



Outdoor Council of Australia

National
Outdoor
Leaders
Registration
Scheme

Climbing (Natural Surfaces)

REGISTRATION LEVELS AND ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

NOLRS VERSION 2.2

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Outdoor Council of Australia

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Introduction

This document contains information on the minimum skills required to achieve Registration within the National Outdoor Leader Registration Scheme (NOLRS) at specific levels within the activity of Climbing (Natural Surfaces). I

Additional documents are available at www.outdoorcouncil.asn.au that provides information about the Scheme and the registration process includes:

- NOLRS *Registration Guide* - information about the registration requirements and process
- NOLRS *Re-registration Guide* - information about the re-registration requirements and process
- *Application for Registration*
- *Application for Subsequent Registration*
- *Application for Re-registration*
- NOLRS *Partnered Assessment Providers* - a guide for organisations that conduct assessment of outdoor leaders, detailing how to have their course outcomes recognised as equivalent to the skill and knowledge requirements of the NOLRS

What is Climbing (Natural Surfaces)?

Climbing on natural surfaces involves ascending vertical (or near vertical) natural features, using ropes and belay devices. This document refers to the independent activity of climbing and to the descent by a rock climber after a climb.

Climbing, as referred to in this document, does NOT include the activity of bouldering.

The following registration levels are available within the NOLRS within the activity of Climbing (Natural Surfaces):

- Restricted Single Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces)
- Restricted Single Pitch Climbing Instructor (Natural Surfaces)
- Single Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces)
- Single Pitch Climbing Instructor (Natural Surfaces)
- Multi Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces)
- Multi Pitch Climbing Instructor (Natural Surfaces)

Climbing Registration Levels and Description

Climbing (Natural Surfaces) registration levels apply to guides and instructors who conduct climbing activities on natural rock surfaces/cliffs which may be single or multi-pitch using natural, fixed or artificial anchors.

Top Rope (Restricted) Single Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces):

A person designated as a Top Rope (Restricted) Single Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces) has the knowledge, skills and experience that enable them to work autonomously within a defined range of skilled operations. These should involve known routines, methods and procedures, where minimal discretion and judgement are required in the selection of equipment, services or contingency measures.

Top Rope (Restricted) Single Pitch Climbing Guides (Natural Surfaces) may work within clearly defined contexts conducting climbing activities on natural surfaces acting according to clearly defined Standard Operating Procedures and relevant documented guidelines. The climbing site should have easy access to the top and the bottom of the climb(s), be free from complex set up and/or operating issues, and should be free from hazards. Anchors at the site should be obvious and easily accessible, and should be either fixed or natural. Both the normal operation and emergency response procedures should have been determined and documented by someone with a higher level of skill, such as those held by a Single Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces).

A Top Rope (Restricted) Single Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces) works as a guide in a context where there is no intention of imparting skills or knowledge to clients beyond that which is necessary to enable their safe participation in climbing. At the end of a session or program with the guide, the intent is not for the client to have acquired the skills to independently participate in climbing activities.

Persons with this level of competence may also work as an assistant with a more experienced leader in potentially non-routine or more complex activities and programs (eg, with “at risk” clients).

A Top Rope (Restricted) Single Pitch Climbing Guide must possess the skills, knowledge and experience that enable them to:

- Plan and implement minimal environmental impact
- Undertake risk analysis of activities
- Interpret and apply weather forecasts
- Apply relevant legislation
- Follow defined Occupational Health and Safety policy and procedures
- Facilitate groups and deal with conflict
- Apply Single Pitch climbing skills on natural surfaces
- Establish belays for Single Pitch climbing on natural surfaces
- Guide climbing on natural surfaces (Single Pitch restricted)
- Respond to emergency situations
- Perform vertical rescues

Single Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces):

A person designated as a Single Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces) has the skills, knowledge and experience that enable them to work independently within a variety of settings and contexts that may be complex and non-routine. Leadership and guidance are

involved when organising activities of self and others, as well as contributing to technical solutions of a non-routine or contingency nature.

