



Southampton University Mountaineering Club

Risk Assessment: Sport Climbing

Activity or Task	Sport Climbing
Assessor (Position)	Charlotte Mercer (Safety and Skills)
Date	08/09/2020

Activity Description	Climbing that relies on clipping in to permanent anchors fixed to the rock for protection.
Additional Notes	

Checked by (Position)	Charlotte Mercer (Safety and Skills)
Date	03/10/2021
Checked by (Position)	Adam Jones (Vice President)
Date	03/10/2021

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Hazard	Effect	Inherent Risk			Controls	Residual Risk		
		Likelihood	Severity	Risk		Likelihood	Severity	Risk
Overexertion	Muscle, tendon, and other injuries	3	3	Medium	Climbers must assess routes before climbing to ensure that they climb within their ability. If a climber starts to feel over-exerted, they must safely exit the route to avoid injury.	3	2	Low
Fire	Burns and death	1	5	Low	In addition to standard operating procedures, people shall be briefed by the person taking the session to avoid congregating and leaving personal effects in the way of the fire exit. Where the fire door is propped open to allow simultaneous activities outside, no obstructions will be left blocking the fire exit.	1	2	Low
Entanglement	Asphyxiation	2	1	Low	Appropriate clothing to be worn, no jewellery to be worn.	2	3	Low
Previous medical conditions	Various	3	4	Medium	Ensure that members of climbing party are aware of any previous medical conditions (through the website profiles or otherwise), and are aware of any action that may need to be taken. Climbers participate at their own risk.	3	2	Low
Dehydration	Personal Injury	2	2	Low	A water fountain is located outside the bouldering wall.	2	2	Low
Falling rocks/objects	Personal Injury (Spinal, breaks, sprains, cuts, death)	3	4	Medium	Climbers and belayers must wear a helmet when climbing or belaying. Whenever the climber notices rockfall or falling objects they must alert those on the ground of the rockfall or falling objects to help to prevent injury.	2	2	Low
Insufficient skills	Personal Injury (Spinal, breaks, sprains, cuts, death)	3	5	High	Climbers must not climb above their abilities. All climbers must also ensure that their belayer has the sufficient skills to belay them on their route (if not a third person should be used to hold the dead end of the rope).	2	3	Low

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Equipment breaking	Personal Injury (Spinal, breaks , sprains, cuts, death)	2	5	Medium	Climbers must ensure that the equipment used is in a suitable condition before use. Gear secretary must also ensure that all equipment unsuitable for climbing are retired and not handed out for use.	1	5	Low
Hypothermia	Personal Injury	4	4	High	Climbers must bring suitable clothing to crag to ensure they are warm. Climbers must also alert others if they are starting to feel to very cold so intervention can occur before it gets worse. If conditions are too cold climbers should leave the crag.	2	2	Low
Heat exhaustion	Personal Injury (Dehydration)	3	4	Medium	Climbers must bring suitable clothing to crag to ensure they do not overheat. Climbers must ensure enough water is bought to the crag to prevent dehydration. If conditions are too hot climbers must either find shade or leave the crag.	2	2	Low
Panic attack / refusal	Personal Injury (Spinal, breaks , sprains, cuts, death, hypothermia, heat exhaustion)	3	4	Medium	Climbers should not climb outside of their ability and ensure they do not feel uncomfortable before climb. If hazard occurs, belayer / others in group must work to console / calm down climber. If this is unsuccessful another climber should carry out suitable rescue if confident, if no climber is confident in this, mountain rescue must be called.	1	2	Low
Falling from height	Personal Injury (Spinal, breaks , sprains, cuts, death)	4	5	High	Climber and belayer must ensure the climber is correctly tied into rope before climbing and that belayer is correctly set up. Climber should wear the correct sized harness when climbing. Climber must ensure that belayer is proficient before climbing.	3	3	Medium

