

~AMC Basic Outdoor Rock Climbing School Syllabus — STUDENTS

Lead Instructor: Andrea Galyean, andreagalyean@hotmail.com, cell/text: 602-797-0919

Session # 1: Intro, climbing gear, basic knots & rope handling

When: Tuesday, Oct. 18, 5:30 p.m.–9:30 p.m.

Where: North Mountain Visitor Center, 12950 N. 7th St., Phoenix AZ 85022

Equipment: At this session, you will be issued your "school pack" of climbing gear, which is yours to keep. If you have your own harness and/or helmet, please bring them to this class for assessment. If you need to borrow a club harness, or rent shoes (\$10 for the whole course), please arrive early if possible. We will have instructors available starting at 5 p.m. to assist you. Club gear must be turned in at the end of each class.

Preparation: Read Chapters 3 & 4

AMC Rock Climbing & Self Rescue Manual and Demo

Videos:

<http://arizonamountaineeringclub.net/schools/outdoor-rock-climbing-school/basic-outdoor-rock-climbing-school-syllabus-manual-videos/>

Useful step-by-step knot tying resource:

<http://www.animatedknots.com/>

Agenda:

1. Registration, gear pack distribution
2. Harness & shoe fittings
3. Introductions
4. Review of class rules (see below) and introduction to climbing safety
5. Introduction to harnesses and climbing equipment
6. Knot demonstration and practice: overhand knot, water knot
7. Knot demonstration and practice: figure-8 on a bight, figure-8 on a follow-through
8. Knot demonstration and practice: grapevine knot, stopper knot
9. ANNOUNCEMENTS and information for next class & climbing days
10. Rope handling demonstration and practice: flaking rope, rope bags, rope coiling, backpack coil
11. Return club gear before leaving at end of class

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Class Rules:

1. COVID protocols, per CDC: masks are optional, social distancing is encouraged where possible, hand washing/sanitizing is encouraged. People with symptoms, a positive test, or exposure to someone with COVID-19 should wear a mask.
2. Please be on time for each session.
3. Bring all your gear, have your harness on, and be ready to go.
4. Wear a name tag on your shirt (first session) or your helmet (climbing days).
5. Use your partner's name in climbing calls.
6. Do not step on ropes. These are your lifeline, and can be damaged by grinding dirt and sand into them.
7. Do not use or handle knives or sharp instruments near any ropes. Ropes under tension cut very easily.
8. Do not smoke near the ropes or other equipment; please smoke well away from the group & downwind.
9. Do not litter; pack out everything.
10. Always wear a helmet during climbing sessions.
11. Always clip into an anchor when near an edge, or when an instructor asks you to.
12. Stay away from cliff edges above people unless you are belaying; it is easy to knock down rocks.
13. Yell "ROCK!" any time you see something coming down the cliff, no matter what it is or who else is yelling.
14. Do not belay unless your belay setup has been approved by an instructor and an instructor is monitoring your belaying.
15. Do not rappel unless your rappel setup has been approved by an instructor and someone is able to bottom-belay you.
16. Do not climb unless your climbing tie-in has been approved by an instructor.
17. If you wear glasses, wear a restraining strap (e.g. Croakie). It is easy to knock your glasses off while climbing.
18. If you have long hair, tie it up or back; it is easy to get it caught in a rappel.
19. Remove watches, rings, and jewelry before climbing for safety and to avoid destroying them.
20. No pets. We love animals, but they make it difficult to concentrate on learning.
21. No observers (e.g. family & friends) due to COVID restrictions.
22. No drones at climbing events. Drones are prohibited in the Preserve (and they sound like a swarm of bees!)
23. Inventory your gear at the end every session to avoid losing it. MARK YOUR GEAR!

F.A.Q.:

Do we always have to bring ALL our climbing gear to each class? Yes!

Do we always have to wear HELMETS when close to the rocks and around the climbing area? Yes!

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Session # 2: Climbing history, styles & ethics; belaying & rappelling

When: Thursday, Oct. 20, 6 p.m.–9 p.m.

