

AMC Basic Outdoor Rock Climbing School Fall 2023 Syllabus — STUDENTS

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Welcome to AMC's Fall 2023 Outdoor Rock Climbing class. This syllabus contains important information including times, locations, equipment, and agenda for each session. Please review it and consider downloading or printing it for easy reference.

In addition, please note that we have an extensive written manual and useful demonstration videos on our website to help you get even more out of this class. Feel free to download the manual and bookmark the videos for easy reference.

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/>

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

When: Tuesday, Oct. 17, 5:30–9:30 p.m.

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

Equipment: You will be issued a "student gear pack" including: belay/rappel device, five carabiners, a sewn nylon sling, 10' of nylon webbing, and three lengths of accessory cord, all of which are yours to keep. Bring them to every class. You will also be loaned a short practice rope, which must be returned at the last class. Part of the session will be held outside, so bring a jacket if necessary.

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 (no cost), or rent shoes (\$10 for the whole course — cash only), please arrive early. Instructors will be available starting at 5 p.m. to assist you.

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

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

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

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

When: Thursday, Oct. 19, 6–9 p.m.

Where: Online via Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85352888597?pwd=VbC1ivhrqzxYf8t5rxezp0HmeG5pqE.1>

Equipment: You will need to be able access Zoom with audio and video capabilities from a phone, tablet, or computer. Please have your practice rope ready.

Agenda: Announcements & questions, including weekend logistics and grad climb information. Knot review with practice ropes. 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.

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

Session # 3: 1st Climbing Day!

When: Saturday, Oct. 21, 8 a.m.–5 p.m. *Meet by 7:45 a.m.! Arrive earlier to use the restroom or purchase anything at Starbucks.*

Where: Meet outside Starbucks at Happy Valley Towne Center, I-17 and Happy Valley Rd in Phoenix. (See map.) We will leave by 8 a.m. to carpool to Watson Lake Park in Prescott (3101 Watson Lake Park Rd, Prescott, AZ 86301). NOTE: There is a \$3 per car — not per person! — 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, etc.), sun protection, lunch, snacks, at least 3 quarts of water, and anything else you need.

The climbing area is a ½ mile hike in, 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 after leaving the trailhead.

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

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

Session # 4: 2nd Climbing Day

When: Sunday, Oct. 22, 8 a.m.–5 p.m. *Meet by 7:45 am!*

Where: TBD

Equipment: Same as Saturday. See above.

Agenda: Check out harnesses, personal anchors, and helmets (at meeting area). Carpool/shuttle to trailhead and hike in to the climbing area. After a short discussion and 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 hitch, long single-rope rappel, long double-rope rappel, top-belay with belay devices and with Munter hitch, and special climbing techniques. At 3 p.m., everyone will help tear down climbs, coil ropes, and carry out ropes/gear, then carpool/shuttle back to parking area.

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

Session # 5: Introduction to Self-Rescue

When: Tuesday, Oct. 24, 7–9 p.m.

Where: Online via Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82175447673?pwd=VpWuEEPEMvqUDQgUHkyczxHf7UUgLI.1>

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, convert from rappel to prusik, escape the belay, and other self-rescue scenarios.

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

Session # 6: Self-Rescue Practice

When: Thursday, Oct. 26, 6–9 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. To save time, you can download, complete, and bring it with you: <https://phoenixrockgym.com/waiver/>*

Equipment: Climbing harness, helmet, and student gear pack. DO NOT wear climbing shoes. Wear stiff HIKING BOOTS/SHOES, preferably high-tops or at with least tall socks to protect your ankles. If you have additional locking carabiners, please bring them. Bring your practice rope to return.

Agenda: Check in at the front desk when arriving. Check out harnesses & helmets. Announcements & questions, including grad climb information. Discussion of self-rescue concepts and scenarios. Demonstration of various ascending methods and devices. Pair up and practice self-rescue techniques: Escape the belay; Prusik up and down fixed line; Prusik past a knot; Convert from rappel to prusik; Pass a knot while on rappel.

Finalize Grad Climb with Andrea and get info sheet from Grad Climb leader.

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

Tips for prusiking:

- Always carry your self-rescue gear on your harness. You never know when you'll need it!
- Carry cords neatly chained for easy access.
- Prusik cord must have smaller diameter than that of the rope to be prusiked on.
- Always "dress" your hitches.
- You may need to add or subtract wraps depending on whether hitch is slipping or over-gripping.
- You can prusik up a single or double rope. Treat a double rope as one, wrapping both strands together.
- If using a waist Prusik, it goes on first and comes off first.
- Tie off short every 10–15' or use a clove hitch as a backup. Connect the new tie-off before releasing the old.
- Plan so you always have a minimum 2 points of contact.
- Make sure the carabiners are locked and watch them for cross-loading.
- Do not grab hitches with your full hand. Instead, slide them up or down from either above or below the hitch.
- Prusiks are not designed to catch a fall and may slip if not properly (i.e. SLOWLY) weighted.
- When carrying Prusiks off your harness, carry them around shoulder and head — not around your neck!
- Inspect the condition of your cords before using.
- Guide devices or mechanical ascenders can be used in place of Prusiks. Learn the specifics of your gear.
- 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.
- Top-heavy climbers may want to use a chest harness or other techniques for prusiking. We will demonstrate options on an individual basis.

