

# AMC Basic Outdoor Rock Climbing School Spring 2023 Syllabus — STUDENTS

**Lead Instructor:** Andrea Galyean, [andregalyean@hotmail.com](mailto:andregalyean@hotmail.com), cell/text: 602-797-0919

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

**When:** Tuesday, March 14, 5:30 p.m.–9:30 p.m.

**Where:** North Mountain Visitor Center, 12950 N. 7<sup>th</sup> St., Phoenix AZ 85022

**Equipment:** At this session, you will be issued your "student gear pack," which is yours to keep. It includes a belay/rappel device, five carabiners, a 48" sewn nylon sling, 10' of nylon webbing, and four lengths of accessory cord. You will also be issued a short length of rope for practicing knots, which must be returned at the last class.

If you have your own harness, personal anchor system, and/or helmet, **please bring them** to this class for assessment.

If you need to borrow a club harness, or rent shoes (shoes are \$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 (except practice ropes) must be turned in at the end of each class.

A portion of the class will be held outdoors, so bring a jacket.

**Preparation:** Read Chapters 3 & 4 in the AMC Rock Climbing & Self Rescue Manual

**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:** Registration, gear pack distribution, and harness & shoe fittings.

Introductions & review of class schedule and logistics. Introduction to climbing safety and climbing equipment. Knot demonstration and practice: overhand knot, water knot, figure-8 on a bight, figure-8 on a follow-through, double grapevine knot, stopper knot. Rope handling demonstration and practice: flaking rope, rope coiling, backpack coil.

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

**When:** Thursday, March 16, 6 p.m.–9 p.m.

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

**Equipment:** Please have your practice rope ready.

**Preparation:** Read Chapters 2, 5, 6, & 7 in the AMC Rock Climbing & Self Rescue Manual

**Agenda:**

Announcements & questions, including weekend logistics and grad climb information. Knot review with practice ropes. Discussion: Climbing history, styles, ethics, and ratings; climbing access and land advocacy. Technique demonstrations: Bottom-belay and top-belay top rope setups; climbing calls and partner communication; and belay technique using both tube-style device and Munter hitch. Rappel setup and rappelling technique using belay device with extension and autoblock.

## Session # 3: 1<sup>st</sup> Climbing Day!

**When:** Saturday, March 18, 8 a.m.–5 p.m. *Plan to meet by 7:45 am!*

**Where:** Meet outside Starbucks at Happy Valley Towne Center, I-17 and Happy Valley Rd in Phoenix. (See map.) We will leave by 8 AM to carpool to Watson Lake Park in Prescott (3101 Watson Lake Park Rd, Prescott, AZ 86301). NOTE: There is a \$3 per car parking fee at Watson Lake Park.

**Equipment:** You will need a harness, personal anchor, and helmet (ours or yours), plus: climbing shoes, student gear pack, belay gloves (optional), hiking boots/shoes, comfortable clothing for varying weather conditions (sun/wind), sun protection, lunch and snacks, at least 3 quarts of water, and whatever else you may need to stay comfortable. Bring cash for park fee.

The Time Zone climbing area is a ½ mile hike from the parking lot, so plan to **carry everything 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.

**Preparation:** Read Chapter 9 in the AMC Rock Climbing & Self Rescue Manual

**Agenda:** Check out harnesses, personal anchors, and helmets (at meeting area). Carpool to Watson Lake and hike in to climbing area. Climbing technique demonstration; Belaying technique demonstration. Students will pair up and practice climbing and belaying at a variety of single pitch top-rope climbs until approx. 3 PM. Everyone will help tear down climbs, coil ropes, and help carry out ropes/gear, then carpool back to Starbucks.

## Session # 4: 2<sup>nd</sup> Climbing Day

**When:** Sunday, March 19, 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 in Scottsdale. (See map.) *If you are coming north on 101, take Frank Lloyd Wright exit and turn into the Target parking lot directly from the frontage road. Otherwise, go east on Frank Lloyd Wright past 101 and take a right into the shopping center.*

**Equipment:** You will need a harness, personal anchor, and helmet (ours or yours), plus: climbing shoes, student gear pack, belay gloves (optional), hiking boots/shoes, comfortable clothing for varying weather conditions (sun/wind), sun protection, lunch and snacks, at least 3 quarts of water, and whatever else you may need to stay comfortable.

The Sven Slab climbing area is a ½ mile hike from the parking lot, so plan to **carry everything 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 beyond the trailhead.

**Safety note:** There may be **active bees** in the area. If you think you could have an allergic reaction to bees, please be prepared with emergency supplies, and alert the Lead Instructor before leaving the parking area.