A person at this level of leader registration may perform a broad range of skilled applications. These may include the evaluation and analysis of current practices, development of new criteria and procedures for performing current practices and provision of some leadership and guidance to others in the application and planning of the skills.

A Single Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces) may work independently at a broad range of venues with a variety of different client groups. Persons at this level of registration should be able to apply their skills and knowledge to a variety of locations, seasons and situations, and should be able to deal with non-routine situations. They may guide clients in a top-rope or Single Pitch lead climbing activity on a natural surface, at grades comparable to, or preferably easier than, grades at which training/experience has occurred. They should be able to establish anchors using any combination of fixed, natural and/or artificial protection.

A Single Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces) must possess all the skills, knowledge and experience required of a Top Rope (Restricted) Single Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces) PLUS those that enable them to:

- Manage risk in outdoor activities
- Provide leadership to groups
- Apply lead climbing skills on natural surfaces
- Guide lead climbing activities on natural surfaces (Single Pitch)
- Coordinate emergency response

Single Pitch Climbing Instructor (Natural Surfaces):

A person designated as a Single Pitch Climbing Instructor (Natural Surfaces) facilitates skill transfer or development to clients in order that they may independently, or with minimal supervision, top-rope or lead climb on Single Pitches on natural surfaces, and establish anchors using any combination of fixed, natural and/or artificial protection. This requires the instructor to be able to transfer required skills and knowledge, apply a variety of appropriate instructional strategies, and assess a client's skill and knowledge acquisition during and at the end of a program or session.

A Single Pitch Climbing Instructor (Natural Surfaces) may work independently at a broad range of venues with a variety of different client groups. Persons at this level of registration should be able to apply their skills and knowledge to a variety of locations, seasons and situations, and should be able to deal with non-routine situations.

Persons at this level of leader registration may only instruct Single Pitch climbing skills and techniques at a natural climbing site although they may also work as an assistant with a more experienced instructor in potentially non-routine or more complex activities and programs (eg. in multi-pitch situations).

A Single Pitch Climbing Instructor (Natural Surfaces) must possess all the skills, knowledge and experience required of a Single Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces) PLUS those that enable them to:

- Train small groups
- Instruct lead climbing on natural surfaces (Single Pitch restricted)

Multi Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces):

A person designated as a Multi Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces) has the skills, knowledge and experience to guide clients in a Multi Pitch environment in situations that are

potentially complex and non routine (eg. rescue situations, adverse weather, loss of equipment).

A Multi Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces) must possess all the skills, knowledge and experience required of a Single Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces) PLUS those that enable them to:

- Apply Multi Pitch lead climbing skills on natural surfaces
- Establish belays for Multi Pitch climbing on natural surfaces
- Guide lead climbing on natural surfaces (Multi Pitch)
- Perform complex vertical rescues

Multi Pitch Climbing Instructor (Natural Surfaces):

A person designated as a Multi Pitch Climbing Instructor (Natural Surfaces) has the skills, knowledge and experience to instruct clients in order that they may acquire climbing skills or climbing guiding skills to enable independent operation and may instruct clients to achieve the following outcomes:

- Single Pitch Climbing Participant (Natural Surfaces)
- Multi Pitch Climbing Participant (Natural Surfaces)
- Top Rope (Restricted) Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces)
- Top Rope (Restricted) Climbing Instructor (Natural Surfaces)
- Single Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces)
- Single Pitch Climbing Instructor (Natural Surfaces)
- Multi Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces)
- Multi Pitch Climbing Instructor (Natural Surfaces)

A Multi Pitch Climbing Instructor (Natural Surfaces) must possess all the skills, knowledge and experience required of a Multi Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces) PLUS those that enable them to:

- Instruct lead climbing on natural surfaces (Single Pitch)
- Instruct lead climbing on natural surfaces (Multi Pitch)

Climbing Skill, Knowledge and Experience Requirements

Top Rope (Restricted) Single Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces):

Critical aspects of Top Rope (Restricted) Single Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces) knowledge and skills include:

