Blind Fitness Program

VIP User Guide to Rock Climbing

Accessible Format Quick Reference Basic Rock Climbing and Bouldering Rating Systems, with Comprehensive Glossary of Climbing Terms and General Introduction.

Introduction

This VIP User Guide has been prepared to assist persons with visual disabilities (VIPs) to understand and appreciate the sports of Rock Climbing and Bouldering more fully. Despite a focus on climbers who may be visually impaired, the information presented within this guide should prove very useful to any beginner climber whether or not visually impaired, and for more advanced climbers and climbing guides who would like to learn about the issues adaptive climbers with visual impairments face while climbing. As useful as this guide may be, it is not intended to be a comprehensive discussion of everything a VIP might need to know before going out Rock Climbing or Bouldering with competent guides. Also, it is not recommended that a VIP attempt any Rock Climbing or Bouldering adventure without an experienced guide familiar with the rock climbing location and how to properly instruct a person with a sight impairment to safely engage in the sports of Rock Climbing and Bouldering, whether indoors or outdoors. Lastly, the reader of this VIP User Guide should know that the sports of rock Climbing and Bouldering are inherently dangerous and that one engaging in such activities can, and often do, become injured and even die during such experiences. All the more reason to be safe and partner with experienced guides to minimize such inherent risks. Therefore, this VIP User Guide neither

advocates nor endorses for VIPs to engage in Rock Climbing or Bouldering, but if they do, knowing a little more about the sport's terminology used may make the experience more interesting, meaningful, and worthwhile, all to further enhance the lives of VIPs.

This VIP User Guide has been prepared with heading styles embedded within the text so that users can quickly zip from heading to heading without the need to review intervening text. Just use the Find headings feature within the Microsoft® Word program or use the heading feature within a screen reading program to locate the next or previous heading.

Also, since this document should have found its way to the reader in a Microsoft® Word format, the reader can search for any word, any expression, etc. within the document using the "Find" feature of the word processing program. This may be a convenient way to search for something if you know the word involved, but are not sure how the word might be used within this VIP User Guide for Rock Climbing.

To end this introduction, an acronym

Of how one should approach any climbing adventure is appropriate. One should "plan to can", that is one should be prepared to do what is needed to plan for success with a climbing adventure. How far can one go with climbing, ASFAR as one wants. The acronym ASFAR, or A.S.F.A.R. is explained below.

A for anticipate what one might encounter.

S for Sense what one finds when they get there.

F for Flexible mind set so that one is not burdened with doing something only one way.

A for Adapt as needed in a given situation.

R for Respond appropriately.

Using this ASFAR acronym, a climber should be able to go as far as they want with a climbing adventure.

Part A: Accessible Format discussion of types of rock climbing and Bouldering.

Use Header Search to skip directly to section desired.

To start with, it might be useful to review the different expressions used to describe the diverse types of rock climbing. Consider the following general list to be a high-level narrative on the types of experiences a VIP might encounter. Note that in the glossary below, one can also find these expressions defined with more detail.

Types of rock Climbing.

All rock climbing can be broken up into Free Rock Climbing and Aid Rock Climbing.

Free rock Climbing. This is rock climbing where technical climbing gear is used only for protection not to aid in the Ascent of the Climb. Below is a short definition of Aid Rock Climbing, but it differs from Free Rock Climbing in that technical climbing gear is used to assist with the ascent up the Rock Face of a Climb.

Bouldering. The most basic form of Free Rock Climbing is Bouldering where no technical climbing gear is used at all, and climbers typically attempt to climb piles of rocks up to around 12 feet in height. Falls are frequent and crash matts at the base of rock piles are often used to soften the impact when a climber falls. High Ball Bouldering involves rock piles of heights greater than 12 feet and involves much greater risk of injury. Only expert Bouldering Climbers should attempt High Ball Bouldering. Bouldering can be done in climbing gyms indoors or on rock piles outdoors.

Trad Climbing (short for Traditional Rock Climbing. This type of Free Rock Climbing involves the use of technical climbing gear by at least two Climbers to protect the Climbers as they ascent up a Rock Face by attaching Cams, Nuts or Bolts into the Rock Face to secure Climbing Ropes between the Climber and the Belayer so that if a Climber falls, they will only fall as far as the last protective gear device connected to the Rock Face which should support the Climber held by a climbing rope secured by the Belayer. . In Trad Climbing, the Climber following the Lead Rope Climber will Clean Gear off the Rock Face as they Ascend behind the Lead Rope Climber.

Within Trad Climbing, there is Top Rope Climbing and Lead Rope Climbing.

Top Rope Climbing. This is the most common form of Free Climbing in Trad Climbing mode using technical climbing gear. In Top Rope Climbing, a Climber is connected to a Climbing Rope which is threaded through an anchor point above the Climber and secured by a Belayer who often is at the same level of the Climber at the beginning of the climb. As the Climber Ascends the Rock Face, The Belayer takes up the slack in the Climbing Rope so that if the Climber falls, the Belayer will catch the climber before they fall very far or at all. Most indoor climbing gyms offer Top Rope Climbing since it is relatively safe when the Climber is on Belay. The difficulty of Top Rope Climbing is setting the top anchor point at the beginning of the day of climbing at the topmost point of the Climb and threading the Climbing Rope appropriately through that top anchor point. In outdoor settings, a climber can establish a top anchor point to engage in Top Rope Climbing in several ways. For example, the specific climb might allow for a Walk Around way up to the top of the Rock Face so that a top anchor point could be set without any rock climbing at all. In other situations, someone will need to climb up the Rock Face without the benefit of and safety afforded by an existing top anchor point by engaging in Lead Rope Climbing. Note that there may be a permanent top anchor point bolted into the Rock Face, but somehow, the climbing rope needs to be appropriately threaded through the top anchor point before top rope climbing can begin on that climbing route .

Lead Rope Climbing. This is the type of Free Climbing / Trad Climbing, where there is no top climb anchor point set up at the beginning of the climb. Rather, the first Climber up ascends up the rock Face carefully, setting cams, nuts or other safety gear along the Climbing Route and threading the climbing rope through the safety gear as the Lead Rope Climber ascends, connected to a climbing rope secured at the other end by the Belayer. The goal of the Lead Rope Climber is to get to a secure anchor point up the Rock Face, never allowing there to be more than about a body length of distance between her position and the last cam or nut securing the climbing rope so that if she fell, or experienced a Lead Fall, she would fall no more than her height before the climbing rope would catch her, threaded through the safety gear, and secured by the Belayer. As the Lead Rope Climber ascends, she leaves all the protective technical climbing gear embedded in the Rock Face for two reasons. First, each piece of protective safety gear adds another level of safety for the Lead Rope Climber just in case any higher level safety gear fails, and second, when the Lead Rope Climber finishes the ascent, establishes a solid top anchor point for the climb, and assumes the position of Belayer for her climbing partner below, the climbing partner can clean up all the safety gear along the climbing route so that just the solid top anchor point remains. The elevation gain of any given Lead Rope Climb is a function of the length of climbing rope used as one Pitch is roughly half the length of the climbing rope used. If a given climbing route would require more than one Lead Rope Climb to ascend, it is referred to as a multi-pitch climb.