**Preparation:** Review Chapter 7 in the AMC Rock Climbing & Self Rescue Manual

**Agenda:** We will distribute climbing gear, then carpool to **Tom's Thumb Trailhead** and hike in to the climbing area. After a rappel demonstration, students will pair up to visit rappel and climbing skills practice stations to include: rappel set up and rope throw, beginning rappel, rappel with Munter, long single-rope rappel, long double-rope rappel, top-belay, chimney, lie-back, mantle, slab, and single-pitch climbing and bottom belaying. At 3 PM, everyone will help tear down climbs, coil ropes, and help carry out ropes/gear. Return club gear before leaving at end of session; carpool back to Target.

## Session # 5: Introduction to Self-Rescue

**When:** Tuesday, March 21, 7 p.m.–9 p.m.

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

**Preparation:** Read Chapter 8 in the AMC Rock Climbing & Self Rescue Manual

**Agenda:** Review logistics for next class at PRG and Grad Climbs. Discussion of self-rescue concepts and techniques. Video demonstrations of using prusiks to ascend/descend rope, pass a knot/obstruction, converting from rappel to prusik, escaping the belay and other self-rescue scenarios.

## Session # 6: Self-Rescue Practice

**When:** Thursday, March 23, 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. *You must check in at the front desk when you arrive. If you do not have a gym waiver on file at PRG, you will need to sign one.*

**Equipment:** Climbing harness, helmet, COMPLETE student gear pack, and gloves (optional). DO NOT wear climbing shoes. Wear stiff HIKING BOOTS/SHOES, preferably high-tops or at least tall socks to protect your ankles from the prusiks.

**Preparation:** Review Chapter 8 and self-rescue videos. Make sure all Prusik cords are tied into loops and ready for use.

**Agenda:** Check in at the front desk when arriving. Check out harnesses & helmets. Demonstration of alternative ascending methods and devices. Then pair up and practice self-rescue techniques: Escape the belay; Chicken hitch; Prusik up and down fixed line; Prusik past a knot; Convert from rappel to prusik; Pass a knot while on rappel; Convert from prusik to rappel. **NOTE: Finalize Grad Climb with Andrea** and get info sheet from Grad Climb leader.

### Tips for 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. Prusik cord must be smaller in diameter than that of the rope to be prusiked on.
4. Always "dress" your Prusik hitch.
5. You may need to add or subtract wraps depending on the # of strands and/or diameter.
6. If the hitch slips, add another wrap. If it's too "sticky," remove one.
7. You can prusik up a single or double rope. Treat a double rope as one, wrapping both strands together.
8. The waist Prusik goes on first and comes off first.
9. Tie off short every 10–15'. As you move up, connect yourself to a new tie-off before releasing the old.
10. Plan so you always have a minimum 2 points of contact.
11. Watch the carabiners for cross loading and make sure the carabiners are locked.
12. Do not grab the Prusik hitch. Instead, slide it up or down with two fingers either above or below the hitch.
13. Prusiks are not designed to catch a fall and may slip if not properly (i.e. SLOWLY) weighted.
14. When carrying Prusiks off your harness, carry them around one shoulder and your head — not around your neck!
15. Inspect the grapevine knots and condition of the Prusik cords before using.
16. Mechanical ascenders can be used in place of Prusiks. Learn the specifics of your gear
17. 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.
18. Top-heavy climbers may want to use a chest harness or other techniques for prusiking. We will demonstrate options on an individual basis.