- Questions? Lead Instructor: Andrea Galyean, andregalyean@hotmail.com or 602-797-0919 -

Session # 7: Grad Climbs & PARTY

When: Saturday, Oct. 28, Grad Climbs: ALL DAY, Grad Party: 5–9 p.m. after grad climbs

Grad Climbs: meet your Grad Climb Outing Leader at PRG on 10/26 for climb details.

Grad Party: location TBD

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 are group climbing outings led by AMC volunteer Outing Leaders and assisted by other Instructors. AMC provides all ropes and other group gear. Students will not be doing any lead climbing but are expected to help carry ropes and group gear as well as their personal gear.

Grad climbs depend on availability of Outing Leaders, student needs, route access issues, and weather, among other factors. Missed grad climbs may 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.

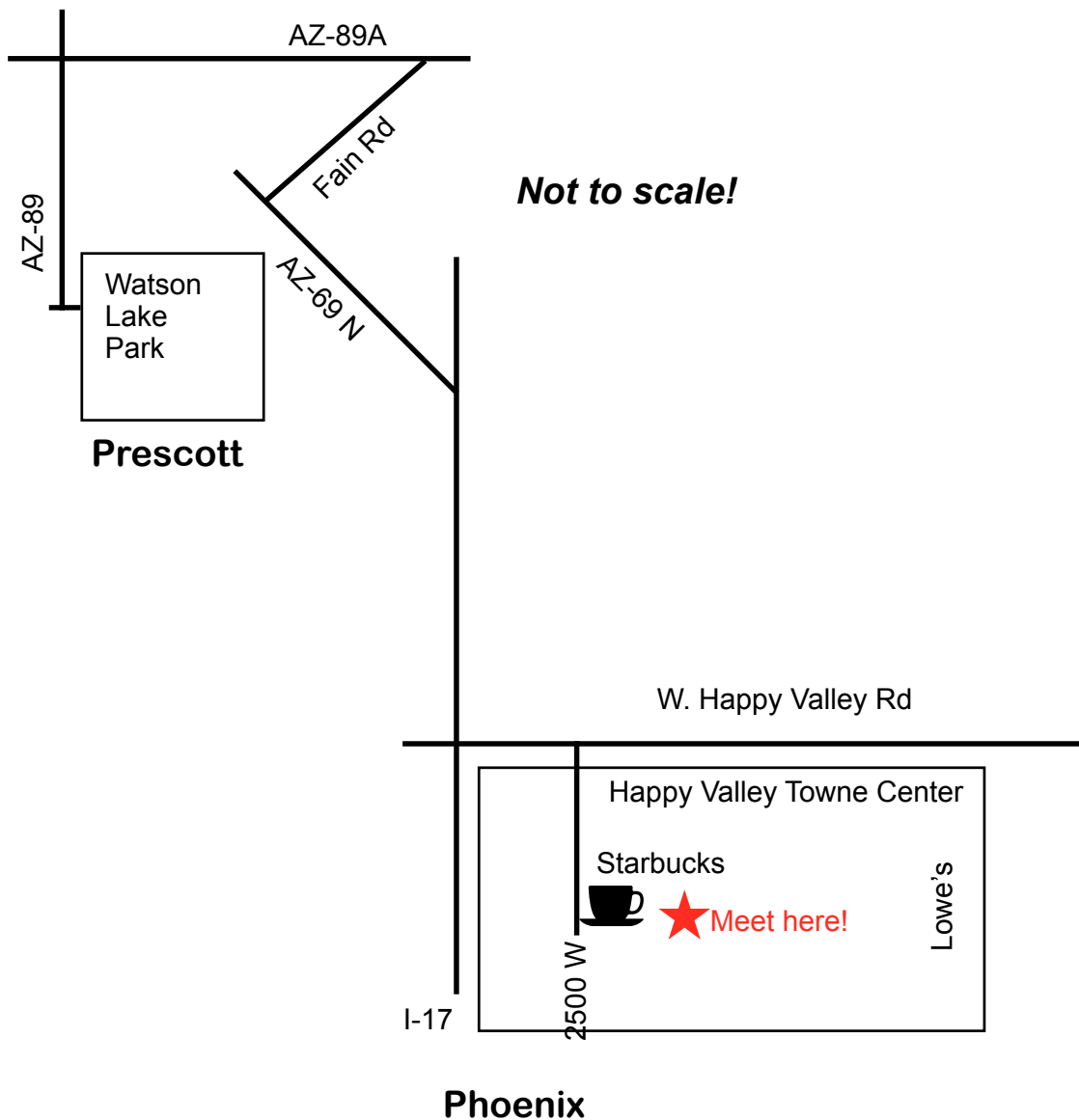
Agenda: Meet your Grad Climb Outing Leader when/where they tell you and bring what they tell you to bring. Enjoy a great day of climbing, and return in time for the Grad Party!