Where: Online via Zoom (link sent in a separate email)

Preparation: Read Chapters 2, 5, 6, & 7

Agenda:

1. Announcements & questions
2. Knot review: have practice rope ready
3. Discussion: Climbing history, styles, ethics, and ratings
4. Discussion: Climbing access, land advocacy, and efforts to keep climbing areas open
5. Weekend schedule and logistics, Grad Climb information
6. Technique demonstrations:
 - Bottom belay top rope setup, climbing calls, and belay – using both tube-style device and Muenster hitch
 - Top belay setup & climbing calls
 - Rappel setup and rope throwing
 - Rappelling using belay device with extension and autoblock

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Session # 3: 1st Climbing day

When: Saturday, Oct. 22, 8 a.m.–5 p.m. *Plan to meet by 7:45 am!*

Where: Meet at Target parking lot in shopping center located at SE corner of 101 & Frank Lloyd Wright

If you are coming north on the 101, take the Frank Lloyd Wright exit and turn into the Target parking lot directly from the frontage road just before you reach the Frank Lloyd Wright intersection. Otherwise, go east on Frank Lloyd Wright Blvd past the 101 and take an immediate right into the shopping center. **Park in the NW corner of the parking lot in front of Target.**

We will distribute climbing gear, then carpool to the **Granite Mountain Trailhead** on the North side of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve. *See map on page 11.*

Safety notes:

1. **There are Restrooms but NO WATER** at the Granite Mountain TH.
2. There may be **active bees** in the area. Be prepared and take personal responsibility. If you think you could have an allergic reaction to bees, please alert the Lead Instructor.

Preparation: Read Chapter 9

Equipment: You will be issued a club harness, personal anchor, and helmet, or you may bring your own (must be UIAA certified). **Club equipment must be turned in at the end of each class.**

You will also need: Climbing shoes, student gear pack, belay gloves (optional), hiking boots/shoes, long pants, wind shell, warm/cool clothing, sunscreen, sunhat, lunch and snacks, **at least 3 quarts of water**, and whatever else you may need to stay comfortable for the day. Please be prepared for any type of weather.

The class will be conducted at the Lost Bandana climbing area. It is a **1 ½ mile hike** from the parking lot, so plan to **carry everything including lunch, water, climbing gear, etc. with you.** You will need a pack large enough to also carry a rope and club gear on the way out. There is no restroom access after leaving the trailhead, so please be prepared.

Agenda:

1. Check out harnesses, personal anchors, and helmets (at Target meeting area)
2. Discussion about proper use, care, and handling of safety equipment
3. Announcements & questions
4. Discussion of technique and balance
5. Climbing technique demos
6. Belaying technique demos
7. Students will pair up and practice climbing and belaying at a variety of single pitch top-rope climbs
8. Everyone will help tear down climbs, coil ropes, and help carry out ropes/gear
9. Return club gear before leaving at end of session
10. Carpool back to Target

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Session # 4: 2nd Climbing day

When: Sunday, Oct. 23, 8 a.m.–5 p.m. *Plan to meet by 7:45 am!*

Where: Meet at Target parking lot in shopping center located at SE corner of 101 & Frank Lloyd Wright

We will distribute climbing gear, then carpool to the **Tom's Thumb Trailhead** in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve. *See map on page 11.*

Safety notes:

1. There are Restrooms but NO WATER at Tom's Thumb TH.

2. There may be active bees in the area. Be prepared and take personal responsibility. If you think you could have an allergic reaction to bees, please alert the Lead Instructor.

Preparation: Review Chapter 7

Equipment: You will be issued a club harness, personal anchor, and helmet, or you may bring your own (must be UIAA certified). **Club equipment must be turned in at the end of each class.**

You will also need: Climbing shoes, student gear pack, belay gloves (optional), hiking boots/shoes, long pants, wind shell, warm/cool clothing, sunscreen, sunhat, lunch and snacks, **at least 3 quarts of water**, and whatever else you may need to stay comfortable for the day. Please be prepared for any type of weather.

The class will be conducted near the Sven Slab climbing area. It is a **½ mile hike** from the parking lot, so plan to **carry everything including lunch, water, climbing gear, etc. with you**. It is not too far to carry a small ice chest and/or folding chair if you want. You will need a pack large enough to also carry a rope and club gear on the way out. There is no restroom access beyond the trailhead, so please be prepared.

Agenda:

1. Check out harnesses, personal anchors, and helmets (at Target meeting area)
2. Announcements & questions
3. Review of practice stations, to include: beginning rappel, long single-rope rappel, long double-rope rappel, top-belay, chimney, lie-back, mantle, and single-pitch climbing and belaying
4. Rappel demonstration
5. All students will go to the rappel boulder to practice standard rappel and Muentner rappel, including use of autoblock
6. Students will pair up to visit rappel and climbing practice stations
7. Noon (or thereabout) - we will gather for lunch
8. Discussion of questions or comments
9. Resume climbing & rappelling practice at stations
10. Think about graduation climbs & talk to Andrea regarding preferences
11. Everyone will help tear down climbs, coil ropes, and help carry out ropes/gear
12. Return club gear before leaving at end of session
13. Carpool back to Target

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Session # 5: Introduction to Self-Rescue

When: Tuesday, Oct. 25, 7 p.m.–9 p.m.