Visually Impaired Sailing Institute & Organization of North America, Inc. (“VISION”)
, tax-exempt under IRC Section 501(c)(3): Federal Tax ID # 81-4251165
Address: VISION, Attn: Walt Raineri, 219 Brannan Street, Suite 12 B, San Francisco, California 94107 USA
Phone: (650)465-9899 or Email: wtr1977@yahoo.com

Sport Climbing. This is a style of Free Rock Climbing which focuses on climbing routes which have fixed anchor points bolted into Rock Faces so that there is less of a need to set safety gear as one Lead Climbs up a Rock Face. The Sport Climber is still on Belay, but the Lead Rope Climbing is often faster since all intermediate anchor points are already set in the Rock Face and the Lead Rope Climber is secured by the bolted anchors, free to move up to the next fixed anchor point once they clip their climbing rope through the fixed anchor point safety gear.

Aid Climbing. This type of rock climbing involves all the elements of Trad Climbing but includes the use of special technical climbing equipment to aid in the Ascent of a Rock Face. Ladders, Foot Loops, Hand Loops, single hand ascenders, double hand ascenders, and other Climbing Aids are used in this type of rock climbing. Aid Climbing is usually attempted when Free Climbing options are limited or considered too risky given the natural Features of the Rock Face. One can Solo Aid Climb or Partner Aid Climb, depending on the circumstances.

Solo Climbing. Solo Climbing is any form of Rock Climbing without any partner for safety. Free Solo Climbing is Free Climbing without a partner. Solo Aid Climbing is climbing without a partner but using climbing aids to assist with the ascent. Solo Rock Climbing is much more dangerous since there is no Belayer to secure the climbing rope and the climber must then use other techniques and safety gear to minimize the risk of falling off the Rock Face.

Alpine climbing. Alpine Climbing typically refers to Rock Climbing where there is a Summit of a mountain involved. Alpine Climbing might involve a combination of hiking and Rock Climbing to achieve the Summit objective.

Deep Water Climbing. This type of Rock Climbing involves climbing over water which is deep enough to allow the climber to safely drop into the water without hitting the bottom. Deep water Climbing can be with a partner or solo, can be with gear or just Bouldering without any technical climbing gear so that no gear gets wet if the climber falls. Deep Water Climbing should only be attempted by experienced climbers familiar with the risks associated with falling into water.

General Introduction to Rock climbing and Bouldering with a visual Disability.

At its core and everything else being equal, rock climbing and bouldering are activities which can be successfully experienced by persons with visual disabilities. The adaptive nature of the Rock Climbing and Bouldering experiences are not that significant once you scrape away the stigma often associated with persons with visual disabilities that they cannot do adventurous activities. Replace the preconceived low expectations on what persons with visual disabilities

can and cannot do, replace them with a set of high expectations that with a little courage and adaptation we all can do just about anything, and the world will open up to a plethora of opportunities for a VIP Climber. Who knows, a highly functional person with a visual disability may be a better Rock Climber or Boulderer than most able bodied persons.

In this section, some general adaptive Rock Climbing and Bouldering concepts will be presented to provide a starting point for a person with a visual disability (sometimes referred to herein as a VIP Climber), to work with their experienced guide. Note that there is no single pathway, no hard and fast set of rules, when it comes to Rock-climbing or Bouldering with a visual disability. Readers of this VIP User Guide to Rock Climbing should embrace the flexibility and adaptability inherent with Rock Climbing and Bouldering generally, and simply expand the notion to encompass what adaptive technique, what additional guidance may be needed in a given circumstance to enhance the experience for the Rock Climber or Boulderer with a visual disability to assist them in safely Climbing the Rock or Boulder. . Note that this VIP User Guide to Rock Climbing will not attempt to provide a thorough discussion of all Rock Climbing or Bouldering techniques generally. For such information, readers should consult general reference materials associated with Rock Climbing or Bouldering. Rather, this VIP User Guide to Rock Climbing is designed to provide some background, some adaptive tips, and techniques, that might enhance a Rock Climbing or Bouldering adventure for a VIP Climber

Physical Fitness.

To start with, , Rock Climbing and Bouldering involve elevating oneself up a pile of rocks or a rock face. This VIP User Guide to Rock Climbing will not attempt to address all of the physical fitness issues involved with being able to lift one's own body weight up to a higher elevation using only one's own muscles. Suffice it to say that Rock Climbing and Bouldering can be a very strenuous physical activity and if one has a difficult time climbing up a vertically oriented ladder, again and again, that person might find Rock Climbing quite challenging. To set oneself up for success with Rock Climbing and Bouldering, one would be well served to be appropriately physically fit to engage in the activities. See the hundreds and hundreds of fitness books on this subject. For example, check out the information at this internet link for an example of what might be involved to prepare oneself for a Rock Climbing adventure. https://rockclimbingguru.com/how-to-prepare-for-a-rock-climbing-trip-a-complete-guide/.

Adaptive Techniques for VIP Climbers

Beyond being physically fit to engage in Rock Climbing and Bouldering, there are some basic adaptive techniques which this author has found useful to enhance rock Climbing and Bouldering adventures as a person with a visual disability. Consider the following adaptive technique suggestions as merely an example of how to incorporate flexibility and special guidance into the success equation for a person with a visual disability.

Use of Caller as Team Member.

Beyond the VIP climber and the Belayer, a third person sometimes referred to as a "Caller" or "Spotter" might be incorporated into the climbing team. The function of the Caller is to be able to stand away from the Rock Face and Call out possible hand Holds, Obstacles, Rock Features, Location of Directionals, etc. to the visually disabled Climber who may not be able to perceive such things, and may not be visible to the Belayer standing underneath the VIP Climber.

Use of Two Way Communication Devices.

Sometimes, but not always, the Caller and the VIP Climber might use two way wireless communication devices so that there is no yelling involved over long distances, there is less risk of miscommunication between the Caller and the Climber, and the VIP Climber can communicate back to the Caller if the VIP Climber needs additional feedback on the Climb.

Orientation Cues

A VIP Climber can be guided up the Rock Face in a number of ways, but orienting the VIP Climber to possible Hand Holds, Foot Holds, Obstacles, Rock Features, etc. using a Clock Face orientation approach can be very useful. That is, a Caller, or Belayer if there is no Caller, might tell a VIP Climber that, for example, there is, or could be, a possible hand hold above the climber, about 2 feet up and at 1 O'clock. This Clock Face orientation will assist the VIP Climber by speeding up the time it will take the VIP Climber to tactilely find the Hand Hold, Obstacle, Rock Feature, etc. Another orientation approach could be to simply use language such as up and to the right, down and to the left, straight up, right below, etc. Callers and Belayers should avoid using expressions such as "right there", "over there", "just near you", "right in front", "right by your foot' or similar expressions which might mean something to a sighted Climber, but mean nothing to a VIP Climber. No matter what orientation approach is used, the goal is to quickly orient the VIP Climber to the next task for the VIP Climber, whether it be the next hand Hold, Foot Hold, Obstacle to avoid, or Rock Feature to find. Speed is usually every Climber's friend (whether visually disabled or sighted), so that the Climber's muscles are not overly exerted during the Ascent. A Climber can become so fatigued if they hang on a Rock

Feature too long that they can become what is known as Pumped Out, which means that their muscles no longer function properly due to lactic acid build up, or similar reasons. This is why orientating the VIP Climber to Rock Features quickly is so important because the VIP Climber cannot anticipate the next Climbing Move like a sighted Climber can.