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

Maps for In-Person Climbing Sessions

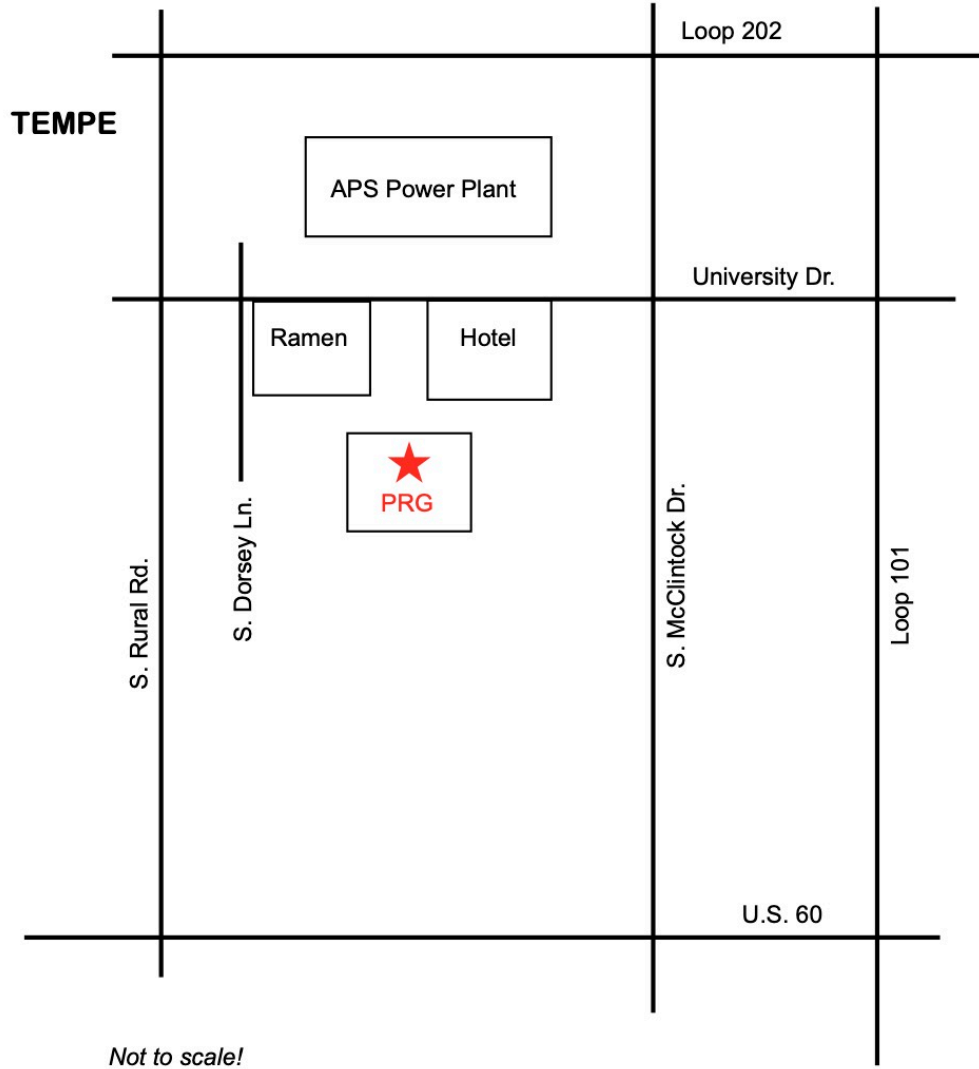
Saturday, Oct. 21: climbing at Watson Lake

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. Parking fee: \$3 per car.



Thursday, Oct. 26: 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.



AMC Basic Outdoor Rock Climbing School Class Rules

1. Public Health: per CDC, Maricopa County is in **Low** transmission for COVID: masks are optional; hand washing/sanitizing is always encouraged. If you have symptoms of **any** contagious illness, please contact the Lead Instructor and do not attend class in person.
2. Be on time for each session.
3. Bring **all** your gear as listed in the syllabus 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/belaying 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 or vape near rope, other equipment, or other people.
9. Do not litter; pack out **everything**.
10. Always wear a helmet during climbing sessions and self-rescue practice, even when not climbing.
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 falling, 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 you.
15. Do not rappel unless your setup has been approved by an instructor and someone is belaying 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 the belay/rappel device.
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, including family & friends.
22. No drones. Drones are prohibited in most parks/preserves (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 have to bring ALL our climbing gear to each class? Yes!

Do we always have to wear HELMETS around the climbing area? Yes!

Now let's go climb!

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