

# ICE CLIMBING & RAPPELLING WORKSHOP



*The mission of the Alaska Mountaineering School (AMS) is to seek excellence in responsible mountaineering and wilderness travel while teaching and guiding others. Our core curriculum focuses on safety and judgment, leadership, teamwork, mountaineering skills, Leave No Trace practices, and the enjoyment of experiencing the great wilderness of Alaska.*

## THIS WORKSHOP

---

The goal of the workshop is to teach you the fundamentals of ice climbing and rappelling and allow participants to repeat what they have learned on their own. Classes on anchor systems, belaying, crampon techniques, ice protection, and leading are introduced and practiced in small groups. Students learn about site selection for setting up their own top ropes, building their own anchors, and rappelling off climbs. Home base is the Matanuska Glacier, with its wide variety of terrain for teaching. The toe of the glacier, conveniently accessed by road, provides a variety of low and high angle ice faces for climbing and rappelling.

## SPECIFICATIONS

---

*Cost:* \$550, due upon registration

*Group limit:* 12 students, 3 instructors

*Tuition includes:* Instruction, group climbing equipment: ropes, ice screws, webbing, sleds, wands; AMS guides carry emergency cell/sat phone, first aid/drug kits. Each person will receive color-coded webbing and cordage necessary for a personal climbing safety rig.

*You are responsible for:* Glacier Park Resort gate fee (payable to AMS), transportation to and from the Matanuska Glacier, lodging, all meals, personal equipment (please see list later in this document).

## FEATURES

---

- Low and high angle ice climbing
- Ice protection

- Mock leading
- Rappelling
- Anchor systems
- Belays

## DAY-TO-DAY ITINERARY

---

Our ice climbing and rappelling course's day-to-day itinerary is designed to make sure you get the most out of an introduction to Alaska mountaineering. Your instructors teach wilderness, leadership, and technical climbing skills in a progression that develops competent and self-reliant climbers. By the end of the course you will have learned to identify and manage hazards, and you will have increased your technical knowledge of glacier and alpine climbing. Note that at the end of each day we debrief the current day and make fresh weather observations and analyses.

### *Briefing and Packing*

AMS likes organization and thoroughness, which takes time and thought. Your instructors dedicate the day before the start date to checking all the technical gear, packing rental gear, and planning the course curriculum. We adhere to the motto, "Prior planning prevents poor performance."

### *Day 1*

Meet at 9 a.m. at the Glacier Park Resort gate. We will drive together to the parking lot overlooking the glacier, proceeding to introductions and orientation, gear check, and rental issue. We'll then head out onto the glacier for the rest of the day, covering knots, rope identification and care, crampon techniques, anchors, and site selection. In the afternoon we

will cover ice climbing techniques, and learn belaying for the rest of the day. We'll be climbing on a variety of terrain from low-angle to steep overhanging routes.

*Day 2*

Meet instructors in the parking lot at 9 a.m. when we will issue any gear needed for the day before heading out. The day will include a ice climbing in the morning and wide variety of rappelling techniques and mock leading practices. We plan to be back in the parking lot at 5 p.m. to de-issue any rental and group gear.

LOCATION

We will meet at 9:00 a.m. at the Glacier Park Resort gate and travel together to the toe of the Matanuska Glacier, at the end of the resort's privately maintained road. The glacier is mile 102 of the Glenn Highway. Look for small green "Glac-

ier Park Road" sign. If you pass the Long Rifle Lodge, you've gone just a bit too far. Follow the gravel road to the entrance gate where your instructors will meet you. All participants are responsible for their own transportation.

ACCOMMODATIONS & FOOD

Lodging or camping for the workshop is arranged at your own discretion. The pre-paid gate fee includes the option to camp. There are outhouses at the campsites, but no other facilities. The Long-rifle Lodge offers packed lunches for pickup with advance notice. The list below outlines most of your local lodging and food options. *Note:* If you plan to camp on Thursday night, before your workshop, you must arrive before 5:00 pm as the Glacier Park Resort office closes.