Where: Online via Zoom (link sent in a separate email)

Preparation: Chapter 8

Agenda:

1. Review of climbing days & questions
2. Discussion: Introduction to Self-Rescue
3. Technique demonstrations:
 - a. Using prusiks to ascend/descend rope
 - b. Passing a knot/obstruction with prusiks
 - c. Passing a knot/obstruction on rappel
 - d. Converting from rappel to prusik
 - e. Escaping the belay (top-rope)
 - f. Self-rescue improv
4. Questions
5. Logistics for next class at PRG and Grad Climbs

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Session # 6: Self-Rescue Practice

When: Thursday, Oct. 27, 6 p.m.–9 p.m. **Arrive early so you are harnessed up and READY TO START BY 6!**

Where: Phoenix Rock Gym, 1353 E. University Dr., Tempe AZ 85281 – see map on page 12

Preparation: Review Chapter 8 and self-rescue videos. Review double-grapevine knot and make sure all three Prusik cords are tied into loops and ready for use.

Equipment: Climbing harness, helmet, student gear pack, and gloves (optional). DO NOT wear climbing shoes. Bring STIFF HIKING BOOTS/SHOES, preferably high-tops to protect your ankles from the prusiks.

Agenda:

1. Check-in at the front desk when arriving at the gym and sign a gym waiver
2. Check out harnesses & helmets and put them on
3. Announcements
4. Review prusiks and retie if needed
5. Discussion: other ascending methods and devices
6. Techniques to practice:
 - Tie off and escape the belay
 - Practice chicken hitch
 - Prusik up and down fixed line, tying off short
 - Prusik up fixed line past a knot, tying off short, prusik down past a knot
 - Rappel down a fixed line, tying off short, convert from rappel to prusik
 - Prusik up fixed line, tying off short, convert to rappel, rappel down
7. **Finalize your Grad Climb assignment with Andrea** before the end of the evening
8. Check in harnesses & helmets before leaving

Key points to remember while prusiking:

1. **Always** carry your Prusiks with you, even when sport climbing. You never know when you'll need them!
2. Carry them properly chained for easy access.
3. The waist Prusik goes on first and comes off first.
4. Always "dress" your Prusik hitch.
5. If the Prusik hitch slips, add another wrap. If it's too "sticky," remove one.
6. Always tie off short every 10' - 15'. As you move up, connect yourself to a new tie-off before releasing the old.
7. Plan so you always have a minimum 2 points of contact.
8. Watch the carabiners for cross loading and make sure the carabiners are locked.
9. Do not grab the Prusik hitch. Instead, slide it up or down with two fingers either above or below the hitch.
10. Prusiks are not designed to catch a fall and may slip if not properly (i.e. SLOWLY) weighted.
11. When carrying Prusiks off your harness, carry them around one shoulder and your head.
12. Inspect the grapevine knots and condition of the Prusik cords before using.
13. Prusik cord must be smaller in diameter than that of the rope to be prusiked on.

Tips

1. You can prusik up a single or double rope. Treat a double rope as one, wrapping both strands together.
2. You may need to add or subtract wraps of the Prusik hitch depending on the # of strands and/or diameter.
3. Ascenders can be used in place of Prusiks. Mechanical ascending device used mostly by cavers, aid climbers, and rescue personnel. Learn the specifics of your gear.
4. Prusiking with a pack requires special techniques. At all times keep pack attached to the anchors or yourself. A loop at the top helps when hauling a pack or prusiking with a pack. Can be built in or pre-rigged.
5. Top-heavy climbers may want to use a chest harness or other techniques for prusiking. We will demonstrate options on an individual basis.

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Session # 7: Grad Climbs & PARTY

When: Saturday, Oct. 29, all day

Where: For Grad Climbs: see Grad Climb Outing Leader on 10/27 at PRG for climb details .

Grad party details and directions are on the last page of the syllabus.

Equipment: Confirm all climb details with Grad Climb Outing Leader. At a minimum, you will need: harness, personal anchor, helmet, climbing shoes, student gear pack, belay gloves (optional), hiking boots/shoes, warm/cool clothing, sunscreen, sunhat, lunch and snacks, water, and whatever else you may need to stay comfortable for the day. Contact your leader and reference grad climb description for other needed gear.

NOTE:

Grad climbs depend on availability of grad climb leaders, student needs, and current access issues. Missed grad climbs can be made up on a club outing at a later date. Due to space limitations, not everyone may get their first choice of climbs. However, every attempt will be made to match students with their first or second choice.