- Ability to identify, and plan for, basic requirements of a Single Pitch climbing activity (i.e. equipment, food, water, clothing)
- Knowledge of, and compliance with, relevant Occupational Health and Safety requirements
- Knowledge of, and compliance with, relevant laws and legal requirements
- Group facilitation skills and conflict resolution strategies
- Application of risk analysis principles in a climbing context
- Ability to respond to emergency situations relevant to climbing on natural surfaces
- Knowledge of first aid procedures relevant to climbing
- An awareness of minimal impact procedures and an understanding of their application to a natural climbing environment

- Knowledge of climbing equipment (advantages, disadvantages, limitations, Australian and international standards, manufacturer's design specifications and recommendations, accepted industry best practice or recommendations)

Knowledge of:

- Principles of anchor systems (equally shared load, single component failure and effect, redundancy, angle of separation)
- Principles of belay systems and devices
- Different types of belay system, eg. top and bottom belays
- Advantages and disadvantages of various knots in a variety of situations
- Ability to tie a variety of knots (knots that have at least 50% of the static strength of the original, end-of-rope knots, mid-rope knots, rope joining knots, tape knot)
- Knowledge of equipment storage and maintenance requirements relevant to climbing equipment
- Independent selection of climbing and belaying equipment appropriate to the situation and clients
- Climbing in a controlled manner in Single Pitch situations on natural surfaces at a minimum of two sites using a range of features
- Use of a minimum of eight of the following categories of climbing technique:
 - Bridging
 - Dynamic movement, eg, dead pointing
 - Heel hooks
 - Jamming
 - Laybacking
 - Layaways and side pulls
 - Mantle-shelving
 - Pinch grips
 - Smearing
 - Underclings
- Simple abseiling skills (for descending from a climb)
- Establishment of effective communication systems with belayer(s) and climbers
- Information about sites to climb (appropriate to skill level)
- Selection of natural and fixed anchors, considering the factors that affect their suitability
- Application of knowledge of knots and anchor selection to rig ropes to suit different situations (ascent and descent) using single and multiple anchors
- Establishment and use of top and bottom belay systems (and back-up belay systems, where required) to accommodate different client abilities and situations
- Use of a minimum of two different belay devices (eg. plate devices, auto-locking devices, tubular devices) to belay and to arrest falls
- Ability to respond to emergency situations and perform self rescue and rescue of clients including:
 - Release of jams
 - Assistance to frozen climbers
 - Approach from above and below
 - Ascent and descent of rope

- Raising and lowering of conscious climbers
- Raising and lowering of unconscious climbers with assistance
- Briefing of clients, covering aspects such as safety procedures, correct climbing, belaying and back-up belaying techniques, communication systems, safe areas/boundaries, etc
- Maintenance of a client's physical and emotional safety during a climbing session
- Ability to plan and guide top-rope climbing sessions on a natural surface at a number of different locations to suit:
 - Different types of client groups/client needs
 - Available resources
 - Different activity aims
 - Different activity duration
 - Different environmental conditions and environmental limitations (if applicable)

(Climbing sessions should be at locations which have easy access to the top and the bottom, are free from complex set up and/or operating issues, and are free from hazards, using fixed or natural anchors which are obvious and easily accessible)

In order to demonstrate currency, an applicant seeking registration must have verifiable evidence of guiding a minimum of four (4) climbing sessions (minimum of three hours per session) on natural surfaces in the last twelve (12) months. In addition, evidence must be supplied of 'in-house' or external vertical rescue training within the past twelve (12) months, or participation in vertical rescue of 'real' clients.

Newly trained outdoor leaders require verifiable evidence of guiding a minimum of six (6) climbing sessions (minimum of three hours per session) on natural surfaces.