## Session # 7: Grad Climbs & PARTY

**When:** Saturday, March 25, ALL DAY, Grad Party 5 p.m.–9 p.m. after grad climbs

**Grad Climbs:** meet your Grad Climb Outing Leader at PRG on 3/23 for climb details.

**Grad Party:** Fallon Residence: 2900 South Dromedary Drive, Tempe AZ 85282 (See map)

**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.

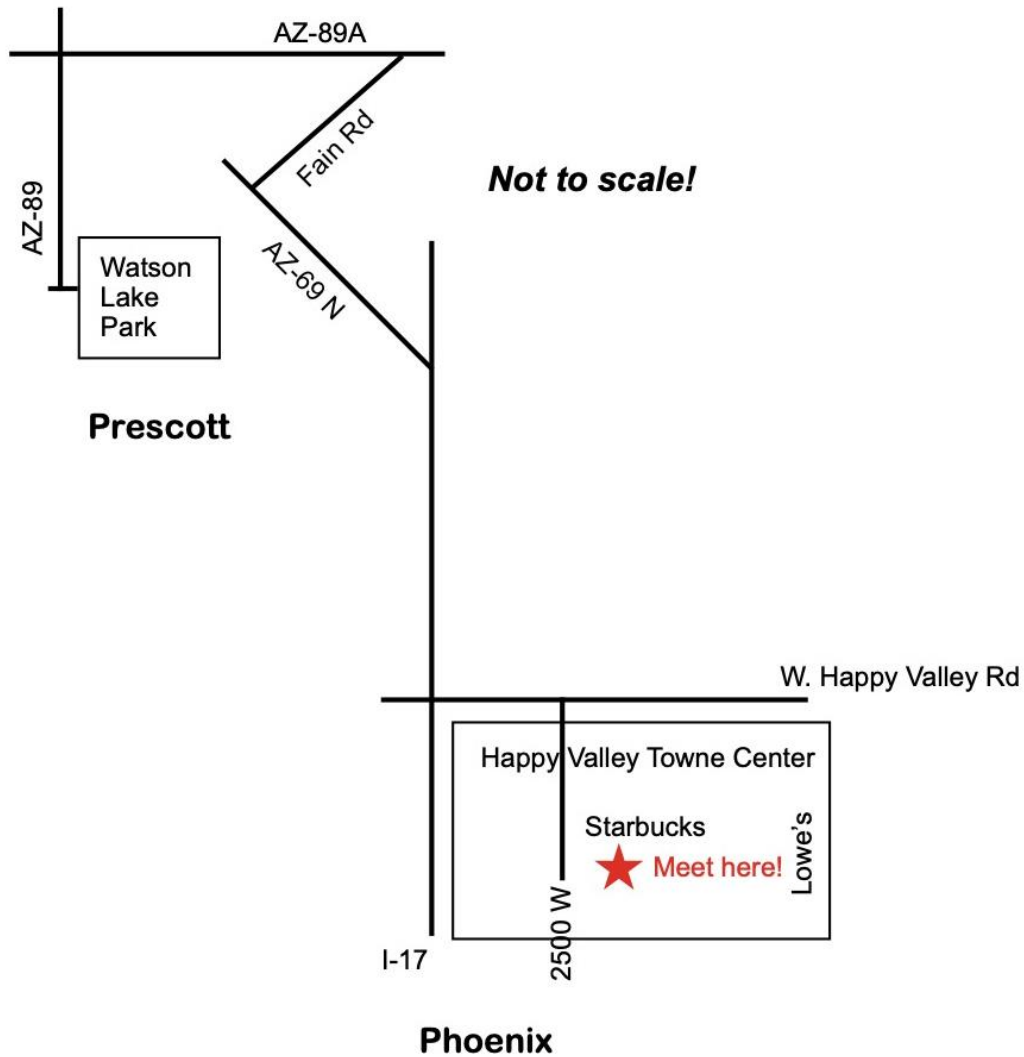
**Agenda:** Meet your Grad Climb Outing Leader when/where they tell you and bring what they tell you to bring. Enjoy a great day of climbing, and return in time for the Grad Party!

For party, come as you are (or lightly cleaned up), bring your beverage of choice, a potluck dish, a chair, and any special guest you'd like as we celebrate your indoctrination into the climbing community!