Agenda:

- Meet your Grad Climb Outing Leader when/where they tell you and bring what they tell you to bring.
- Climb and belay safely all day.
- Return in time for the Grad Party.
- BYOB, a potluck dish, and any special guest you'd like over to Bill's house.
- Celebrate your indoctrination into the climbing community.

GRAD CLIMB OPTIONS (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

1. ****The Hand, Superstitions** (5.6) 3-pitch rhyolite pinnacle. 60 min approach. *Long free-hanging rappel. Limit 4 students.
2. ****Crying Dinosaur, Superstitions** (5.5) 3-pitch rhyolite pinnacle. 90 min approach. *Long free-hanging rappel. Limit 4 students.
3. **Hanging Gardens, McDowells** (5.6) 2-pitch granite crack and face climb. 45 min approach. 2 rappels. Limit 3 students.
4. **Praying Monk, Camelback Mountain** (5.6) 2 pitches up a conglomerate pinnacle with a scramble in between pitches. 15 minute approach. 2 rappels, *including a free-hanging section. Limit 4 students.
5. **Trident, Superior** (5.9) - 3-pitch sport climb, advanced climbers only. 15 min approach. Limit 4 students.
6. **Phoenix, Superior** (5.9) - 3-pitch sport climb, advanced climbers only. 15 min approach. Limit 4 students.
7. **Timezone Wall, Prescott** (5.4 – 5.7) - Single-pitch sport climbing. 15 min approach. No rappel. Limit 10 students.

NOTES: *All free-hanging rappels involve exposure. Anyone bothered by heights or uncomfortable on rappel should select a single-pitch grad climb.

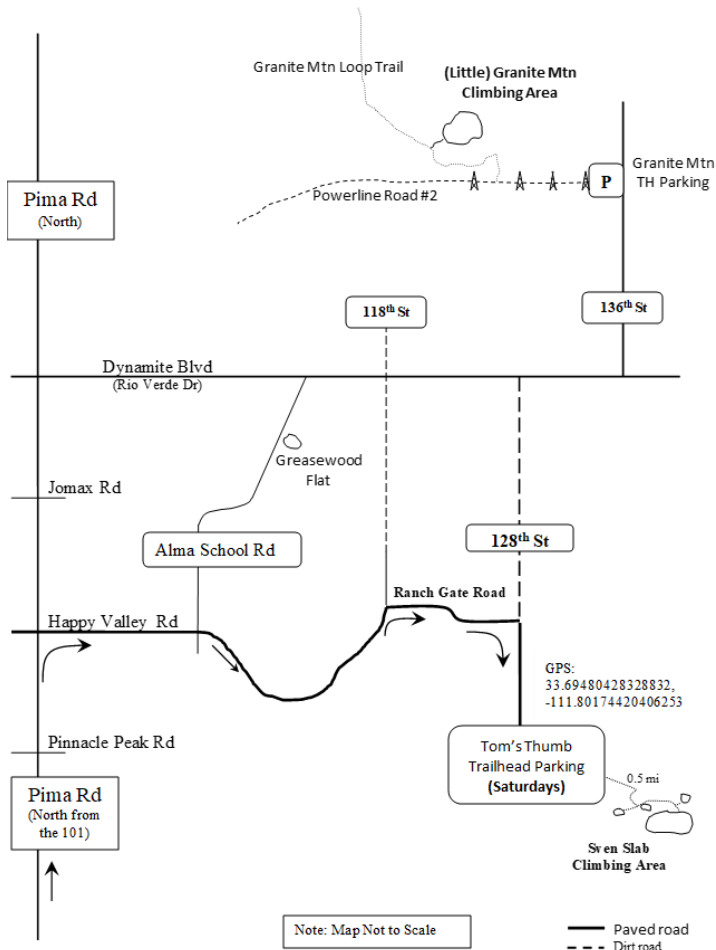
** These climbs have the potential to be long days. If you have plans Saturday night other than the grad party, we would advise you to not go on these climbs. Since you may be coming down in the dark, you should also bring a flashlight/headlamp with batteries, windbreaker, and any other special gear your Grad Climb Leader may specify.

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Map for Weekend Climbing Sessions in the McDowells

NOTE: We're climbing at Granite Mtn. on Saturday, Oct. 22 and Tom's Thumb on Sunday, Oct. 23.