Hand Scan Technique.

This is a technique where the VIP Climber uses her / his hand to scan the surface of the rock to locate a hand Hold, Obstacle, or Rock Feature. The Caller might tell the VIP Climber, for example, to perform a right Hand Scan up and to the right between 12 O'clock and 3 O'clock to locate such items. Hand Scans can be further couched in terms of orientation to the VIP Climber in terms of closeness to the VIP Climber's face. For example, a caller might tell a VIP Climber to perform a Hand Scan near to the right side of the VIP Climber's face, or 2 feet up and to the right of the VIP Climber's face, or at 3 O'clock and 2 feet away from the VIP Climber's face. All such Hand Scan Orientation comments, no matter what approach is used, should be offered with a goal of quickly orienting the VIP Climber to the next task to perform.

Foot Scan Technique.

A Foot Scan is similar to a Hand Scan, but the VIP Climber's feet are involved. For example, a Caller or Belayer might say Foot Scan right at knee height out 2 feet to find a Foot Hold by dragging the VIP Climber's foot along the Rock Face to locate the Rock Feature in the approximate location indicated.

Anticipatory Cues.

Since a VIP climber cannot see what may lie ahead of them along Climbing Routes, the Caller or Belayer can assist the VIP Climber by actively participating in the climb by anticipating what the VIP Climber might or should do next. For example, if the VIP Climber needs to Lateral or Traverse over to the right before continuing the ascent, the Caller or Belayer could tell the VIP Climber that after they stabilize on the foot hold, they will be Traversing horizontally right before ascending further. Providing such anticipatory information in just the correct quantity can reduce the anxiety of the VIP Climber greatly. Note that such anticipatory information should not be provided too far in advance or the VIP Climber might not be able to catalogue and store all such information. Common sense should be the ultimate guide on what to say, how much to say, and how soon to say it when it comes to providing anticipatory information. The VIP Climber and Caller / Belayer can experiment to develop a useful system for the specific Climb being attempted. Note that this provision of anticipatory cues might be useful to sighted climbers as well, but it is especially useful to a VIP Climber who cannot see up the Rock Face or over the Boulder. Also, the person on belay and / or caller might be able to see the chalk marks left by previous climbers on the rock face and might consider passing this information along to

the VIP climber at the correct time to help identify appropriate hand and / or foot holds where depth perception or angle of viewing might make it difficult for the person on belay or caller to notice an efficient route up the rock face.

Two Way Communication.

Since it cannot be anticipated what a VIP Climber might encounter on a given Climb, or what assistance they may need, it is important to embrace the concept of two way communication between the VIP Climber and the Caller / Belayer so the VIP Climber can help identify and tailor the information being provided so that it is most useful to the VIP Climber. A VIP Climber should be ready to tell a Caller / Belayer, that the information being provided is too much, not enough, is being provided too late, is being provided too early, that the VIP Climber needs a break, etc. The goal will be to establish a system of communication which works between the specific VIP Climber and their Caller / Belayer. Again, Common Sense and curtesy should be the ultimate guides to developing an appropriate two way communication approach.

It should be noted that patience and perseverance should be incorporated into the two way communication approach. Both the VIP Climber and the Caller/Belayer should expect that differences in timing, or flow of communication might arise. The demonstration of patience with perseverance will allow for appropriate course correction with communication approaches so that an optimal system can be developed among the team members.

Collaboration.

While effective collaboration between any Climber and her / his Belayer is important, for all the reasons noted above, collaboration between a VIP Climber and her / his Caller / Belayer is especially critical. Thinking of the climbing adventure as a team sport will enhance the experience for both the VIP Climber and the Caller/Belayer. The VIP Climber's physical ability may be how the VIP Climber was able to get up the Rock, they probably would not have been able to do so without the collaboration of the Caller/Belayer. This collaboration extends beyond mere safety elements of the Climb, but to the core of the adventure itself and why Climbing can be such a meaningful and fulfilling activity for persons with visual disabilities.

Part B: Accessible Format discussion of rock climbing and Bouldering Rating / Grading systems.

Use Header Search to skip directly to section desired.

Yosemite Decimal System. Difficulty Rating / grading systems for roped climbing: the Yosemite Decimal System.

The most common rating / grading system for technical rock climbing is known as the Yosemite Decimal System, or YDS. There are five "classes" in the YDS.

YDS Classes 1-4

YDS Classes 1 and 2 are used to describe walking and hiking terrain. YDS Classes 3 and 4 describe steeper, more technical terrain that is often exposed and requires some rock scrambling and the use of all four limbs on the ground to ascend safely. Think of YDS classes 1 and 2 as a walk in the woods, and YDS classes 3 and 4 as a technical hike or steep mountain ridgeline which may or may not require any climbing Gear.

YDS Class 5.

YDS Class 5, or fifth class, covers technical rock climbing. This one is subdivided into subparts, which currently range from 5.0 to 5.15D. There is no theoretical top limit to the YDS scale. The higher it is, the more difficult the climb and the most difficult climbs today top out at 5.15D. Early proponents of the system added the decimal to break up the fifth class into minute, incremental ratings that allow climbers to describe a route's difficulty with a high degree of accuracy.
Low YDS fifth class, from 5.0 to 5.5, is considered to be easy terrain by most climbers. After the YDS scale reaches 5.9, letters are used to further subdivide each numerical grade. The 5.10 grade is divided into 5.10A, 5.10B, 5.10C, and 5.10D, which is then followed by 5.11A, and so on.

As a rough guideline, the YDS 5.6- to 5.8-grade range is generally considered beginner-level climbing. YDS 5.9 through 5.10 is roughly intermediate, YDS5.11 through 5.12 can be considered advanced, and YDS 5.13 and beyond is very difficult elite-level climbing.

The YDS is used by most climbing gyms in North America and other regions where the YDS is preferred. In these areas, any roped form of rock climbing, from bolt-protected sport climbing to removable gear-protected traditional climbing, probably will be rated using the YDS.

Note that a given climb might be in certain parts rated lower and in other parts rated high. The overall rating for a given climb thus may be a composite score based on average difficulty, or may be based on the Crux, or most difficult part of the climb.

Safety Rating Scale.

In addition to technical difficulty rating / grading scales, there are often also safety rating / grading scales used to assess the risk of injury associated with a given climb. A typical safety rating / grading scale assuming that a competent climber is attempting the route. The letter codes associated with the different protection ratings are based on the American system for movie ratings:

- G: Good-quality, ample protection
- PG: Generally good protection with a few sections of poor protection
- PG-13: Fair protection that may result in long, potentially dangerous falls
- R: Loosely refers to "runout terrain," where there's limited protection and the possibility of serious injury
- X: No protection and overall, the route is extremely dangerous.

