

Rock Climbing Dictionary: Terms & Lingo

A vue - adj. French for "onsight", a clean ascent first try with no prior knowledge of the route (see onsight).

A0 - n. (Pronounced "A-zero") Rating given to using a bolt for aid. No possibility of falling because weight is supported by something that cannot fail.

Abseil - v. UK English for rappel, from the German origin. See Rappel.

Aid Climbing - n Originally called direct aid or artificial climbing, aid climbing is a means of ascent where the climber's weight is supported primarily, or entirely, by slings attached to a device attached to the rock, rather than by the climber's own hands, feet and other body parts as in free climbing. Upward progress is not required: weighting the rope, or resting on gear is aid. Difficulty increases as security diminishes. (See Aid ratings.)

Aider - n. Ladder made of webbing used for Aid Climbing, or as footholds for the belayer on a multi pitch climb. See also: Etrier

Allez - v. French for "Go!" Used to encourage climbers to push on.

Alpine Start - n. The set off time on an Alpine Route to enable a summit and return journey without the worry of the snow & ice melting in the days heat. Generally very early in the morning, ie 3am.

Alpine Style - adj. Doing a mountain route without pre-placing fixed lines or using pre-supplied camp sites for any stage of the journey. Example: The British group climbed the new route on Changabang in fine alpine style.

AMS - n. Acute Mountain Sickness

Anchor - n. That which attaches the belayer to the rock, or otherwise prevents the belayer from being pulled off the belay stance if the leader falls. In roped technical climbing, one climber moves at a time, while the other belays. The belayer must be securely attached to the rock by means of protection devices (cams, nuts, bolts, pitons), or tied to an immovable object like a boulder or sturdy tree. The attachments are called collectively the "anchor." An ideal anchor relies on at least three bombproof attachment points. (See also belay.)

Angle - n. A type of piton made of a few inches of chromoly steel with a 90 degree angle down its spine, like a shallow taco. Comes in sizes of less than 1/2 inch (baby angle) to 2 inches wide, 4 to 6 inches long, and with an eye in the end for clipping a carabiner. Rarely used now except on aid climbs, and when left as fixed protection on free climbs.

Approach - v. The journey to the base of a crag or route.

Approach shoes - n. A sort of cross between a trainer and a walking boot used for the approach from the car to the base of the climb.

Approach Time - n. The time taken to reach the base of the route your going to climb.

Arete - n. A narrow ridge, or corner, of rock or snow. Derived from the french word for "stop".

Ascend - v. To go up. Climbers ascend a route to get to the top.

Ascenders - n. Mechanical devices used to ascend a rope, consisting of a camming mechanism which bites into the rope when downward pressure is applied but allows movement when slid up the rope.

Ascent - n. A completed climb. 'Everest was one of my many ascents.' 2. v. The upward [not vertical] movement or progress [not motion] of a climber. Antonym: descent.

Back clean - 1. v, *back cleaning, back cleaned*, When leading, to remove superfluous gear from below for anticipated use higher on the pitch, most often when aid climbing by simply reaching back or below to clean. *Mindy decided to back clean the last two TCUs she had placed to save them for the centimeter-wide crack out the big roof.*

Back step - 1. n, a foot position relative to its foothold wherein the climber uses the outside edge of the toe box, instead of the big toe, inside edge, heel, instep, etc. 2. v, to use the outside edge of one's foot on a foothold. 3. v, (the rope) to place a foot or leg between the rope and the rock in such a way as to make entanglement and, subsequently, an upside-down fall more likely. Dude! Watch your right foot! Don't back step the rope!

Bail - v. To give up and rappel or otherwise get off the route because of weather, darkness, or difficulties. "We both tried and fell on the crux several times, so we bailed." "We didn't want to finish in the dark, so we bailed."

Bail Biner - n. A carabiner left behind when rappelling or lowering off of a climb, usually left on a single bolt or other protection device mid-pitch.

Bandolier - n. A short sling with a padding worn over the shoulder by the leader to hold a rack that is too big to be accommodated by gear loops.

