Intro to Snow & Ice Climbing

Aimed at those who already have basic winter skills (basic crampon & ice axe) and want to climb snow and ice at grades I to III. Some previous rock climbing experience is advised.

- Snow belays, rock and ice anchors
- Multi-pitch climbing
- Route choice and avalanche avoidance
- Movement and technique

Improver’s Snow & Ice Climbing

For those with previous winter climbing experience who wants to improve their skills, learn to lead or push their grade. The course will cover all aspects of the Introductory course plus:

- Routes graded III-V
- Learning to lead (where conditions permit) & retreating safely
- Advanced techniques of ice & rock protection

Participation Statement

Adventure Peaks recognises that climbing, hill walking and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement.
PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE
For the introductory course you need good basic winter skills and the ability to use crampons and ice axe safely and effectively. Some previous rock climbing experience is also advised. The Improvers course is designed for those who are reasonably comfortable on I-II graded ground, have an understanding of basic ropework techniques and wish to progress to harder climbs.

DATES
Our courses run every week and weekend throughout January, February and March, with the format below:

Weekend courses (4 days – 3 days guiding):
1. Friday Arrive in the evening, Hotel
2. Saturday Instruction and climbing, Hotel
3. Sunday Instruction and climbing, Hotel
4. Monday Instruction and climbing, depart

Midweek courses (6 days – 5 days guiding):
1. Friday Arrive in the evening, Hotel
2. Saturday Instruction and climbing, Hotel
3. Sunday Instruction and climbing, Hotel
4. Monday Instruction and climbing, Hotel
5. Tuesday Instruction and climbing, Hotel
6. Wednesday Instruction and climbing, depart.

VENUE
The mountains around Glencoe and Ben Nevis provide some of the best and most reliable winter walking and climbing conditions in Britain suitable for beginner and expert alike. It is the perfect training ground for mountaineering in the Alps or Greater Ranges.

ACCOMMODATION
We are based at the friendly and comfortable Onich Hotel which is situated midway between Fort William and Glencoe. The hotel provides en-suite rooms, a comfortable bar, restaurant with excellent and filling food, and stunning views.
www.onich-fortwilliam.co.uk

Accommodation is booked from the night of your arrival (Day 1) with instruction starting the following morning.

Check out is normally on the morning of your final day (Day 4 or 6) unless you have booked an additional night. Accommodation is booked on a twin or double room basis; however single rooms will be provided where there is not a member of the same sex to share with. Single rooms and additional nights can be requested at an extra cost.

MEALS
Breakfast is the key to a good day in the Scottish hills and at the Onich Hotel you will be offered a full Scottish Breakfast. On the hill we provide a packed lunch and the hotel will fill your flask each morning. Dinner consists of three courses and vegetarians can be catered for – please advise in advance.

OUTLINE ITINERARY

An exact programme is difficult to confirm as we operate according to the weather, conditions and the progress of the group, but typically on a 6 day course we would aim to do to following:

Day 1: On the first evening there will be an informal meeting with a member of the Adventure Peaks team to chat through the course.

Day 2: During an initial briefing we will check your personal kit and issue you with any hire kit required. We have a very flexible program and your instructor will develop your itinerary based on your previous experience and aspirations for the course and the future. The first day will revisit the skills required to move safely and efficiently on steep and exposed snow-covered terrain.
In the evening there will be a short lecture on avalanche avoidance.

**Days 3, 4, 5 & 6:** Your instructor will pick routes to maximize your learning, introduce you to the different aspects of winter climbing (gully, buttress & ice), develop certain identifiable skills and provide plenty of enjoyment with due regard to weather & avalanche conditions. Our courses have previously covered the full spectrum of routes including:

- Curved Ridge, II, Glencoe
- Ledge Route, II, Ben Nevis
- Aonach Eagach, III, Glencoe
- Tower Ridge, III, 4, Ben Nevis
- Glovers Chimney, III, 4, Ben Nevis
- Twisting Gully, III, 4, Glencoe
- Green Gully, IV, 4, Ben Nevis
- The Curtain, IV, 5, Ben Nevis
- Smiths Route, V, 5, Ben Nevis
- Point 5 Gully, V, 5, Ben Nevis

On the one of the evenings there will be a short slide show on some of the expeditions run by Adventure Peaks.

A 4-day weekend course will cover many of the same skills but obviously in less depth and with less opportunity to put your new skills in to practice.

**WHAT IS INCLUDED**
- Instruction by qualified Mountain Instructors or Guides.
- Accommodation and meals (breakfast, packed lunch and a three course evening meal), starting with breakfast on the morning of day 2 through to packed lunch on the day of your departure.
- (Bar meals can be purchased until 8.30pm at The Onich Hotel)
- Ropes and all technical equipment (exc. personal kit)

**WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED**
- Personal equipment including ice axes, crampons, harness and helmet (although much of this can be hired).
- Uplift by cable car on Aonach Mor (Ben Nevis) or the White Corries (Glencoe). These maximize your time above the snow line and you’d usually use them twice during a week long course or once for a weekend. 2020 prices are £19.50 and £12 respectively for a return trip.
- Entry to the ice wall at the Ice Factor in the event of severe weather.
- Liquid refreshment in the bar!

**TRANSPORTATION**
The Adventure Peaks minibus is available for use by our courses for transport between the hotel and the mountains on instructed days. During busy periods, clients may be asked to use their own vehicles for themselves and other members of the group. In this case other clients may be asked to contribute to fuel costs.

**INSTRUCTORS**
The majority of our leaders are UIAGM Guides or qualified Winter Mountaineering and Climbing Instructors (WMCI), many of whom are members of AMI (Association of Mountaineering Instructors).

[www.ami.org.uk](http://www.ami.org.uk)

**INSTRUCTOR/CLIENT RATIO**
Both the longer and shorter courses have a ratio of 1:2. *We will run courses with a min of 1:2*

**WEATHER CONDITIONS**
Scottish mountaineering is very weather dependent, but your instructor will endeavour to give you a productive and enjoyable course based on the prevailing conditions, group fitness and avalanche risk. Despite an apparent
trend for warmer winters we have not had to cancel any
days in the last 3 years due to lack of snow.
If the winds or avalanche risk are too high we may use
the ice wall at Ice Factor in Kinlochleven.

www.ice-factor.co.uk

**Ice axes**
**Crampons**
**Climbing helmet**

**Climbing harness**
**Mountaineering boots (B3)**
Waterproof jacket & trousers
Warm clothes
Hat & gloves
50L Rucksack
Water bottle
Headtorch
Orange survival bag
Whistle
Compass
Map – Ben Nevis & Glencoe

** These items can be hired from us. Please let us
know at the time of booking. All other technical
equipment is provided.

INSURANCE
We recommend you have travel insurance to cover
cancellation/curtailment. Search & rescue cover is not
required as Scotland has a dedicated voluntary
Mountain Rescue Service.

BOOKS & MAPS
The OS Landranger Map 41 covers Ben Nevis &
Glencoe. The Scottish Mountaineering Club (SMC)
produce a range of guides including the definitive guides
to summer and winter climbing in Glencoe and on Ben
Nevis as well as a selected guide of winter climbs across
Scotland. All these maps and guides are available from
our shop or online at www.adventurepeaks.com.