Single Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces):

Critical aspects of a Single Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces) experience, knowledge and skills include the Restricted Single Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces) knowledge and skills **PLUS:**

- Ability to identify, and plan for requirements of a Single Pitch climbing activity (i.e. equipment, food, water, clothing) where extreme environmental conditions could potentially occur; and/or at a diversity of locations
- Coordination of response to emergency situations associated with Single Pitch top rope and lead climbing on natural surfaces
- Group leadership techniques
- Ability to identify and record the potential risks and hazards in an activity, and develop management strategies to lessen their potential impact, evaluate risk management and risk management plans
- Ability to deal with complex, unpredictable and non-routine situations associated with climbing on natural surfaces
- Application of an extensive knowledge of climbing equipment and discrimination between features of different equipment
- Knowledge of fall factors and forces exerted during a fall
- Knowledge of the principles of placing, using and removing artificial protection
- Use of a minimum of twelve of the following categories of natural features when climbing:
 - Arêtes
 - Chimneys
 - Corners

- Cracks
 - Edges
 - Flakes
 - Jugs
 - Ledges
 - Overhangs
 - Pinnacles
 - Pockets
 - Protrusions
 - Roofs
 - Scoops
 - Slabs
 - Selection and use of all of the following types of anchor
 - Artificial (nuts or chocks, wedges, tricams, spring loaded camming devices, slings)
 - Fixed (pitons, bolts, fixed hangers, chains)
 - Natural [chockstones or threads, trees and roots, limestone formations (where appropriate)]
- Establishment and efficient use of top and bottom belay systems, using single and double rope
 - Ability to ascend a route as a second climber, removing quick draws and artificial protection in a manner that minimises potential for dropping of gear, damage to the equipment and impact on the environment
 - Ability to lead Single Pitch climbs on natural surfaces using natural, fixed and artificial protection, demonstrating suitable techniques that minimise rope drag and minimise injury in the event of a fall
 - Experience in climbing on a minimum of two (2) different types of rock types (eg. granite, sandstone, basalt, limestone, rhyolite, sea cliffs)

In order to demonstrate currency, an applicant seeking registration must have verifiable evidence of guiding a minimum of four (4) climbing sessions (minimum of three (3) hours per session) on natural surfaces in the last twelve (12) months and leading a minimum of three (3) climbs requiring use of artificial protection. In addition, evidence must be supplied of 'in-house' or external vertical rescue training within the past twelve (12) months, or participation in vertical rescue of 'real' clients.

Newly trained outdoor leaders require verifiable evidence of guiding a minimum of six (6) climbing sessions (minimum of three (3) hours per session) on natural surfaces and leading a minimum of three (3) climbs requiring use of artificial protection.

Single Pitch Climbing Instructor (Natural Surfaces):

Critical aspects of a Single Pitch Climbing Instructor's (Natural Surfaces) experience, knowledge and skills include the Single Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces) knowledge and skills **PLUS:**

- Ability to instruct learners to achieve competencies in order to participate independently, or with minimal supervision, in a top-rope or Single Pitch lead climbing activity on a natural surface, in routine or non-routine situations. The learner should be able to establish anchors using any combination of fixed, natural and/or artificial protection.

This requires skills to:

- Plan an instructional session for teaching Single Pitch top rope and lead climbing skills on natural surfaces
- Select appropriate resources required to teach Single Pitch top rope and lead climbing skills on natural surfaces
- Establish a positive learning environment
- Introduce, conduct and conclude and evaluate an instructional climbing session
- Apply appropriate teaching techniques for climbing, recognising different client abilities and teaching to suit individual needs
- Provide constructive feedback which enhances the client's learning
- Demonstrate Single Pitch top rope and lead climbing techniques or skills accurately
- Apply knowledge of safety practices to conduct a safe instructional session in accordance with risk management plans, industry guidelines and occupational health and safety requirements

Ability to demonstrate and/or teach the following:

