



Alpine Mountaineering and Technical Leadership Part 1

Sample Course Itinerary

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Following is an example course itinerary. In most cases a great deal more will be covered during the day than what is listed here. It is important to understand that given conditions certain topics will receive more coverage than others. For example, early in the season more time will be given to snow stability whereas later in the season more time will be spent on ice technique. This is because early in the season there is more snow, whereas late in the season there is often more exposed ice.

It is extremely important for those who participate in this course to understand that this itinerary is not set in stone. Changes may take place at any time due to weather or summit strategies. If you do not understand why an itinerary change occurred, please ask your guide.

Day One

- Meet at AAI and do a thorough gear check.
- Drive to the South Side of Mount Baker. The trailhead may be found at 3,200 feet. On extremely early or extremely late season courses, some teams will go to the North Side of the Mountain.
- Hike into Base Camp. Camp options include a semi-sheltered camp at the last trees at 5,600 feet, Sandy Camp at the end of the Railroad Grade at 6,000 feet or west of the moraines slightly higher.
- Discuss Leave No Trace techniques and how they pertain to human waste.
- If there is still time, participants will learn the following: prusik-hitch, rope-coiling, double-fisherman's knot, overhand-knot, clove-hitch, munter-hitch.

Day Two

- Snow school techniques to be covered include: snow travel with and without an ice-axe, parts of an ice-axe, self-arrest, glissading, shuffle step, plunge step, diagonal ascent, piolet canne, and piolet manche.
- Snow anchors to be covered include: deadmen, pickets, snow flukes, ice-axes and snow bollards.
- Glaciology discussion will include the following terms: crevasse, bergshrund, moraine, ice fall, serac, compression zone, accumulation zone and ablation zone
- Techniques to create SRENE/ERNEST snow anchors.
- Introduction to carabiners, their strengths and weaknesses.
- Snow seats and belaying on snow with both a static and a dynamic belay.

Day Three

- Glacier travel and crevasse rescue techniques will be covered in depth.

- Crevasse rescue studies will include prusiking, a 2:1 Drop C, a 3:1 Z Pully and a 6:1 C on Z.
- Upon return to camp, a map, compass and altimeter lecture will cover the uses of each of these instruments. If there is time, the GPS will be covered as well.

Day Four

- Introduction to ice climbing technique. Topics to be covered include: French, German and American technique, step cutting, pied a plat, pied en canard, pied assis, piolet ramasse, piolet rampe, piolet panne, piolet poniard, piolet appui, piolet ancre. If there is adequate time, participants may practice piolet traction. Note: The amount of time spent on this curriculum will be determined by snow cover.
- Move camp up to a high camp. Probe for crevasses and set-up camp on the glacier.
- Discuss summit strategies.

Day Five:

- Summit Mount Baker and then descend to the parking lot.
- It is likely that the team will go out to dinner after this ascent.
- The team will car camp.

Day Six

- This is an introduction to rock day. It is possible that this day could be interchanged with the first day of the course due to weather.
- This day will take place at either Mount Erie or at Fun Rock.
- Toproping, free climbing, knots, commands, basic anchors, rappelling, guidebooks, and a knot pass will be covered at the crag.
- It will be possible to visit a grocery store any time from days six through nine. There are showers and a Laundromat available in Winthrop. It is also likely that you will go out to dinner at least one more time.

Days Seven through Nine

- Days seven through nine will encompass a series of ascents. Options for ascent include, but are not limited to the following:
 1. South Arete of South Early Winter Spire
 2. Southwest Couloir of South Early Winter Spire (Spring Snow/Ice Route)
 3. North Face of Kangaroo Temple
 4. Becky Route on Liberty Bell
 5. Left East Couloir of Whistler Peak (Spring Snow/Ice Route)
 6. Prime Rib of Goat Wall
- Some ascents may not take as long as others so there may be the possibility of evening lessons or a return to Fun Rock to cover more material.

Days Ten through Twelve

- Days ten through twelve are reserved for a student-led ascent. Most ascents will go to one of the following destinations:
 1. Sulphide Glacier of Mount Shuksan

2. Silver Star Glacier of Silver Star Mountain
 3. East Ridge of Eldorado Peak
 4. Quien Sabe Glacier of Sahale Peak
- If the ascent does not take three days it may be possible to finish the trip with a day of rock climbing at Mount Erie or Fun Rock.

Depending on time and conditions additional course lectures may include the following:

- Mountain First Aid
- Mountain Weather
- Avalanche Awareness
- In depth discussion of Leave No Trace principals
- Use of a GPS or other Electronic Devices in the Mountains
- Rock Rescue Techniques