Difficulty Rating / grading systems for Bouldering: The V Scale.

While the YDS is used to grade pretty much every roped rock climbing route in America and beyond, bouldering utilizes a completely different system. Like grades for roped climbing routes, bouldering grades indicate the difficulty of a boulder problem to a climber who has never tried it before. The typical Boulder Rating / Grading scale is the V System. The "V" in V scale is short for "Vermin" or "Verm," which is the nickname of iconic boulderer John Sherman, credited with creating the V scale.

V Scale Grading

Boulder problems in America are typically rated / graded using the V scale. Like the YDS, the V scale is completely open-ended, and the highest grade on the scale will continue to increase as the sport progresses. Currently, the scale starts at V0 and goes up to V17.
Sometimes, VB is used to describe beginner-level boulder problems that are easier than V0. Generally, problems between VB and V3 are considered beginner-level, V3 to V6 is considered intermediate, V7 to V10 is advanced, and V11 and beyond is very difficult or elite.

As with technical rope climbing, a given Bouldering situation may involve different levels of difficulty in different parts of the climb. The grade of a boulder problem considers the entire experience of climbing the boulder. Individual movements from one hold to the next are sometimes given a grade themselves, but the accumulation of all of the moves adds up to the final grade of the entire boulder problem.

For example, a boulder problem with 10 V5 moves in a row without rest will probably be rated a higher grade than V5. This is because a series of moves of a given grade is more difficult to complete than a single move of the same grade.

A V10 boulder problem could include a bunch of easy moves leading to a single V10 move, or it could be a sequence of lesser moves that overall requires a V10 effort to link together.

Part C : Accessible Format Glossary of Rock Climbing and Bouldering terms and expressions. Alphabetical Order.

Use Header Search to skip directly to section desired.

Letter A.

Aid Climbing. A type of rock climbing where gear is used to assist a climber to ascend the rock wall. Aid might include Ladders, Foot Straps, single or double Ascenders, and the like.

Alpine Rock Climbing. A type of rock climbing where a summit of a mountain is often the target of the climb instead of just some number of Pitches. Summit is target and it may take a combination of hiking and Rock Climbing to achieve the Summit.

Anchor, Rock Anchor, Rope Anchor. Anchor Point. The device securely affixed to some Feature on the Rock Slab which can support the Climber, his Gear and all other weight reasonably expected to pull on the Anchor. Some Anchors are permanent bolts drilled into a rock slab due to the popularity of a given Climbing Route, others are just rocks, around which a Climbing Rope can be appropriately secured, trees around which a Climbing Rope can be appropriately secured, cracks into which cams can be secured, and the like. Setting an Anchor can be the most challenging part of a Climb as it may require one climber to be lead Rope and Ascend without the benefit of an existing Climbing Rope already in place. Setting an anchor point can also be as easy as locating a Walk Around to the top of the Rock Face and setting the top anchor point without Rock Climbing at all. An Anchor Point is just the location of the Anchor. As you'll discover, anchor-building is a game of compromises — the perfect anchor may not exist. One just needs anchors which effectively manage risk within practical limitations.

When setting an anchor, consider the following acronym of useful attributes: SERENA or S.E.R.E.N.A. Each letter is explained in the next set of paragraphs.

S for Solid or Strong placements as the anchor point should be as solid and strong as possible for the circumstances. Whenever possible, anchors should incorporate strong natural features like horns, boulders, or trees. Be sure that if a tree is used, it is deeply rooted, and if a large rock is used that it is not precariously balanced. If an anchor involves slinging a rock feature, make sure that it's firmly attached to the rock face, and not a flake which might release under pressure.

E for Equalized so that there is no uneven pressure on the anchor point . Equalization is one of the centers of the anchor debates. It refers to how well an anchor distributes the load between pieces. If an anchor could theoretically distribute a load completely equally (i.e., 50% each in a two piece anchor or 33% each for three), it would be completely equalized. The equalization

can be either static (valid for only one direction of pull) or dynamic (moves with direction of pull), but it will usually not be perfect.

R for Redundant as the anchor should incorporate redundant safety features such as double carabiners, double cordelette webbing straps, double trees or rocks, all as available. The true definition of redundancy is: if any one element fails, the climber doesn't get seriously hurt. That is, if one piece of gear fails, there should be backup. For example, if a sling somehow gets cut, the anchor will ideally still hold.

E for Efficient as the anchor should allow for not only the most timely placement of the anchor, but should also allow for an efficient route up the given rock face. Balancing safety which might suggest that one create triple, quadruple, quintuple and so on anchors, but such an approach would significantly detract from the joy of climbing if it resulted in a time allocation of 90 percent anchor placement and 10 percent climbing.

N for no Extension. Extension refers to the amount of slack that would enter an anchor system if a piece of protection were to fail. To minimize extension, anchors can involve limiter knots which could limit the full extension of a sling.

A for Angles. Ensuring that one incorporates small angles into an anchor placement is just basic physics: the greater the angle created by the lines of the anchor, the greater the force on each piece. On pieces placed far apart, a downward load creates an extra inward force by way of the tension in the anchor. This multiplies the load on each piece. To avoid any extra load, it's best to keep the angles in the anchor strands small. This usually means placing pieces closer together, or using a greater length of anchor material.

Ascend, Ascending. The act of moving up a rock wall or boulder, increasing your elevation.

Ascender. A climbing Aide which you connect to a climbing Rope to allow you to pull yourself up the Rope without using any Holds or Features of the rock. Ascenders can be single hand to stabilize as you walk up a wall, or double handed so you can pull yourself up like doing a pull up. Ascenders can also be leveraged so you can pull less than your own body weight and still ascend up the route.

Ascent. An expression used to refer to the entire upward movement of the climb. For example, you might ask someone, "How was the ascent?"

Aide. Climbing Aid. A climbing Aide is some type of device other than just a climbing Rope and the devices to secure a climbing Rope, , which a climber uses to climb a given route on a

Rock Wall which are not used only for protection and safety. Climbing Aides can include Ascenders, Ladders, Foot Loops, or any other device which a climber uses to ascend a rock wall. Some purists consider the use of grippy gloves to be a Climbing Aide, for example.

Arête. An outside corner of rock faces. Imagine the outside corner of a house, but angle may vary widely. Also imagine the rock corner like a piece of pizza sticking out from the rock wall, with the pointy end forming an outside acute angle (very pointy corner from 1 to 89 degrees between a sliver and a quarter of the pizza), to a right angle (90 degrees or a quarter of the pizza), to an obtuse angle (very open between 91 and 179 degrees or between a quarter and a half of a pizza). Compare to a Dihedral which is like the inside corner of a house.

Letter B.

Belay. The act of securing the rope connected to a climber by a person below or above the climber. Essentially, the person on belay secures the free end of the climbing rope so that if the climber slips off the rock, the person on belay prevents the climber from falling more than a meter or a few feet. Climbers should always confirm that they are "on Belay" before climbing.