Barn door - n. When the body swings away from the rock from two or more pivot points (usually one hand and one foot) due to the angle. Can occur on a steep lieback as well. Difficult to recover from and often results in a fall.

Base Camp - n The lowest fixed camp on a long route or other journey.

Belay - vb. (1) vb. - the process of paying out the rope to the lead climber, or taking in rope for a follower, while he/she climbs, and of protecting the climber in the event of a fall. Belaying allows a climber to fall and live to try again. (2) n. - the place where a climber belays, and the anchor is set up attaching the climber to the rock, normally at the beginning and end of each pitch. (See belay station.) Also, a session of belaying.

Belay Device - n. A device that attaches to the climber's harness through which the rope is threaded for belaying. Its primary purpose is to create friction quickly in the event of a fall so the belayer can stop the rope, which stops the leader's fall, simply by pulling against the device. The device creates a 'hairpin' turn in the rope at all times and allows the belayer to pay out or take in slack freely, and to stop or brake the rope in an instant. Common belay devices: ATC, GriGri, Sticht Plate

Belay Monkey - Any person recruited for the task of belaying for long periods of time. Similar to Belay Betty; usually a non-climbing female recruited to belay a significant other.

Belay Station - n. A secure stance consisting of an anchor, a rope, and a belayer with a belay device. The place where a belayer sits, stands or hangs while belaying.

Belayer - n. a person who is belaying a climber.

Beta - n. information about a route.

Betaflash - n. a clean first ascent with no falls after having received beta. (This contrasts an onsightflash, a clean ascent with no prior knowledge of the route. 2. (vb.) to perform a betaflash.

Big wall - n. A large expanse of steep rock taking a minimum of three days to climb with conventional methods (free and aid climbing, hauling a bag with food water and shelter). El Cap and Half Dome in Yosemite Valley are big walls though both have routes that have been climbed in less than a day. The majority of routes on both require three to eight days to climb. Washington Column, Sentinel, and Leaning Tower are usually not referred to as a big walls. 2. (adj.) Of or pertaining to a big wall. (e.g., big wall climbing gear).

Biner - n. Slang for carabiner, a metal ring with a spring-loaded gate used to attach the rope to protection, and many other things. (See carabiner.)

Bird Beak - n. A thin hook used as protection in small cracks and pockets.

Bivouac - n. a place to spend the night. 2.(vb.) to spend the night, often in an unexpected location. Slang: Bivy

Bivy - n. Slang for Bivouac. A place to spend the night. 2.(vb.) to spend the night, often in an unexpected location.

Bolt - n. A permanent anchor in the rock installed individually as a protection device, or with other bolts or protection devices as an anchor. The bolt is a metal shaft 1/4 inch, 3/8 inch or 5/16 inch in diameter (common sizes), driven into a hole drilled by the climber, and equipped with a hanger to attach a carabiner. Generally, no one installs 1/4 inch bolts anymore, and because most of them are more than 25 years old, they should not be used when found. Occasionally they can be pried out by hand, or break under body weight.

Bomber - adj. a corruption of "bombproof" meaning very secure.

Bombproof - adj. Very secure, unlikely to move even when subjected to great force.

Booty - n. gear left behind for the taking, usually either from a previous party bailing on a route or accidentally fixing gear.

Boulder - n./v. a big rock typically climbed without a rope. May be head high to over 30 feet. Each boulder may have many distinct routes. Boulder problems are often top roped (See top rope), but climbing without a rope is thought to be better style. To boulder or to go bouldering is to climb boulder problems.

Bouldering Pad - n. A mat three to four inches thick, and roughly four feet square placed on the ground under a boulderer to cushion a fall. Usually made of layers of foam of various densities and covered with heavy, durable nylon and equipped with straps so that it can be folded in half and carried from place to place on the climber's back. Also known as a crash pad.

Bouncing - v. Sport climbing technique used to regain the rock after falling and the climber is hanging free and out of reach of the rock. The climber climbs the rope hand over hand (very strenuous), and then drops. At the instant the climber lets go, the belayer hauls in slack thereby raising the climber. Repeating this process eventually brings the climber back to the rock. Also known as boinking, and to superman (compare with batman).