## Maps for In-Person Climbing Sessions

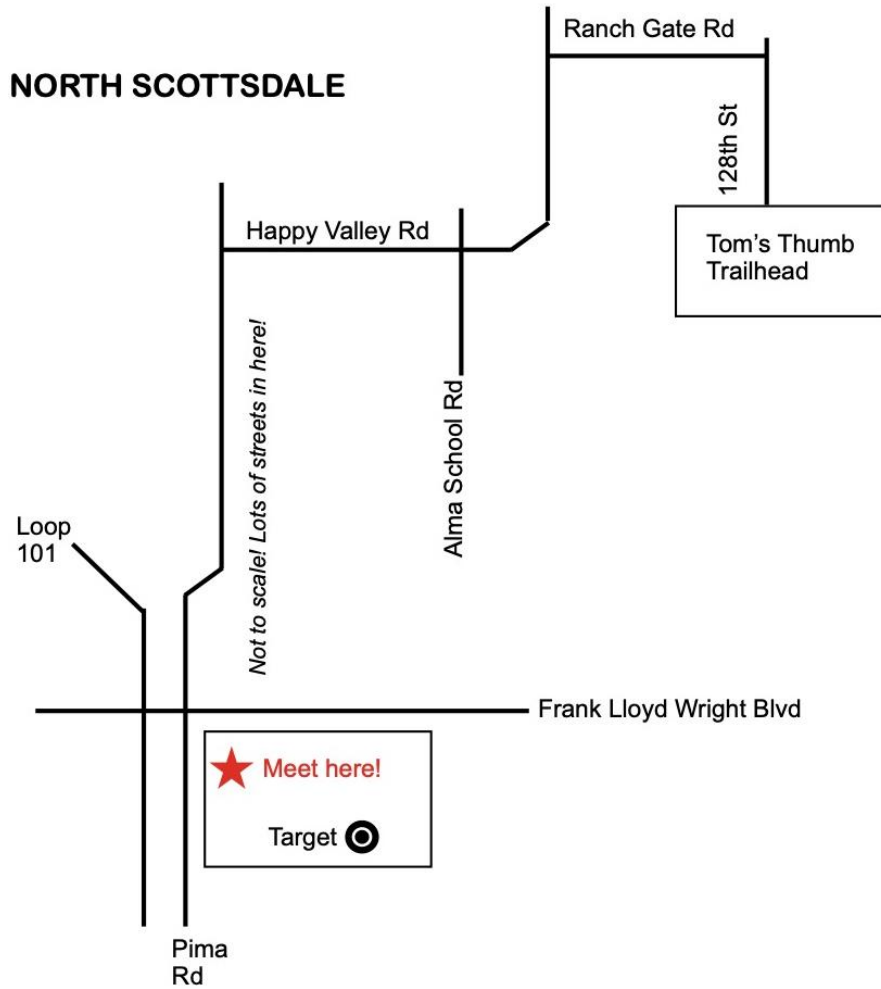
### Saturday, March 18: for climbing at Watson Lake

Meet at 7:45 a.m. in front of Starbucks at Happy Valley Road and I-17 (2501 W Happy Valley Rd, Phoenix, AZ 85085). We will carpool to Watson Lake at 3101 Watson Lake Park Rd, Prescott AZ 86301. Bring cash for parking fee: \$3 per car.



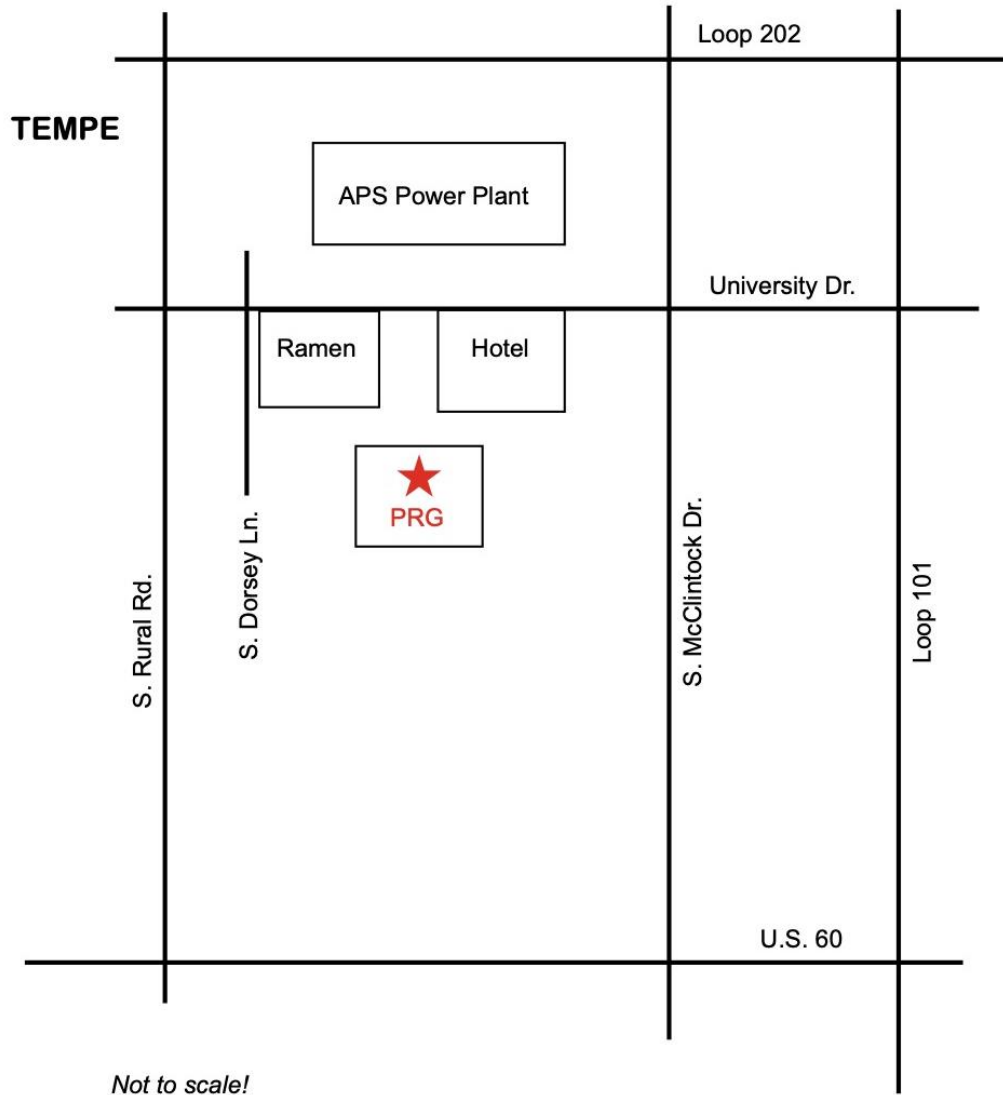
## Sunday, March 19: for climbing at McDowell Sonoran Preserve