Glacier Park Resort	907-745-2534	<a href="http://matanuskaglacieradventures.us">http://matanuskaglacieradventures.us</a>	Campsites near the glacier, outhouses, no running water
Long Rifle Lodge	907-745-5151	<a href="http://www.longriflodge.com">http://www.longriflodge.com</a>	Simple rooms and a restaurant overlooking the glacier
Matanuska Glacier State Recreation Area	907745-5151	<a href="http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/">dnr.alaska.gov/parks/</a>	Campsites and one recreational cabin available for rent
Sheep Mountain Lodge	907-645-5121	<a href="http://www.sheepmountain.com">http://www.sheepmountain.com</a>	10 miles away, cabins, RV park and restaurant
Matanuska Lodge	907-746-0378	<a href="http://www.matanuskalodge.com">http://www.matanuskalodge.com</a>	3 miles away, newer lodge

EQUIPMENT LIST

This workshop is held entirely on the glacier, therefore it is especially important to be properly equipped to stay warm and dry. Without a gear store nearby there are few options if you forget something. While we usually get pleasant weather during these workshops, you need to be prepared for snow and cold temperatures in April and rain throughout the rest of the summer season. Contact us if you have any questions.

**Each participant must complete and return the Workshop Rentals Form at least one week prior to the workshop.**

Please label your gear with your name or an identifying mark such as a piece of colored tape.

*Equipment Key*

- \$ For purchase only at AMS
- RNT Available for rent at AMS
- NC Available at no charge
- N/A Not available at AMS (should be obtained)

*before arrival)*

*OPT Optional for the workshop*

*Most prices are noted on the Personal Equipment Checklist.*

---

Personal Equipment: Clothing

---

**Socks**, 2 pairs (\$): Fit your boots to 1 pair and bring a spare pair.

**Rigid mountaineering boots**, 1 pair (RNT): Rigid sole; fit your boots to a single pair of socks. Your toes should be free to wiggle and your heel shouldn't lift more than 1/2 inch when walking. AMS carries Scarpa Inverno double boots and Scarpa Charmoz single boots.

**Upper-body base layer**, 2 layers (\$): One light or mid-weight and one heavier weight.

**Fleece jacket or heavy wool sweater**, 1 layer (\$)

**Insulated parka**, (OPT, \$) 1 layer: Synthetic or down, with hood.

**Upper-body hard shell**, 1 layer (\$): Waterproof/breathable fabric, such as Gore-Tex; roomy enough to fit over your other layers.

**Lower-body base layer**, 1 layer (\$): Mid-weight.

**Soft shell pants**, 1 layer (OPT): Many people enjoy the versatility.

**Lower-body hard shell**, 1 layer (\$): Waterproof pants, preferably with full side zippers.

**Baseball cap or sun hat**, 1 layer (\$): Should fit under helmet.

**Wood or fleece hat**, 1 layer (\$): Warm ski hat (should fit under helmet).

**Neoprene gloves**, 1 pair (\$): Summer months. Paddling or gloves with rubber grips work well.

**Fleece gloves**, 1 pair (\$): Cooler months. Rubber grip is helpful. An extra (dry) pair may be desirable if you are camping.

**Insulated gloves**, 1 pair (\$): With removable liners; insulated, waterproof/breathable gloves provide warmth and dexterity in the cold.

---

Personal Equipment: Travel & Climbing

---

**Day pack**, (\$): The main compartment should be approximately 3,500 cu. in./60 L, and have places for ice axe and crampons to be lashed on the outside.

**Crampons**, (RNT): Crampons must have front points and fit securely on your boots.

**Seat harness**, (RNT): Adjustable climbing harness, should fit over layers.

**Carabiners**, 5 (RNT): Oval or D-shaped, regular gate or wire gate.

**Locking carabiners**, (RNT): Full-size screw-gate carabiners—3 pear-shaped OR two pear-shaped and one D-shaped.

**Belay Device**, (RNT): Black Diamond, ATC

---

Personal Equipment: Sun

---

**Sun glasses**, 1 pair (\$): Good quality, but not necessary to have "glacier glasses."

**Lip balm** (\$)

**Sunscreen** (\$)

---

Personal Equipment: Miscellaneous

---

**Water bottle**, 2 (\$): Wide-mouth 1-quart size. Please fill beforehand.

**Insulated water bottle covers**, 2 (\$): April only.

**Thermos**, 1 (OPT): 1-quart thermos for hot liquids.

**Head lamp** (\$): April and September only.

**Trail food** (N/A): Snack food that is easy to eat throughout the day.

---

GROUP EQUIPMENT—AMS PROVIDES

---

For the workshop, AMS provides all of the group equipment, which is carefully checked and inventoried beforehand, such as ice tools, ropes, ice screws, ice tools, and other climbing equipment. Some items may be provided for demonstration purposes. We all share the use and care of the group equipment. Instructors carry first aid, drug kit, repair kit, and emergency communications (radio/cell phone/sat phone).