Belayer. The person who is usually in a stationary position (most likely below the climber), securing the free end of a climbing rope connected to a climber with a Belay device. A Belayer can be above the Climber when Lead Roping and is at the top of a Pitch. See Belay Gear for more on what a Belay Gear or Belay Device is.

Belay Gear or Belay Device . This is the device the person on belay connects to their Harness to secure the free end of a climbing rope to secure a climber and prevent the climber from falling if they slip off the rock. Several types of Belay Gear exist and may be referred to by brand name. Some include a GreeGree device with a pull lever to automatically secure a climbing rope and requires that a lever be released before a climber can be allowed to descend. Other Belay devices are strictly friction based with no mechanical levers such as the ATC. Essentially, all Belay Gear or Belay Devices utilize rope to rope and / or rope to metal friction to hold a rope in place when needed to hold the Climber in place, and to allow a rope to slip through when a Climber is Ascending. . There may be various styles and generations of these Gree Gree and ATC belay devices available for use such as the Gree Gree Plus, ATC Guide, etc. Which type of Belay device used may not be as important as being able to competently and safely use what Belay device may be available. It is not recommended to try out a new Belay device without first thoroughly understanding how the device operates in all situations, and second, being trained by an experienced guide who is familiar with using such device. Many times, climbing gyms will not let just anyone even be a Belayer without first being check out on their competency on the Belay device they wish to use. This glossary is not intended to provide a

comprehensive explanation on how Belay Devices operate or even how to Belay, so please refer to other general technical Rock Climbing guides for such information.

Belay Gloves. These are the gloves a Belayer might use to protect their hands while manipulating the Climbing Rope while Belaying a Climber. Since the Climbing Rope must always be gripped by the Belayer and since the Climbing Rope must be pulled through the grip of the Belayer, Belay Gloves can be useful to avoid or minimize friction rope burns for the Belayer.

Belay Knot. This is the knot a Climber will use to tie herself to the Climbing Rope and involves creating a Figure Eight Knot in a Climbing Rope, threading the bitter end of the Climbing Rope through the Hard Points of a Climbing Harness, and then retracing the Figure Eight Knot with the bitter end of the Climbing Rope to secure the Climber to the Climbing Rope. When tied correctly, there should be 10 sets of double rope in the knot. There should always be at least 8 to 12 inches of Bitter End extending beyond the Belay Knot to ensure that the Belay Knot remains secure while the Climber is Climbing. If there is an excessive amount of Bitter End rope extending beyond the Belay Knot, such excess can be secured with a Fisherman's Knot just so that the excess rope does not impede the Climber in any way. Climbers should be wary of what is known as the Yosemite finish by tucking the bitter end of the rope back into the belay knot as this technique, if done incorrectly, might cause the belay n=knot to unravel under stress.

Beta. Prior knowledge about a climb such as where the best hand holds are, where the best Cracks are, where fixed climbing equipment is located, where the best rock features are, and the like. Beta can include knowledge on what gear would be appropriate to accomplish the climb. Offering Beta about a climb to someone who has never been on that specific part of a rock wall is considered neighborly.

Big Wall Climbing. A type of Rock Climbing which is a multi-pitch climb and usually takes more than 1 day to accomplish the Climb, and often requires the use of a Port-a-Ledge device on which the Climbers can rest while sleeping.

Bitter End. This is the very end of a rope. Typically, with Top Rope Climbing, the Bitter End of a Rope is threaded through the anchor point at the top of the Rock Wall and brought back down to the base of the Rock Wall, and then the Climber will use the Bitter End to thread through the Hard Points of their Harness to tie a Belay Knot to secure themselves to the Climbing Rope.

Bowline Knot. This is an alternative knot which might be used as a Belay Knot and is borrowed from sailing. Most do not use a Bowline knot when climbing despite its functionality because it is more difficult to quickly determine if the Bolen Knot is tied correctly, as compared to the 10 sets of double rope knot as described above in the definition of a Belay Knot.

Boulder or Bouldering. Unroped climbing not far from the ground (12 feet or less) with an emphasis on movement and strength. Typically, no ropes, or aides of any kind are used to boulder. Most terms and expressions for rock climbing and bouldering are the same, with some minor differences.

Bridging. A rock climbing maneuver that involves pushing out to the sides with either, or both, the hands, or legs on opposing rock walls; also known as Stemming. Often used when climbing a Chimney feature.

Bucket. A hand Hold which offers you a full grip to hold onto. Similar to a Jug. Jugs and Buckets make a particular route easier.

Letter C.

Cam. A climbing Gear device with a spring loaded carabiner you can jam and lock into a rock feature, crack, pocket, or other appropriate location on a rock Slab, to connect your climbing Rope. A Cam is often referred to in the collective along with other climbing devices used for technical rock climbing as Gear. A Cam usually has a trigger or pull device to make the part of the Cam you insert into the rock Feature smaller, and when the trigger is released, arms open up and lock the Cam into the rock Feature. Care should be taken to make sure that while the Cam is secure enough to hold your weight, it is not jammed so hard into the rock Feature that you cannot remove it.

Carabiner. A metal, oval shaped open jaw device which can lock or spring close capable of supporting an appropriate amount of weight for a climb. Locking carabiners usually have twist barrels to lock the spring loaded carabiner in the closed position. Carabiners are used for a variety of purposes in technical Rock Climbing.

Chimney. A separation between two rock formations which creates a cave like opening in the rock into which you can crawl. You might have to Stem or engage in a stemming maneuver, requiring you to use your hands and feet on both opposing walls, or your feet on one wall and your back on the opposing wall, to ascend or descend.

Choss. Any kind of impeding debris that gets in the way of good, clean rock (e.g., dirt, rubble, vegetation, etc.).

Cleaning Gear. An expression to remove climbing Gear from the climbing Route as you Ascend or Descent. Often the person on Bely will Clean Gear of the Lead Rope Climber once the Lead

Rope Climber has reached the top of the Pitch and then begins to Belay the following climber from above.

Climb, Climbing, or Rock Climb. A Climb is often just a generic expression used when referring to a specific way up a rock slab or rock formation. Compare to Route or Climbing Route which is a specific way up a rock slab or rock formation. There may be many different ways up the same rock slab or rock formation so there may be many Climbs or Routes up to the top of the same rock slab or rock formation.

Climber. The person who is the active climber. Compare to the Belayer who is not climbing when on Belay.

Climbing Rope. The rope used to assist Climbers safely to Ascend a Rock Slab. Used for protection, not to aid in the ascent of the climb. Not used in Bouldering. The length of the Climbing Rope used dictates the elevation of a Pitch since a Pitch is approximately half the length of the climbing rope.

Crack. A separation between two rock slabs, or a crack in one rock slab. Typically, a crack is no larger than one's foot, toe, hand, or finger. Walls of a crack might be parallel, angling in, or angling out, and may be a shallow crack into which you might be able to insert only part of a foot, tow, hand or finger, or a deep crack which has no visible end. Compare to a Dihedral which is the coming together of two rock faces. Compare also to a chimney which is much larger, cave like, and may require you use your hands and feet on both opposing walls to ascend or descend. A Crack may be vertical to diagonal, with varying degrees of upward slope. A horizontal crack might be referred to as an Edge or Ledge.