- Independent selection of climbing equipment appropriate to the situation
- Underpinning knowledge about climbing equipment (advantages, disadvantages, limitations, Australian and international standards, manufacturer's recommendations, industry accepted practice, storage and maintenance requirements)
- Information about climbing sites (appropriate to skill level) and the ethics and philosophy of climbing
- Environmental impacts of climbing and ways to minimise them
- Hazards associated with climbing and ways to minimise risk
- Selection of fixed and natural anchors and placement of artificial protection
- Rigging of belays using single and multiple anchors
- Establishment of belay systems at the top and bottom of pitches
- Belaying technique using single and double ropes to accommodate different abilities and situations
- Knowledge of, and ability to perform, vertical rescue techniques appropriate to Single Pitch top rope and lead climbing on natural surfaces
- Maintenance of a client's physical and emotional safety during a climbing session

In order to demonstrate currency, an applicant seeking registration must have verifiable evidence of instructing a minimum of four (4) climbing sessions (minimum of three (3) hours per session) on natural surfaces in the past twelve (12) months and leading a minimum of three (3) climbs requiring use of artificial protection. In addition, evidence must be supplied of 'in-house' or external vertical rescue training within the past twelve (12) months, or participation in vertical rescue of 'real' clients.

Newly trained outdoor leaders require verifiable evidence of instructing a minimum of six (6) climbing sessions (minimum of three hours per session) on natural surfaces and leading a minimum of three (3) climbs requiring use of artificial protection.

Multi Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces):

Critical aspects of Multi Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surface) skills and knowledge include the Single Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces) knowledge and skills **PLUS:**

- Efficient climbing in single and Multi Pitch, routine and non-routine situations
- Multi Pitch lead climbing skills on natural surfaces, demonstrating the ability to climb on surfaces including arêtes, chimneys, corners, cracks, edges, flakes, jugs, ledges,

overhangs, pinnacles, pockets, protrusions, roofs, scoops or slab in at least two different locations

- Ability to safely and efficiently lead on sight Multi Pitch climbs with different climbing parties with differing abilities, demonstrating a high level of protection selection and placement, rope management and belay construction
- Establishment of safety for self and other climbing party members at belay stations and efficient management of belay stations using single and multiple anchors in single and multi-pitch situations
- Establishment of anchors (multi-directional, uni-directional and self-equalising)
- Selection and use of all of the following types of anchors:
 - natural (trees, knobs of rock, threads, rock bollards, limestone formations, where appropriate):
 - fixed (bolts, chains, bollards, pitons, eyelets, fixed hangers): and
 - artificial (wires, nuts, hexes, camming devices)
- Use of all of the following types of belay devices (plate devices, auto - locking devices, tubular devices, Prusik cord and suitable friction hitch)
- Safe change over techniques at belay stations
- Knowledge of rigging techniques applicable to different types of anchor, different equipment, different pitch requirements and different abilities of group members
- Knowledge of the factors affecting the stability and selection of anchors (fixed, natural and/or artificial) to select anchors for simple and complex, single and multi - pitch climbs to accommodate different belayer and climber abilities, types of anchor and location requirements
- Guiding clients in a Multi Pitch lead climbing activity on a natural surface, at grades comparable to, or preferably easier than, grades at which training/experience has occurred
- Maintenance of a client's physical and emotional safety during climbing sessions in a diversity of situations (eg. extended periods of time, rescue situations)
- Ability to retreat from pitches both greater than and less than 25m in length
- Ability to perform complex rescues of self, equipment and clients, including:
 - Self-rescue in complex situations (eg. Multi Pitch, numerous obstacles to negotiate, limited human resources, extreme environmental conditions)
 - Raising conscious participants in complex rescue situations with assistance from others with limited rescue skills
 - Lowering conscious participants in a controlled manner in complex rescue situations with assistance from others with limited level of skill
 - Raising or lowering an unconscious person using the assistance of an unskilled person
 - Rescuing persons in situations without assistance from others
 - Participation in the rescue of a person on a stretcher
- Establishment and use of mechanical advantage systems using simple (eg. z-drag) and compound pulley systems (eg. pig-rig) in rescue situations
- Performance of complex vertical rescues i.e. rescues which may include the following contexts:
 - Multi Pitch
 - Numerous obstacles to negotiate, eg, ledges, trees
 - Limited anchors

- Rescuer is unconscious
- Limited physical resources
- Limited human resources/no assistance
- Extreme environmental conditions
- Application of the following rescue methods:
 - Raising
 - Lowering
 - Assisted rescue from above/below
 - Assisted rescue from above or below requiring diagonal or horizontal (traversing) techniques
 - Pluck off

In order to demonstrate currency, an applicant seeking registration must have verifiable evidence of guiding a minimum of three (3) Multi Pitch climbing sessions with clients (minimum of three (3) hours per session) on natural surfaces in the past twelve (12) months. In addition, evidence must be supplied of 'in-house' or external vertical rescue training within the past twelve (12) months, or participation in vertical rescue of 'real' clients.

