling—
	pieces of vegetation, climbing gear, or personal gear. The bigger the rock, the louder the call, and
	the more people yelling the better the chance everyone will hear. Everyone at the base should either
	duck under an overhang, hug the cliff as close as possible or run to the side if in a chute. Rocks tend
	to fall outward from the cliff.
"Rope"	. (to everyone below): "Danger!! I am throwing a rope down. It may knock off rocks or other items on
	the way down. Watch out for the rope and/or rocks." The thrower should allow sufficient time for
	people down below to respond and get under cover. Just to be sure, he/she should yell "Rope!" again
	just before tossing it.

BELAY LEDGE ETIQUETTE

It is common for a group of friends to sit around the base of a climb and chatter on about this and that and laugh and have a good time. This is fine, and part of the normal social scene. But for a belayer to do a good job belaying, he/she must be able to hear his/her climber. So please, keep it as quiet as possible around the belayer.

Camaraderie is prevalent among groups of climbers. When you are on the rock and want some help, feel free to ask for it. If you find coaching to be distracting, tell people to cease the chatter or coaching.