

Activity Risk Assessment: Winter Climbing & Mountaineering

Adventure Hunter recognises that using suitably qualified and experienced Instructors reduces the risks of the activity. We always use instructors who are suitably trained and qualified and who are aware of the relevant emergency procedures. We also work within industry-recognised instructor-to-participant ratios for the activity.

- Instructors must hold the following qualification as a minimum requirement:
Winter Mountaineering & Climbing Instructor (WMCI);
Outdoor First Aid (2-day)
- Participants must be 18+ unless accompanied by a parent/carer
- Maximum Instructor to Participant Ratio:
(Winter Climbing: 1:2); (Winter Mountaineering: 1:6)

In addition to the activity risk assessments for mountain walking in summer and winter conditions, as well as rock climbing, the following risk assessment for winter climbing and mountaineering also applies.

Identified Hazard	Who it effects	Unmanaged Risk	Control Measures	Managed Risk
Approaching routes with steep snow aprons/scarp slopes with cornices.	Participants & Instructors	Possible Fatal High (6)	Instructors must protect themselves and participants with the rope in good time. Careful assessment of the snow conditions and potential avalanche risk or risk of cornice collapse is required. If in any doubt turn around and choose a more suitable objective.	Unlikely Fatal Medium (3)
Falling ice and heavy spindrift	Participants & Instructors	Possible Serious High (6)	Winter climbing and mountaineering brings an increased chance of being hit by falling ice and snow (spindrift avalanches) either from other parties, each other or naturally. Helmets must be worn at all times and instructors should always try to avoid these hazards by belaying in suitable places or avoiding routes altogether if these hazards can't be effectively managed.	Unlikely Fatal Medium (3)
Injury from equipment	Participants & Instructors	Possible Fatal High (6)	Winter equipment (ice axes, crampons and some passive equipment) are sharp and potentially dangerous pieces of equipment if used or carried inappropriately. Instructors must brief participants on all of these hazards and ensure proper use and stowing of equipment.	Unlikely Fatal Medium (3)

Compromised belaying and abseiling with icy ropes and gloves	Participants & Instructors	Possible Fatal High (6)	Winter climbing and mountaineering often requires handling icy ropes with gloves on which bring additional hazards. Instructors must ensure that participants are aware of the hazards and take steps to eliminate the increased risk of letting go of the ropes or failing to brake appropriately. Gloves must be warm but dexterous enough to ensure handling of the ropes is not compromised. Mitt's make this more difficult and should be avoided if possible. Belay devices must be appropriate for the diameter of the ropes being used and additional precautions to add friction should be used if necessary.	Unlikely Fatal Medium (3)
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