Meet at 7:45 a.m. in the Target parking lot at Frank Lloyd Wright and Pima Rd (Loop 101). We will depart by 8 a.m. and carpool to Tom's Thumb Trailhead at 12943 E Paraiso Dr, Scottsdale, AZ 85255



## Thursday, March 23: for Self-Rescue Practice at Phoenix Rock Gym

Arrive prior to 6 p.m. at 1353 E. University Dr., Tempe AZ 85281. PRG is on the southeast corner of University and Dorsey, behind the hotel. Check in at front desk and sign waiver.



# Graduation Party!

**Saturday, March 25, 5 p.m.–9 p.m. following the grad climbs**

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

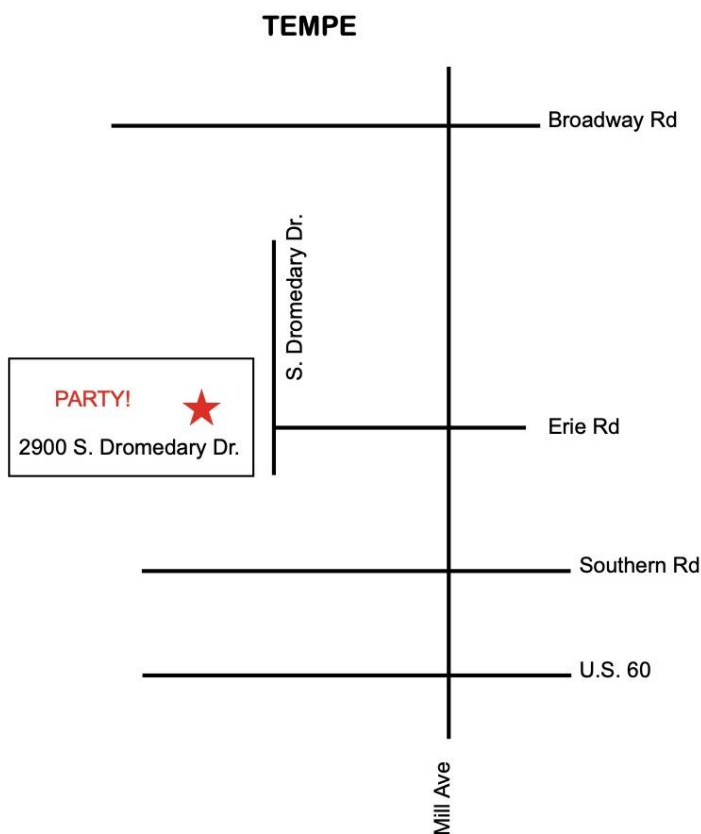
## Directions:

- 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.
- Significant other or other special guests.
- Food to eat and/or share.
- 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.





## AMC Basic Outdoor Rock Climbing School Class Rules

1. COVID protocols, per current CDC guidelines Maricopa County is in **Medium** transmission: masks are optional but recommended if you are at high risk of getting sick; social distancing is encouraged where possible; hand washing/sanitizing is encouraged. People with a positive test should follow CDC recommendations for isolation. If you have symptoms of any contagious illness, please contact the Lead Instructor and do not attend class in person.
2. Please be on time for each session.
3. Bring **all** your gear, have your harness on, and be ready to go by start time.
4. Wear a name tag on your shirt (first session) or your helmet (climbing days).
5. Use your partner's name in ALL 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, including self-rescue practice.
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 setup has been approved by an instructor and an instructor is monitoring your belaying.
15. Do not rappel unless your 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. 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 are distracting when learning.
21. No observers (e.g. family & friends).
22. No drones. 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!

## Be safe and have fun!