Brake Hand - n. The hand that holds the rope on the opposite side of the belay device to the climber.

Bridging - v. Climbing manouver involving arching the legs across a gap to put pressure on two opposing holds or walls. See also: Stemming.

Bucket - n. big handhold that is easy to hold onto. Usually a depression, hole or scoop (concave) in the rock. See also jug.

Buildering - n. to climb on buildings or manmade structures. Often done for training for rock climbing.

Buttress - n. A part of the mountain or rock formation that stands out from the main face. May also be used to describe the corner of a rock formation, e.g., the East Buttress of Middle Cathedral.

Cam - n. Short for camming device, removable, portable protection that helps arrest a climber's fall.

Campus - vb to work out on a campus board. 2. (vb.) to rock climbing moves with feet dangling as if using a campus board.

Campus board - n. a wrunged ladderlike training device used to train for climbing. Originated by the Late Wolfgang Güllich, this simple device has been largely responsible for advances in climbing difficulty around the world.

Carabiner - n. A metal ring with a spring-loaded gate used to attach the rope to protection, and many other things.

Cave - n. A roof enclosed on two sides.

Chalk - n. white drying agent used to keep a climber's hands dry. Sometimes called "white courage" 2. (vb.) to apply chalk to hands.

Chalk Bag - n. A small bag with a stiff rim worn clipped to the harness or around the waist on a belt and used to hold chalk. Allows the climber to access chalk while climbing.

Chalk Up - v. Putting chalk on the hands before or while on a climb.

Chicken Wing - n. A type of arm bar useful in off widths and tight chimneys. Bend arm at elbow so that hand touches shoulder. Insert in crack and push against opposite sides. Works especially well vertically in squeeze chimneys, with elbow pointing up and pressing against one side of chimney, and heel of hand against the other side. 2.(v.) To Chicken Wing: bad climbing form on a face climb where the climber's elbows point out and back at an awkward angle.

Chickenhead - n. A knobby feature (resembling a chicken's head) found in granite which provides excellent holds for hands or feet.

Chimney - n. a parallel sided constriction wider than body width. 2. (vb.) to climb a chimney.

Chipping - n. the act of altering the rock by breaking it. Almost universally shunned by climbers, but still performed by those whose bodies and egos are too weak to meet the challenge of a climb.

Chock - n. A generic term for all passive protection that can be wedged into a crack or slot in the rock, i.e., wired nuts, slung nuts, hexes, stoppers, wedges, etc. . .

Choss - n. loose, bad quality rock.

Chossy - adj. like choss.

Class 1 - n./adj. (Archaic. Almost never used.) AKA First Class. Denotes walking where no special footwear is required. One of six classes describing travel in the mountains.

Class 2 - n./adj. (Archaic. Almost never used.) AKA Second Class. Denotes trail walking where it is advisable to have boots or other sturdy footwear. One of six classes describing travel in the mountains.

Class 3 - n./adj. AKA Third Class. Denotes scrambling involving the use of the hands as well as the feet, but where a rope is not needed. More commonly used to describe climbing without a rope, especially when the climbers have a rope.

Class 4 - n./adj. AKA Fourth Class, like Class 3, requiring use of hands as well as feet, sometimes referred to as scrambling, but where a rope is advisable because a fall would likely result in serious injury or death. Class 4 is a step below technical rock climbing (Class 5), which involves more difficult climbing and requires the use of protection devices. For a rock climber to describe something as fourth class usually means that it is easy.

Class 5 - n./adj. AKA Fifth Class. Technical rock climbing requiring the use of rope and protection, and where only one climber moves at a time while belayed by another climber. This is why the Yosemite Decimal System starts at 5.0.

Class 6 - n./adj. (Archaic. Almost never used.) AKA Sixth Class. Direct aid. When the Yosemite Decimal System was first devised, free climbs were rated from 5.0 to 5.9, and the next rating up was 6.0, the point at which you had to hang on the rope. The decimal system never caught on for aid. (See aid ratings.)