Crack Gloves. These are often used when a climber expects to jam her hand into a crack to hold her weight as she ascends up the rock face. The crack gloves usually protect the back of the hands and the top side of the knuckles, leaving exposed the palm and underside of the fingers to grip the rock while ascending . The climber might put their hand into a crack, make a full or partial fist to create contact and friction with the walls of the crack, and use the crack glove to avoid abrasions on the back of the hand or knuckles with the hand in a fist like position bearing the weight of the climber.

Crampons. These are devices an Ice Climber straps onto their boots to allow them to Ice Climb. The devices have sharp pointed spikes extending from the bottom and all four sides so that an Ice Climber can stab their foot into the wall of ice and the foot will stick to the ice and hold the weight of the Ice Climber.

Crash Matt. The rubber matt usually found at the bottom or base of a Boulder Field in an indoor fitness center to soften the impact when a Climber on a Boulder falls off the Bounder.

Crimp or Crimper. A thin climbing hand hold, or rock feature, typically on a slab of rock that requires one to "crimp" with just their fingertips to support their weight. Imagine a piece of toast, the edge of a tortilla, or a slice of cheese on which one would put their fingers into a claw like or tight fingers down position to hold onto the edge of the crimp. Similar to Edge but used in the context of a hand hold, where Edge is used in the context of a foot hold.

Crimping. A rock climbing maneuver that requires a fingertip only or closed-hand grip on a thin climbing hold known as a crimp or crimper.

Crux. The most difficult section of a climb. May be at the beginning, middle or end of a climb, but requires the most skill to accomplish.

Letter D.

Dead Point. A kind of semi-dynamic move where the climber finally hits the targeted Hold at the apex of their movement arc.

Deep Water Solo. A type of Solo Climbing in which the rock wall is above a body of water such that if the Climber fell, she would fall into water deep enough to arrest the fall with minimal impact injury risk.

Descend. The act of moving downward a rock face. Often referred to when a climber has reached the top of the climb and is beginning to return to the base level of the climb.

Descent. The downward movement of a climb after you reach the targeted elevation gain or top of the rock.

Dihedral. An inside corner of rock faces. Imagine the inside corner of a room. Angles may vary widely. Also imagine the rock corner like a "V" shaped divot in the rock wall into which you could fit a piece of pizza, the pointy end towards the rock wall, forming an acute angle (very pointy inside corner from 1 to 89 degrees or between a sliver and a quarter of the pizza), to a right angle (90 degrees or a quarter of the pizza), to an obtuse angle (very open between 91 and 179 degrees or between a quarter and a half of a pizza). Compare to an Arête which is an outside rock corner. Also compare to a rock crack which might have parallel walls into which you could jam your foot, tow, hand, or finger to support your weight. Compare also to a Chimney which is cave like and may have parallel walls.

Directional. A connection point along a Climbing rope which diverts the Climbing Rope so that it hangs in the appropriate location for a lower section of the Climb. Often, Climbers need to reach the Directional and unclip the Climbing Rope from the Cam or Nut to allow the Climbing

Rope to Swing into place for the upper sections of the Route. There can be one or many Directionals placed on a given Route depending on the Features of the Climb.

Dyno. A dynamic rock climbing or bouldering maneuver which involves jumping from one position on a rock to another position with a moment in which no part of your body is touching the rock. Often very risky with high probability of falling associated with maneuver.

Letter E.

Edge or Edging. A climbing maneuver that involves placing the toe or ball of the foot on a thin climbing hold or feature. Imagine a thin piece of toast, tortilla, or slice of cheese on the rock slab on which you would rest your foot or toe. Similar to a crimp but used in the context of a foot hold, where a Crimp is used in the context of a hand hold.

Letter F.

Feature or Rock Feature. A blemish to an otherwise smooth rock surface which could be used to place your hand or foot to support your weight Sometimes a Hold is referred to generically as a Feature on the rock wall.

Finger Hole. A Rock Feature only large enough to insert a single finger to hold onto the Rock face.

Flag, Flagging. To stick one of your legs out in order to improve balance while climbing.

Flapper. That flappy bit of skin that hangs off your finger after slicing it on some rock.

Flash. Climbing a route clean for the first time with some prior knowledge / Beta and/or

equipment already in place. This is often an expression used in Sport Climbing.

Free Climbing. A type of rock climbing where gear is used for protection only and not to aid in the ascent of the rock wall. Only the natural Features of the rock wall are used to ascend the rock wall.

Free Solo. A type of climbing where the climber is climbing alone and uses gear only for protection and not to aid in ascending a rock wall.

Letter G.

Gaston. Hand Hold named after the French climber Gaston Rébuffat. Imagine the grip you take when opening a sliding glass door, knuckles facing each other, pushing with palms horizontally.

Gear, Climbing Gear. A generic expression used to describe devices used to rock climb. Gear can include devices strapped to the climber, devices inserted into the rock face, devices permanently affixed to the rock face, etc. Sometimes Gear may be used to describe the devices specifically inserted into the rock face, and expressions such as Cleaning Gear, refer to the process of removing Gear placed into the rock face to assist with climbing the rock along a given route. Since the term Gear is loosely defined, it can also refer to any equipment used to Rock Climb.

Glass. A smooth, featureless slab of rock with no hand or foot holds.

Ground Up. To climb a route from the ground up. You usually start from a floor sit position.

Letter H.

Hand Jam. Quite literally the act of jamming your hand into a crack and simultaneous widening your grip and squeezing your fist closed as much as it will go. You might only be able to make your hand into a cup. A claw or complete fist to support your weight. You're basically using your entire hand like a cam (SLCD camming device) and leveraging your weight into that grip to pull yourself up. Can result in skin abrasions, cuts, skin taers, and other injuries to your hands. Using Crack Gloves can help minimize injuries and abrasions to your knuckles and backs of your hands.

Hard Points. These are the reenforced loops on a Climbing Harness through which a Climbing Rope is threaded before a Belay Knot is tied to secure a climber to a Climbing Rope. There are usually 2 Hard Points on a Harness, right in front at the top of the Harness, oriented in a vertical orientation (i.e., one is below the other). Making sure a Climbing Rope is threaded through both Hard Points of a Harness is a critical step in the Partner Check Out procedure before a Climber begins a Climb.

Harness, Climbing Harness. The device which connects around a Climber's waist and legs to comfortably support the Climber during a Climb. All Climbing Gear is typically stored on a Harness when such Gear is not in use. Often, there are loops on the sides and back of a harness

to store Climbing Gear when not in use. The 2 vertically oriented Loops right in front and at the top of a harness are referred to as the Hard Points of a Harness. There are many different styles of Climbing harnesses and it is important to check out a climbing Harness thoroughly before beginning a Climbing session to make sure that it is fastened properly to a Climber so that the Climber's weight can be supported by the Harness while Climbing.