Newly trained outdoor leaders require verifiable evidence of guiding a minimum of six (6) Multi Pitch climbing sessions with clients (minimum of three (3) hours per session) on natural surfaces and leading on sight, in traditional style, using fixed and/or natural and artificial protection on three (3) separate Multi Pitch climbs at a minimum of two locations. In addition, evidence must be supplied of 'in-house' or external vertical rescue training within the past twelve (12) months, or participation in vertical rescue of 'real' clients.

Multi Pitch Climbing Instructor (Natural Surface):

Critical aspects of Multi Pitch Climbing Instructor (Natural Surface) skills and knowledge include the Multi Pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surface) knowledge and skills PLUS the ability to instruct learners to achieve the skills to participate independently, or with minimal supervision, in a Multi Pitch lead climbing activity on a natural surface, in routine or non-routine situations. The learner should be able to establish anchors using any combination of fixed, natural and/or artificial protection. This requires skills to:

- Plan an instructional session for teaching Multi Pitch lead climbing skills on natural surfaces
- Select appropriate resources required to teach Multi Pitch lead climbing skills on natural surfaces
- Establish a positive learning environment
- Introduce, conduct and conclude and evaluate an instructional climbing session
- Apply appropriate teaching techniques for climbing, recognising different client abilities and teaching to suit individual needs
- Provide constructive feedback which enhances the client's learning
- Demonstrate Multi Pitch lead climbing techniques or skills accurately
- Apply knowledge of safety practices to conduct a safe instructional session in accordance with risk management plans, industry guidelines and occupational health and safety requirements

Ability to demonstrate and/or teach the following:

- Independent selection of climbing equipment appropriate to the situation

- Underpinning knowledge about climbing equipment (advantages, disadvantages, limitations, Australian and international standards, manufacturer's recommendations, industry accepted practice, storage and maintenance requirements)
- Information about Multi Pitch climbing sites (appropriate to skill level) and the ethics and philosophy of climbing
- Environmental impacts of climbing and ways to minimise
- Hazards associated with Multi Pitch climbing and ways to minimise risk
- Selection of fixed and natural anchors and placement of artificial protection in Multi Pitch situations
- Rigging of belays using single and multiple anchors
- Establishment of belay systems at the top and bottom of pitches and at belay stations on Multi Pitch climbs
- Belaying technique using single and double ropes to accommodate different abilities and situations on Multi Pitch climbs
- Knowledge of, and ability to perform, complex vertical rescue techniques appropriate to on multi lead climbing on natural surfaces
- Maintenance of a client's physical and emotional safety during a climbing session

Currency Requirements:

In order to demonstrate currency, an applicant seeking registration must have verifiable evidence of instructing a minimum of three (3) Multi Pitch climbing sessions with clients (minimum of three hours per session) on natural surfaces in the past twelve (12) months. In addition, evidence must be supplied of 'in-house' or external vertical rescue training within the past twelve (12) months, or participation in vertical rescue of 'real' clients.

Newly trained outdoor leaders require verifiable evidence of instructing a minimum of six (6) Multi Pitch climbing sessions with clients (minimum of three (3) hours per session) on natural surfaces and leading on sight, in traditional style, using fixed and/or natural and artificial protection on three (3) separate Multi Pitch climbs at a minimum of two locations. In addition, evidence must be supplied of 'in-house' or external vertical rescue training within the past twelve (12) months, or participation in vertical rescue of 'real' clients.