



## ROCK CLIMBING

**Step 1: IDENTIFY THE HAZARDS:** Let's look at the hazards associated with MMA:

- Impact or struck by hazards
- Weather (wind, Extreme temps, rain)
- Surface (loose items, debris, rock slides)
- Visibility and access
- Fall from heights
- Traumatic brain injury or paralyzed

**Step 2: ASSESS THE RISK:** Then assess the impact of each hazard in terms of potential loss and severity:

- Equipment failure
- Condition of safety equipment
- Potential for strains/sprains/exhaustion/fatigue
- Increased potential for mishap due to the amount of training required to become a skilled climber.

**Step 3: MAKE RISK DECISIONS:** Once you have identified the hazards and assessed the associated risk, you should develop risk control options. Start with the most serious risk first and select controls that will reduce the risk to a minimum consistent with mission accomplishment. Decide on some controls that can be employed to reduce or mitigate the hazards:

- Assess weather conditions before and during activity (e.g. temperature, storms)
- Check and assess surrounds for loose items, debris and hazards and suitability of participants.
- Use of proper PPE (helmet, climbing shoes, harness, chalk,, etc.)
- The location should allow safe access to the staging areas
- Visibility and access to be considered before choosing routes
- Consider hazards associated with types of fencing material, gates and other infrastructure.

- Use, maintain and store equipment according to manufacturer's specifications
- Conduct regular equipment checks prior to start of sessions. Particular attention to fastening systems when removable rope systems are used
- Use a belay system appropriate to the activity, with supervision at all times
- Appropriately prepared for the activity and conditions

With selected controls in place, decide if the benefit outweighs the risk. If risk outweighs benefits or if assistance is required to implement controls, communicate with higher authority in the chain of command. You need to either accept the risk, avoid the risk, reduce the risk, or spread the risk. Do not make dumb decisions.

**Step 4: IMPLEMENT CONTROLS:** Once you select appropriate controls, implement them! A plan is only good if it is followed.

**Step 5: SUPERVISE:** As always, the situation is subject to change quickly. Monitor the situation and adjust as necessary to keep things under control. MMA is a great way to have fun and challenge yourself now and then. Use risk management to make your MMA experience memorable and safe. No one wants an outing to turn into a tragedy!

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