Head Lamp. The illumination device a Rock Climber may use to light up a Route while climbing in low or no light.

Heel-hooking. A climbing maneuver that involves hooking the heel around a climbing feature / hold or Arête.

Helmet, Climbing Helmet. The safety device which should be used at all times when climbing or in the area where Climbing is occurring. Falling rocks and Gear can, and do, cause great bodily injury and even death and the use of a Climbing helmet reduces such risk.

High Ball Bouldering. A type of Bouldering which involves routes of more than 12 feet high and comes with much greater risk due to the height of any fall.

Hold, foot Hold, hand Hold. A generic expression for a Feature to put your hand or foot. Often used in connection with foot or hand, such as a Hand Hold, or Foot Hold.

Letter I.

Ice Axe. The pick axe like device with a loop strap at the bottom of the handle, connected to a metal pick , used to stab into ice by Ice Climbers.

Ice Climbing. The act of climbing up ice using technical climbing gear. Ice Climbing is very similar to Trad Climbing and other forms of Rock Climbing but is on a block or wall of ice.

Letter J.

Jam. The act of putting a climber's hand or foot into a crack to create a secure position from which to further ascend. Expressions might include "hand jam" or "foot jam".

Jug. A large hand hold that will allow all four fingers into or around it. Also used to describe a hand hold you can grab using your 4 fingers and thumb, like the handle to a jug of milk. Similar to a Bucket. Jugs and Buckets make a rock Climbing Route easier to ascend.

Jugging. An expression to describe quickly ascending a rope using an Ascender device connected to a rope.

Letter L.

Lead Rope, Lead Roping. The climber who Ascends the route first to place Gear so others may climb up the route. Can be very dangerous as there often is no

Lead Fall. This is an expression to describe the fall of a Lead Rope Climber who cannot hang onto the Features of the Rock Wall and falls off the wall, hopefully suspended by the Climbing Rope and the Gear placed into the wall up to the point of where the Climber has climbed. Ideally, a Lead Fall is no higher than the height of the Lead Rope Climber.

Ledge. A deep horizontal Feature on a rock face which would allow you to sit, stand, or lie down.

Lie back, Lay Back. A counter-intuitive climbing maneuver that involves hanging with hands on hand holds with straight arms, while feet are against rock wall in a Smear or Edge with straight legs, then pulling up with arms and pushing out and up with feet to ascend. Using a lot of leverage, you essentially lay back, pushing your feet out into the wall and simultaneously pulling into the grip with your arms.

Lunge. A rock climbing maneuver that involves lunging from one position to another, but can involve certain body parts, with other body parts still supporting some of your weight. Compare to a Dyno which involves jumping from one position to another.

Letter M.

Match, Matching. The act of replacing one hand or foot with the other on the same Hold. Often needed when you need to Move to the right or left to reach the next hold and to do so, you have to Match one foot to where your other one is on an existing Hold.

Mantle, Mantling. A climbing maneuver that involves lifting and supporting oneself with the hands, which are palms-down on the same climbing hold. May or may not be able to put your entire palm down on the hand hold, but the palms down orientation and the push down aspect of maneuver is like you are pushing down on the mantle of a fireplace to climb it, or how you push yourself out of a swimming pool with your hands palms down near your face on a flat surface.

Move, Movement. one of a series of motions involved in gaining climbing distance, usually ascending, but could be Traversing laterally across a rock face so that the Climber can ascend.

Multi Pitch Route. A Climb which involves more than one Pitch, which means that the elevation gain of the route is longer than half of the length of the Climbing Rope the Climber has to use

when engaged in Trad Climbing with a partner. . Thus, there is no fixed amount of elevation gain for any given Pitch.

Letter N.

Negative. An expression used to identify the part of the Rock Face which begins to angle away from the Rock Face and require the climber to climb at an angle greater than 90 degrees to the force of gravity, often requiring the climber to literally hang from the rock as she climbs.

Nut. A device which functions like a Cam but does not use any moving parts to lock into a crack or crevasse on a rock face. Nuts are connected to Carabiners which allow climbers to secure their climbing ropes into the rock face. Often Nuts are used to secure climbing Ropes into very small cracks or crevice's which are too small for Cams.

Letter O.

On Sight. To successfully climb a route without Beta, or prior knowledge or experience of the moves. Also known as Redpoint. Usually refers to a clean, continuous first time Ascent from bottom to top in one continuous flow – no rests or falls.

Ovalize. An expression used with a rope which is no longer round due to extreme loads or a rope shock due to a sudden heavy pull on the rope.

Overhang. A Rock Feature where the rock juts out from the Rock Face and hangs over the Climber, requiring the Climber to literally hang from the Rock as she ascends up the Route.

Letter P.

Partner Check Out. This is the procedure each Belayer and Climber should engage in before a Climber begins a Climb. The Partner Check Out procedure can vary but the main things to be confirmed by each are as follows: (1) Climber check out of Belayer, to confirm Belayer's harness to make sure it is fastened properly to the Belayer, that the Belay Device is properly threaded with the Climbing rope and is functioning properly, that the Belay Device is properly secured to the Belayer, that the Belayer is wearing a helmet, if appropriate, that the Belayer is wearing Belay Gloves, if appropriate, and that the Belayer is ready for the Climber to begin

Climbing; and (2) Belayer's Check Out of Climber, that the Climbing Rope is properly secured to the Climber through the Hard Points of the Climber's Harness, that that Climbing Rope is properly secured back onto itself with a Climbing / Belay knot, that there is not too much excess Climbing Rope above the Belay Knot and if so, that such excess is tied off with a Fisherman's Knot, , that the Climber's Harness is properly fastened to the Climber, that the Climber is wearing a Helmet if appropriate, that the Climber has the Climbing Gear they will need for the Climb such as Cams or Nuts, or extra carabiners, etc., and that the Climber is ready to begin the Climb. Note that additional Partner Check Out procedures will be appropriate for different types of Climbing, such as Ice Climbing, Deep water Climbing, etc. and Climbers and Belayers should coordinate with each other before any Climb is attempted to make sure that all appropriate Partner Check Out procedures appropriate for the situation are followed.

Pinch, Pinching. A climbing maneuver that requires one to pinch with the fingers to grip a Hand Hold.

Pitch. The length of a climb, typically defined by the length of Rope used. A Climb is often referred to in number of pitches which defines how many times ropes and gear will need to be reset to accommodate the length of ropes used. A Multi-Pitch route is a climb involving an elevation gain greater than half of the length of the climbing rope a climber and her partner have to use when engaged in Trad Climbing since the rope might start with the climber, be threaded through the anchor point at the top of the climb, and then double back down to the Belayer, with some extra rope length just for safety.

Pocket. A small climbing hold that has an opening in it for the placement of one or more fingers. Compare to a Crack in which a foot, toe, hand, or finger could be used to support your weight.

Port-a-Ledge. A climbing device used with Big Wall Climbs which take more than one day to accomplish and acts like a ledge on which the Climbers can rest / sleep with some level of comfort and safety.