Clean - v. 1. v To remove protection devices (gear). On a multipitch climb, the climber who seconds (follows the leader), takes out all of the removable gear placed by the leader. 2. adj. A clean climb, or a climb that "goes clean" is one that can be done without using a hammer to pound in pitons or mashies. This method is called clean because it does not damage the rock. (See pin scars.)

Cleaning Tool - n. A metal tool used in the extraction of protection that has become stuck in the rock.

Clipping - v. The act of putting a carabiner onto a bold, the rope, or a piece of protection. 'Clipping!' is a common call to indicate to the belayer that you are about to pull up rope to make a clip.

Clove Hitch - n. Knot often used to tie a rope to a carabiner.

Copperhead - n. Aid device made of a malleable copper alloy and slung on swaged wire cable, used to hammer into shallow grooves and slots in the rock. When pounded with a hammer and chisel, they deform to fit the shape of the rock. These are typically left fixed because they are difficult to remove without damaging the rock.

Crack - n. An inwards split or break in a rock face.

Crack climbing - n. the act of climbing continuous cracks in the rock often requiring specific techniques and protection methods.

Crampons - n. Metal spikes which attach onto climbing boots to allow a firm grip on snow or ice.

Crank - v. Slang for pulling on a hold at your maximum power.

Crater - vb. to fall off a climb to the ground.

Crimp - vb. to grip in a way such that fingertips contact the hold with knuckles raised slightly.

Crimper - n. a small edged hold which is conducive to crimping.

Cross Threaded - adj. When the thread on a carabiner's locking mechanism's is not twisting freely, usually due to it being tightened up whilst loaded. This can be very hard to unscrew.

Cross through - n. a reach with hand or foot that crosses the line of the other appendage.

Crux - n. the most crucial., difficult part of the climb.

Cruxy - v. A climb is said to be cruxy if it has several hard sections interspersed with rather easy sections.

D.W.S. - n. Deep water solo. Free solo climbing on routes above deep water, such that the climber will land in the water if they were to fall.

Daisy Chain - n. A sown webbing sling with multiple loops used in aiding and belay stations.

Dead Hang - adj. Hanging from a hold with the arms straightened allowing body weight to be held by the skeleton rather than arm muscles. - good for relaxing the arm muscles

Deadman - n. A metal plate placed into deep snow for use as an anchor.

Deadpoint - n. to catch a hold at the apex of upward momentum at the point where the climber will experience the least force. (see "dyno"). 2. (vb.) to perform a deadpoint

Deck - v. To "deck" or to "deck out" or "hit the deck" is to take a fall resulting in a impact on the floor, often resulting in serious injury or death.

Descender - n. Any device used to rappel or abseil. ie: figure 8, rappel rack, stitch plate

Dihedral - n. A corner. Literally, the word means two planes coming together. It may be a 90 degree corner, and it may be more or less than 90 degrees. (Right, obtuse, acute angles.) Look at a picture of the Nose of El Cap. See that big corner that forms the upper third of the route? Now that's a dihedral.

Disco Leg - adj. Also known as 'sewing machine leg' or 'doing the wild elvis'. Refers to the uncontrollable shaking of the leg(s) while climbing. Result of tired leg muscles.

Dogging - v. short for 'hang-dogging'. Refers to spending large amounts of time hanging in the harness while working a climb.

Doubled Back - adj. Bringing your harness webbing loop back through the buckle when putting it on. This is an important part of ensuring that your harness is done up correctly.

Downclimb - vb. to climb downward rather than upward on a climb.

Draw - n. short for "quickdraw", a useful link consisting of two carabiners connected by a length of rope or webbing. Often used to attach the rope to points of protection.

Drop knee - n. technique requiring twisting your body and a downward turning of the inside knee to increase reach efficiency.

Dyneema - n. A very strong material used to make slings. Thinner and lighter than typical nylon webbing. Called 'spectra' in the US.

Dyno - n. abbreviation for "dynamic movement", a move that requires some use of momentum. (antonym: static movement) 2. (vb.) to perform a dyno.

Edge - n. a small, horizontal hold. 2. (vb.) to stand on an edge with the corner of a shoe maximizing the pressure applied to a small area of rubber.

