



GOSFORTH ACADEMY CLIMBING WALL - CONDITIONS OF USE

Risks

“The British Mountaineering Council recognises that climbing 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.”

Although the climbing wall is an artificial environment the risks involved are **no less serious than when climbing outside** on a crag or mountain. There is an additional risk that bolt-on holds can spin or break.

Climbing **beyond your capabilities** on any wall is likely to result in a **fall**. Any fall may result in an **injury** despite the safety systems in place to avoid it. You must make your **own assessment of the risks** whenever you climb.

Our Duty of Care

The **rules** of the climbing wall set out below **are not** intended to limit your enjoyment of the facilities. They **are** part of the **duty of care** that we, as operators, owe to you, the customer, by law. As such they are **not negotiable** and if you are not prepared to abide by them then the staff must politely ask you to leave.

Your Duty of Care

You **also have a duty of care** to act responsibly towards the other users of the climbing wall. Statements of ‘Good Practice’ are posted alongside and on the climbing wall. These describe the accepted methods of use and how customers would normally be expected to behave towards each other.

Unsupervised Climbing - Before you climb without supervision the centre expects you to be competent in the use of a safety harness, a re-threaded figure of eight knot to attach a rope to the harness and a belay device to secure a falling climber or lower a climber from the wall using a rope. You are required to register to say that you know how to use the equipment, that you are prepared to abide by the Rules below and that you understand the risks involved in your participation. You may also be asked to demonstrate that you have the skills listed above in order to climb safely on the wall. Anyone who has not registered is classed as a **novice** and **must not** climb without supervision.

Unsupervised climbing is just that! Staff will provide whatever help and advice they can, but instruction in the use of equipment or climbing techniques will only be provided where it has been booked and paid for in advance. If you are **not confident** in the use of any climbing equipment or technique then **do not** attempt to use it without the supervision of someone who is competent to do so.

Supervised Climbing - An adult who has registered at the wall may supervise up to **two** novice climbers as long as they are prepared to **take full responsibility for the safety of those people**. Groups of three or more novices must only be supervised by an instructor holding the relevant Mountain Leader Training qualification (CWA, SPA, MIA or MIC)

Children – Children must be aged 5 years to use the climbing wall and must be supervised by an adult until they are aged 14 when they can be assessed by the management and registered for unsupervised climbing.



GOSFORTH ACADEMY CLIMBING WALL - RULES

General Safety

- Report to reception on each visit before you climb. On your first visit you must become a registered user or book induction instruction.
- You must exercise care, common sense and self preservation at all times.
- Report any problems with the wall, equipment or other climbers' behaviour to a member of staff immediately.
- Be aware of the other climbers around you and how your actions will affect them.
- Do not distract people while they are climbing or belaying.
- Stand well back from the climbing wall unless you are belaying or spotting a climber. Never stand directly under someone who is climbing.

Top Roping

- Most of the climbs on the wall have top ropes already in place. These are in place for users and should not normally be taken down unless users have permission to lead climb.

Leading

- To lead climb you must first seek the permission of the duty manager of *Sport at Gosforth*
- When using the lead walls you must supply your own appropriately rated dynamic rope. Do not use the wall's top ropes for lead climbing.
- Running belay attachments (runners) are not provided on the wall so you will need your own 'quick draws'. You must clip **all** the runners on the route you are climbing. Avoid "back clipping" runners.
- If to lead a route you pulled a top rope down from its top anchor, then you must replace the rope to its original anchor. To do this you must top rope an adjacent route and, when at the top, reach across to replace the top rope. Alternatively you can link ropes with clove hitches tied in a short length of 6mm cord and then pull the ropes through.

When Belaying

- Always use a belay device attached to your safety harness with a locking karabiner. 'Traditional', or 'body' belaying is not acceptable.
- In the event that the climber is significant heavier than the belayer we insist that belayers use the heavy anchor bags provided. Please ensure that these are returned to storage areas after use, as they may constitute a tripping hazard if left in the climbing area.
- Always pay attention to what the climber is doing and manage the rope safely.
- Sitting or lying down when belaying are not acceptable.

When Climbing

- Solo (unroped) climbing is not acceptable on the walls. Always use a rope to protect yourself on the climbs.
- Always use a safety harness to attach yourself to the rope.
- Always tie the rope directly into the harness using re-threaded figure of eight knot. Clipping in with a karabiner is not acceptable.