Pumping Out. This is a muscle fatigue phenomenon where the lactic acid build up in a Climber's muscles have the effect of causing the effected muscles to not perform properly. The experience often unfolds like the following. A Climber grabs a Hand Hold which is challenging to keep for a long period of time. Maybe the Hand Hold is slippery, or smooth, or just allows for a Crimp Hold. For whatever reason, the Climber knows that they cannot hold onto the hand Hold for long. The Climber does not find a suitable Foot Hold to take pressure off the challenging Hand Hold and sooner or later, the Climber simply cannot hold onto the Hand Hold any longer and the Climber's grip fails. Once a Climber Pumps Out, it may take a long time for the Climber's affected muscles to recover.

Puzzle . Often a climber might refer to the techniques employed to effectuate an assent as working the "puzzle" of the rock face.

Letter R.

Rack. An expression used to describe the set of Gear a climber has on their harness to accomplish a climb. A Rack might include a complete set of Cams, Nuts, Carabiners, Ascenders, Belay Gear, Repelling Gear, and the like.

Repel, Repelling, Repelling Gear. The act of descending along a fixed climbing rope where the climber is allowing the climbing Rope to slip through a Repelling Gear device to slow their descent. Repelling involves only the climber and there is no one on Belay.

Red Point. To successfully climb a route without Beta / prior knowledge or experience of the moves; also known as On Sight.

Rock Climb. Rock Climbing. The act of Climbing a Rock Boulder, Rock Slab or Rock Face. Rock Climbing can be broken up into technical Rock Climbing which requires the use of Gear and Ropes, and Bouldering which requires no Gear at all.

Rock face. The surface of a rock which is to be climbed. See also Rock Slab.

Rock-Over. Using a rocking motion to get yourself onto a higher foot or hand Hold. .

Rock Slab. The surface of a Rock Formation to be Climbed. Often used in connection with a nearly Featureless rock surface where there are no Cracks, no Jugs, no Buckets, no Ledges, or the like.

Rope, Climbing Rope. The rope used to Climb a Rock Face.

Route. The pathway chosen to Ascend up a Rock Slab or Rock Face. On any given Climb, there may be many different Routes, each of which may have varying levels of difficulty.

Letter S.

Sandbag. To intentionally mis-represent the difficulty of a climb, stating it is easier than it actually is. Also, a route that is deceptively tougher than advertised and graded.

Side Pull. A climbing maneuver that requires one to "pull" in a horizontal motion with one or both arms. Also used to refer to a climbing Feature that runs vertically, rather than horizontally.

Slack. The amount of excess line in between a climber and the belayer. When there is slack, a climber could slip off the rock face and will fall the distance of the slack in the rope. A climber might ask for more slack if they want more rope to investigate the rock face while in a secure position, or might ask for less slack if a difficult maneuver is to be attempted and the climber wants there to be less risk of a longer fall.

Sloper. A diagonal sloping rock climbing Feature / Hold that requires an open-hand friction grip to support yourself. A Sloper could be angling up and away or up and towards you at any angle between the vertical and horizontal and can be thin or thick. The closer to the horizontal a Sloper Hold is, the easier it is to hold onto.

Smear. A climbing maneuver that involves using the friction of the shoe sole to "stick" the foot to the climbing surface without the use of a climbing Feature or Hold. You can Smear with part or all of the sole of your foot, depending on your body position.

Solo Climbing. A type of climbing involving just a single climber. Considered very risky with high likelihood of falling, injury, and death. There are various types of solo Climbing: Rope Solo, Deep Water Solo, and Free Solo.

Sport Climbing. A type of Lead Rope Climbing where the Climber uses Quick Draw gear with existing bolts permanently affixed into the Rock Face of the Climb for safety purposes.

Stemming. A rock climbing maneuver that involves pushing out to the sides with either, or both, the hands, or legs on opposing rock walls; also known as Bridging. Often used when climbing a Chimney feature.

Letter T.

Taut. An expression about the tension in a length of rope. A rope which is full of tension might be referred to as being "taut.

Tension. This often refers to the extent to which the rope has no slack in it . The more tension there is on a rope, the less the rope will stretch if weight is loaded onto the rope.

Tight. This is the expression used to determine how much tension a climber might want on the Bely Rope when climbing. A climber might say "Keep the rope tight" which indicates a preference of the climber to have tension on the rope at all times as she ascends. If a climber asks for a "tight" belay, the belayer should pull in all the slack in the line and support the weight of the climber with the rope. This might be appropriate if the climber needs a rest, or if the

climber is about to attempt a challenging maneuver and does not want to risk falling very far if the maneuver is not successful. If the climber asks for a "loose" belay, then the climber wants more slack so that they might investigate the rock face, or a ledge, or a cave, all the while limiting the risk of a fall by making sure they are secure on the rock or the rock feature.

Toe-hooking. Similar to Heel-Hooking, a rock climbing maneuver that involves hooking the toe around the climbing hold or Rock Feature.

Top Roping , Top Rope Climbing. This is a type of Rock Climbing where an anchor is placed at the top of the Route, and a Climbing Rope is affixed to the Climber, threaded through the Anchor, and secured by a Belayer usually at the bottom of the Climb. Rock Climbing in an indoor fitness facility is almost always Top Rope Climbing style. Compare to Lead Rope Climbing where the first Climber is required to Climb up the route using special techniques and safety Gear such as Cams and Nuts to prevent the first Climber from falling very far if a lead Fall occurs.

Traditional or Trad Climbing. This is the type of Climbing where the first Climber on Lead Rope, may set safety Gear while they are Climbing, and where the last Climber Cleans Gear on their way up the Route so that no Gear is left on the Route, other than permanently affixed Gear.

Traverse. To climb laterally or sideways, without gaining altitude. You may need to Traverse a section of the rock slab to get under more favorable Features above.

Letter U.

Undercling. To grab the underside of a climbing hold with the palm of the hand up. This is usually a downward-facing (or upside down) hold that is taken while pulling upwards. It requires good body tension, leverage, and bicep strength.

Under hang. This refers to a climber being under a ledge or under an overhang.

Letter V.

No meaningful climbing expressions start with the letter V.

Letter W.

Wet. The rock or boulder condition in terms of how much water may be in or on the rock. A climber might climb wet granite but would never climb wet sandstone.

Letter X.

X Rated. This refers to a safety rating for a particular climbing route. Refer to the safety ratings which borrow from the movie industry for relative levels of safety, with G being very safe and X on the opposite end of the safety spectrum.

Letter Z.

Zip Line. The technique of connecting a block or pulley system to a downward sloping rope to allow a person slide along the downward sloping rope is not part of rock climbing. Zip Lining is popular an should be performed with great care as there are many safety issues which can arise with sliding down a downward sloping rope.

Author's Note.

This VIP User Guide was prepared by a blind person and is intended to be used by persons with sight impairments. Document formatting issues may exist since the primary purpose of the VIP User Guide is to be used with screen reading technology with respect to which text formatting is usually irrelevant. If the reader would like to suggest edits or additions to this VIP User Guide, they may contact the author at wtr1977@yahoo.com.

End of VIP Climbing User Guide.

Version 2.1. September 29, 2024.