Elvis leg - n. the uncontrollable shake of a leg uncontrollably during a climb. Often due to a combination of nerves and overcontraction of muscles. Also called sewing machine leg.

Epic - adj. Surpassing the usual or ordinary, particularly in scope or size. An adventure where everything seems to go wrong and the adventurers are constantly put at risk.

Etriers - n. The original French term for Aiders. Nylon webbing steps for use when aid climbing.

Exposure - Being very far above your last piece of protection or being in a situation in which you are very aware that you are high off the ground or in a remote location.

F.A. - n. abbreviation for "first ascent". Often seen in guidebooks to list the people responsible for the route.

F.F.A. - n. abbreviation for "first free ascent", first ascent that did not use aid gear.

Face Climbing - v. Climbing on the flat part of a rock face, considered to be the opposite of crack climbing.

Fall Factor - n. The length of the fall divided by the amount of rope paid out. Used when deciding how much strain has been placed on a rope or piece of gear after it has been fallen on.

Fall Line - n. The path of a climber if he were to fall off a climb.

Fifi Hook - n. A small hook, primarily used when aiding, to clip into a daisy chain or piece of gear.

Figure 4 - n. An uncommon technique to make long reaches that requires lifting a leg over the opposite arm, putting the body in a position that resembles a "4". Mostly used in ice and mixed climbing.

Figure 8 - n. a common rappel / belay device shaped like the number "8".

Figure 8 knot - n. Also known as the "double figure 8" or "figure 8 follow through". The most common knot used to attach the climber's harness to the rope.

Figure 9 - n. An uncommon technique to make long reaches that requires lifting a leg over the arm on the same side of the climber's body, putting the body in a position that resembles a "9". Mostly used in ice and mixed climbing.

Finger jam - n. Obtaining purchase in a crack wide enough for a finger but too narrow for a hand; can be achieved with one or more fingers. An advanced technique. Cracks that are too small for hands and wider than finger width (off-finger size) are especially difficult to master.

Finger lock - n. see "finger jam"

Fist Jam - n. A technique involving a fist being wedged into a crack in order to hold on.

Fixed protection - n. gear that is left on the rock for future use.

Fixed Rope - n. A rope fixed to a route by the lead climber and left in place for all who follow. Also refers to ropes left on sections of alpine climbs in order to aid the next party to attempt the route.

Flag - vb. to dangle a leg in a way that improves balance. Also referred to as using feet without holds to improve balance and create sideways momentum.

Flake - n. A rock formation where a 'flake' of rock sticks out from the rest of the wall.

Flapper - n. a superficial injury resulting in a loose flap of skin.

Flared Crack - n. A crack with sides that are not parallel, but instead form two converging planes of rock.

Flash - n. completion of a climb first try with no falls. 2. (vb.) to perform a flash.

Follow - v. Synonym: second. After the first climber leads the pitch, the second (the one who belayed the leader) follows, that is, he/she climbs up to the leader, cleaning (removing protection placed by the leader) the pitch on the way up. Because the leader is belaying the second from above, the second has a top rope and will not fall far if he falls at all. When the follower reaches the leader's belay, he secures himself, takes the rack, and leads the next pitch. (See swinging leads.)

Fourth Class - n./adj./v. Refers to the Class 1 to 6 system (See Class 1 through 6); movement requiring the use of the hands as well as the feet and requiring specialized foot wear, and requiring a rope for safety, unlike Class 3. Experienced rock climbers tend to think of fourth class as easy and often do not rope up until they are on Class 5 terrain.

Free Climb - v. The act of making upward progress using only your hands, feet, and other body parts for purchase on the rock, as opposed to direct aid where the climber's weight is supported by a sling attached to a device attached to the rock. When free climbing with a rope, the game is to never rely on the rope for assistance: it is there to catch you only if you fall. Contrast this with aid climbing in which your feet are in slings or stirrups and your hands are free (generally) to place the next piece of gear that will support your weight. While free climbing, you are using only your hands, feet, legs, hips, butt, back, chest, and shoulders to keep yourself from falling, and none of your weight is supported by slings or the rope.

