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Self-Rescue Part I – Basic Skills

Pre/Co-requisites

This course assumes some knowledge of how to rappel and belay. Such knowledge, along with some experience, will be essential to feel comfortable with the skills covered in this course. Students lacking the necessary background will probably still get something out of the course but will have difficulty retaining and using what they learn.

To ascend and descend a rope presumes that it is securely anchored, and the placement and construction of climbing anchors is important in the application of self-rescue skills. However, many of the skills in Part I will still be of use without experience in anchor construction since it may be necessary to ascend or descend a rope which has been anchored by another more experienced person.

Objectives

Knots

- Know how to tie the following knots, their pros and cons, and when to use them: Figure 8, prusik, Munter hitch, Clove hitch

Rappelling

- Be able to tie off a rappel using a mule knot
- Know how to use an autoblock (or other friction knot) below the device as a safety backup
- Know how to stop yourself on rappel using a leg-wrap and how to stop somebody else on rappel using the “Firemans Belay”

Ascending a Rope

- Be able to ascend a fixed rope using the Texas prusik system
- Be able to switch between ascending and rappelling while on a rope
- (Optional) Become familiar with the Purcell prusik system

Escaping a Belay

- Be able to use the above skills to escape from a belay (minimally, enabling you to go for help but not necessarily to proceed with more complex rescue steps.)