



# Rescue Dynamics

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This letter will serve to introduce you to the Alpine Climbing Course you expressed interest in. We have several Basic Alpine Climbing courses this year. The course for May is now fully booked and we are no longer accepting names on the waiting list. The dates for the remaining courses are June 21, 22, 2007 (Thursday, Friday) or July 12, 13, 2007 (Thursday, Friday). The cost of the course is \$275.00.

In order for you to be confirmed on the course you must prepay the course fee, complete the personal information form, then read, understand and sign the waiver. The waiver must be witnessed by someone other than a family member.

If you have not paid, your spot is NOT booked. See our website for complete cancellation policies and procedures. Medical cancellation coverage is available for an additional \$13.75. Should less than three persons sign up for the course, we reserve the right to cancel the course. We also reserve the right to cancel the course in the event of severe weather. Should this happen, your course fees will be refunded.

This is a very different course in that the focus is on "efficient" motion on varied terrain. It is not at all about doing hard rock or ice climbing. Many good climbers seem to spend too much time on easy routes or easy sections of routes, not because of inability but because of inefficiency. We will spend a lot of time short-roping, a little known skill used extensively in the guiding profession to proceed quickly up easy terrain. We will examine the gear used on alpine routes and see how our selection can be improved. We will look at optimizing everything we carry and how we carry it.

The intent on this weekend is to learn a lot of new techniques and climb an alpine route. No wasting time here. We depart early on Thursday and begin our first lessons on very easy terrain then spend the afternoon on an easy alpine style rock climb near Jasper. This straightforward route has a lot of lessons to offer us. We will review movement on rock, knots, ropework, belaying, rappelling and safety topics.

On the Intermediate level course (not scheduled for 2007), we may also review protection, anchor systems, rope handling and belay station management and how they relate to alpine situations. Each participant may be given the opportunity to lead (if appropriate), at least on easier sections if not the entire route. (Intermediate participants often do harder routes than Basic participants.)

The activities of the second day will depend on the weather and our progress. Suffice it to say that the objective may be a snow and ice climb for day two. Since we will be doing two climbs, your fitness level should be good. I also expect that everyone will read the article on "Traveling at Light Speed" available on the Rescue Dynamics website. It will provide a focus for some of our discussions and lessons. URL <http://www.rescuedynamics.ca/articles/pdfs/lightspd.pdf>

We will provide all of the technical climbing equipment including ice axe, crampons, hardware, ropes, helmets and harnesses if required. Please note your particular requirements on the enclosed forms. If you will need any of the equipment listed, you must submit the forms to Rescue Dynamics at least two weeks before the course so that the gear can be brought out for you. (If you own your own gear, feel free to bring it if you wish.)

We DO NOT provide climbing boots, rock shoes, day pack or clothing. We strongly recommend renting plastic mountaineering boots for the second day of this course unless you have fairly stiff mountaineering boots with a good welt. Boots can be rented at MEC, Edmonton or Gravity Gear, Jasper. Light hiking boots are not acceptable for the snow & ice climb. Be sure your clothing can handle the changes in mountain environment, including heat, cold, wind, rain, snow, sun and insects. We are outside all day on both days, and the course will proceed in all but the most severe weather. The equipment checklist may help you prepare. URL <http://www.rescuedynamics.ca/articles/pdfs/Check98s.pdf>

You are responsible for your own meals, accommodation and transportation for the entire course. Be sure to prepare a bag lunch and bring water or other drinks for each day of the course, as we do not return to the vehicles for lunch.

The meeting time and place for the course is 7:00 am on the first morning of each respective course at the Morro Slabs parking lot. This is located along Highway 16 east of Jasper where the highway crosses the Athabasca River. At the meeting place, look for one of three vehicles; white cargo van - CYM 044; black Toyota Forerunner - VE6 MTN; brown camper van - WJK 864. In case of emergency, you can contact us by cell phone on the morning of the course at (780) 916-7951.

Many course participants prefer to stay at the Folding Mountain Campground (780 - 866 - 3737) which has reasonable facilities including showers. You can make reservations at this campground or you reserve at some National Park campgrounds. Cabins are also available at Folding Mountain for those who prefer more "solid" accommodation. If you prefer accommodation other than that which is available at Folding Mountain, remember that for this course Hinton is as close to our first climbs as Jasper is.

At the end of the first day we move to the Columbia Icefields so if you book accommodations, only book for Friday night. The second night we will be staying in the Columbia Icefields area. There are two campsites in that area and only one hotel (The Columbia Icefields Chalet). You are responsible for your own accommodations here as well.

First thing on the first morning of the course you should be packed and ready to go on an alpine rock climb. We will be departing shortly after we meet. Do not over burden yourself with excessive gear. (In you have your own gear just bring your harness, helmet, a couple of locking carabiners and a prusik sling or two.) Be sure to have your lunch, water and lightweight but appropriate clothing. A three section collapsible ski pole is handy on the ascents and descents. Otherwise, BRING NO JUNK. We will be practicing alpine climbing, not weight lifting!

We will organize the other hardware and ropes at the start of the climb. The first route we are doing on the afternoon of day one has no climbing harder than 5.5/5.6 and is predominantly easy 3rd and 4th class. On the Intermediate course we may do a route with multi-pitch 5th class climbing and a multi-pitch rappel descent. Either day will take us anywhere from 7 to 10 (or more) hours to complete. Rock shoes shouldn't be necessary on the Basic course, but you can bring them if you wish. If you do bring rock shoes, be sure they are comfortable as these are LONG routes.

You must have a valid Park Vehicle Group Pass or Personal Pass to attend this course, as we are traveling in National Park areas. Be sure to purchase one when you first enter the Park if you do not already have one.

If you have any further questions, please call or email us.

Sincerely

Cyril Shokoples IFMGA  
Chief Instructor / Mountain Guide

# General Course Overview

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## Alpine Climbing

### Day 1

- Introduction to Traveling at Light Speed
- Introduction to shortroping on rock - it is NOT roped soloing
- shortening the rope - over shoulder / in pack
- moving with coils vs. running belays vs. short pitches vs. regular belayed climbing
- direct belays / body belays sans anchor / indirect belays - body, mechanical
- Routefinding on alpine rock terrain
- increasing safety / reducing weight - packing appropriate to objective
- time loss areas - group, routefinding, belay stations, poor timing
- using terrain on approaches - the shortest distance is NOT a straight line
- shortroping and multi - person belays
- geology of the route you are on
- route descriptions
- relating major features to where you are - photographic memorization
- 3Ms - Macro / Medium / Micro
- Efficient travel during roped climbing - physical and mental techniques

### Day 2

- Traveling at Light Speed - snow & ice
- rope preparation, gear selection
- direct tie vs. carabiners
- End tie in vs. rescue coils
- the vast importance of timing
- Introduction to shortroping on snow - long vs. short, the ultimate dilemma
- Introduction to Snow / Ice routefinding - avalanches, crevasses and the entire alpine mess
- Introduction to Mixed climbing
- Use of running belays in snow

### Day 3 (on selected courses only)

- Additional skills training for Alpine climbing situations