

AMC Belaying Guidance

Lead climbers need to be aware that a climber saying “Yes, I can belay” may have only belayed another climber on top rope at a climbing wall and may not have the skills necessary to hold a lead fall in an outdoor climbing situation.

Belayers need to be aware that belaying at the climbing wall and belaying outside are two very different things. Even if they say otherwise a lead climber will be relying on you to hold them in the case of a fall.

It is the responsibility of both the lead climber and the belayer to establish and understand the competence of the belayer. A list of generic belaying skills is given below in ascending order of competence:

1. Top Rope Belaying, Indoors Only
2. Lead Belaying, Indoors Only
3. Lead Belaying, Sport Climbing
4. Lead Belaying, Trad Climbing, Single Rope, Outside, Single Pitch
5. Lead Belaying, Trad Climbing, Double Ropes, Outside, Single Pitch
6. Lead Belaying, Trad Climbing, Single or Double Ropes, Multi Pitch

It is recommended that a pair of climbers choose to undertake a climbing activity appropriate to the competence of the belayer.

For novice climbers wishing to gain experience of more challenging climbing activities it is recommended that they climb in a group of three with two experienced climbers. It should be emphasised that the AMC does not teach climbing. In order to learn the required skills the AMC recommend that you go on a course run by a professional instructor.