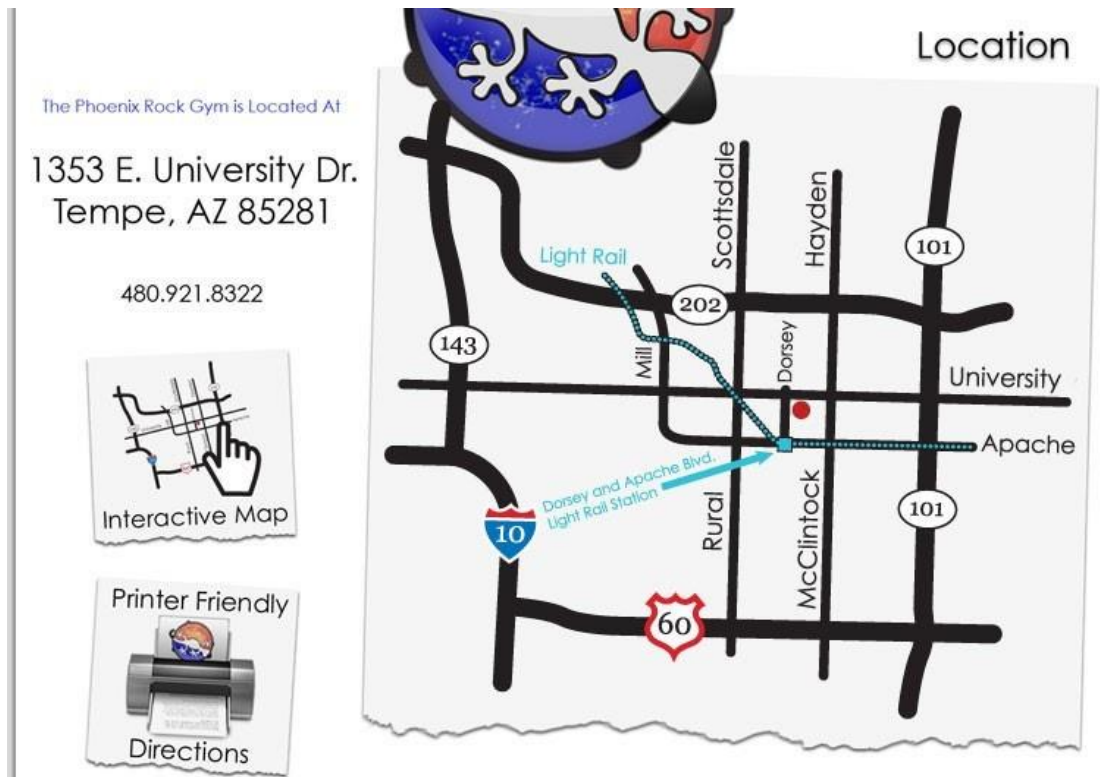
MEET at Target at Frank Lloyd Wright & 101 on both days.



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Map for Self-Rescue Practice at PRG on Thurs., Oct. 27 at 6 p.m.

Phoenix Rock Gym



From Phoenix | Take the 202 Freeway east to the Scottsdale/Rural Rd exit. Turn right onto Rural then left onto University. **Then...**

From Scottsdale | Take Hayden south to University. Turn right. **Then...**
or Take the Pima Freeway (101) south to the Rio Salado/University Exit. Follow the frontage road 1/2 mile to University. Turn right. **Then...**

From Mesa | Take Hwy-60 (Superstition Frwy) west to the Pima Freeway (101). Drive north on the 101 to Broadway. Exit and drive west to McClintock. Turn right onto McClintock. Turn left on University. **Then...**

Then... We are located in Aztech Court on the southeast corner of University & Dorsey (halfway between Rural & McClintock). We are in the huge building behind the Quality Inn.

Or... Take the **Light Rail** to the **Dorsey and Apache Blvd. Station** and walk .5 miles north to Aztech Court.

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AMC Basic Outdoor Rock Climbing School Graduation Party

When: Saturday, Oct. 29, anytime after 5 p.m. following the grad climbs

Where: Fallon Residence: 2900 South Dromedary Drive, Tempe AZ 85282

Directions:

- Take Mill Ave south from Broadway Rd or north from U.S. 60 or Southern Ave
- Turn west onto Erie Dr.
- Continue until Erie ends at Dromedary.
- The house will be on the west side of Dromedary.
- Park on the street and enter through the north side gate.

AMC will provide water, soft drinks, cups, plates, utensils, napkins, etc.

What to Bring:

- Yourself, cleaned up or “as is” from your climb. If you decide to grab a shower and change clothes before coming over, be careful not to get carried away or your climbing partners might not recognize you.
- Spouse, significant other, or other special guests.
- Food to eat and/or share.
- Something to grill, if you want. A barbecue will be available.
- Beverage of your choice (AMC provides water & soft drinks)
- Folding chair if you want to guarantee you have the chair of your choice.
- Your best stories and battle wounds from a day on the rocks.