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Injury from falling below first bolt/ground falls	Personal Injury (Spinal, breaks, sprains, cuts, death)	4	3	Medium	Belayer to spot the lead climber before they clip the first bolt to prevent serious injury. Risk can be reduced further by a clipstick being used by the lead climber to clip into the first bolt before beginning to climb. The lead climber must be confident in the belayer's competence before climbing, otherwise the belayer must be supervised by a more experienced climber. Ensure there is not a significant weight difference between belayer and lead climber, unless climber is experienced in catching falls.	2	3	Low
Injury from falling due to bolt failure	Personal Injury (Spinal, breaks, sprains, cuts, death)	3	5	High	Prior to climbing the climber(s) attempting the route must assess it, taking care to inspect the bolts to check for signs of degrading e.g. rust, discolouration, special care must be taken when climbing in coastal regions, where saltwater leads to quicker corrosion of bolts. Any unsuitable bolts must be backed up and not relied on for a sole point of safety. Climber must read guide books available/UKC pages before climbing to check for wear which has been found by previous climbers.	2	4	Low

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Injury through incorrect use of equipment	Personal Injury (Spinal, breaks, sprains, cuts, death), injury to others (head damage, concussions, breaks, spinal, sprains, cuts, death)	3	5	High	Lead climber must ensure that belayer is competent with the user of the belay device before climbing, if there is any uncertainty a more competent person should be used. Long hair should be tied back and loose clothing tucked away before climbing. Before climbing, climber should be aware of the correct way to use quickdraws, if they feel unsure, they should ask a more experienced climber for advice. Climbers should avoid grabbing bolts or putting fingers in bolts and quickdraws. Clipping should be undertaken from a secure stance. If quickdraws are dropping during clipping, climber must shout "BELOW!" to avoid causing injury to those on the floor.	2	3	Low
Injury through incorrect technique	Personal Injury (Spinal, breaks, sprains, cuts, death), injury to others (head damage, concussions, breaks, spinal, sprains, cuts, death)	3	4	Medium	Both climber and belayer must be aware of back clipping and z-clipping, as well as the procedures used to rectify these mistakes. If the belayer notices that the climber's foot is in front of the rope, they must inform the climber to avoid entanglement.	2	2	Low
Injury due to incorrect belay stance	Personal Injury (Spinal, breaks, sprains, cuts, death), injury to others (head damage, concussions, breaks, spinal, sprains, cuts, death)	3	4	Medium	Belayer must practice good belay stance (secure foot placement, with slightly bent legs in order to easily catch falls). Anything in the area around the belayer must be cleared before the climber begins to climb to ensure the belayer does not trip while belaying. Belayer must also ensure they are positioned in a suitable area. Belayer to wear suitable footwear when belaying.	1	2	Low
Rope running over sharp rock, leading to cutting it	Personal Injury (Spinal, breaks, sprains, cuts, death)	2	5	Medium	Lead climber must ensure they use longer quickdraws when required to prevent rope running over sharp rock, or in extreme cases, rope protector must be used.	1	3	Low

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Falling due to condition of the rock (such as damp, icy or windy conditions)	Personal Injury (Spinal, breaks, sprains, cuts, death), injury to others (head damage, concussions, breaks, spinal, sprains, cuts, death)	3	4	Medium	Climber(s) and belayer(s) must inspect rock and overall crag before climbing to ensure the rock is safe to climb on. Climbing should not take place in very rainy/cold conditions, conditions to be assessed and reassessed by climber(s) and belayer(s) throughout stay at crag.	2	3	Low
SARS-CoV-2 (Novel Coronavirus)	COVID-19 (Flu-like symptoms, death in those who are at risk, transmission to those at risk, transmission to those not at risk leading to an epidemic)	5	3	High	Climbers must use hand sanitiser before/after climbs. Climbers must also ensure that they keep a suitable distance from other groups of climbers along with government guidelines. Liquid chalk is encouraged. Climbers must provide evidence of a negative lateral flow test before attending sport climbing meets.	2	3	Low