Free Solo - v. To free climb without a rope and without protection. A fall is likely to result in serious injury or death. Usually distinguished from climbing high boulders in that free soloing implies a climb of a pitch or more. Contrast with the term highball.

Front Pointing - v. Technique for ascending steep or overhanging ice. The front teeth of the crampons are used to dig into the ice.

Gaston - n. a climbing technique that involves sidepulling with an elbow pointed outward.

Gate - n. The hinged part of a carabiner which opens to allow the clipping of a rope or piece of gear. etc.

Gear Loops - n. The loops attached to the waist belt on a harness that are used to hold gear.

Glissade - vb. a controlled slide down a slope.

Greasy - adj. slippery

Greenpoint - n. To flash a route on top rope.

Gripped - adj. tired and/or scared. Often a synergy between the two.

Guide Book - n. A book which shows where climbing routes are located and gives brief descriptions of the route and its difficulty.

Gumby - adj. A (often derogatory) name for a novice climber.

Gym - n. an indoor climbing facility consisting of manmade walls.

Hand jam - n./v. Using your hand to gain purchase in a crack by twisting the hand, squeezing or spreading the palm, pulling the thumb down, making a fist, stacking both hands, etc. . .

Hand Traverse - n. Climbing horizontally using hands only. Also: Campus Traverse

Hang - v. Common usage: 'Bill ran up to hang draws on that 5.12". A more experienced climber may climb a route to place quickdraws for other climbers of lesser abilities. Or simply to hang from a handhold.

Hang Dog - vb./n. to repeatedly rest on the rope while climbing.

Hanging Belay - n. A belay stance where the climbers must hang from the anchor rather than sit or stand on a ledge. These tend to be uncomfortable and more time consuming because the climber must hang in the harness, and it is harder to keep gear organized when freedom of movement is restricted. If a ledge is available, climbers will try to end a pitch there to avoid a hanging belay.

Harness - n. Device the climber wears that attaches the climber to the rope so that in the event of a fall, the climber is held by the rope. (See belay.) Modern harnesses include leg loops and a waist band secured by a buckle system. They are designed to withstand far more impact force than they should ever be subjected to in use.

Haul Bag - n. Large and sturdy bag used to carry gear up a big wall climb. Generally cylindrical in shape with a minimal number of straps to avoid snagging on the rock face as it is hauled up at each pitch.

Heel hook - n./vb. a climbing technique involving the use of a heel to pull down like a third arm.

Heel toe lock - n/vb. a climbing technique involving the wedging of a foot lengthwise in a constriction

Helmet - n. Protection for the head from falling gear or rocks.

Hexcentric - n. Commonly referred to as a Hex; a hexagonal shaped metal piece of protection. Allows for passive protection when placed one way and camming action when placed another.

Hidden Hold - n. A hold that is out of sight until a climber is very near it. Hidden holds are often hard to see even at close range and many climbers will climb past one without seeing it.

Highball - n. A very high boulder problem, often with a hard landing. A high boulder problem with a sandy or otherwise soft landing may not be considered a highball. Of Planet X in Joshua Tree John Bachar said: "That's not a f@#%in' highball."

Hike - v. To send a climb in excellent style. Usage: "I was falling all over that climb then I took a rest and hiked it."

Hold - n. Any feature of the rock which affords the climber a place to grip with hands or feet. Also, for indoor use; small plastic molded climbing grips.

Hook - n. Small 'r' shaped piece of metal used as protection on ledges and small holes when aid climbing. Requires a fair amount of skill to place and weight efficiently.

Hueco - n. a large indented pocket in the rock. From Hueco Tanks, a popular climbing area with many such features.

Ice Screw - n. A piece of protection for ice climbing that is literally screwed into the ice. Has a metal hanger on the end for clipping a carabiner.

Incut - adj. An indent An indent in a rockface or climbing wall big enough to be used as a hand or foot hold. Also refers to a hand/foot hold which slants downwards into the wall affording a better grip. ie: an incut crimper, rather than a flat or sloping crimper.

Indoor Climbing - n. Climbing on an artificial wall generally found indoors and utilizing plastic holds.

Instructor - n. A person with the qualifications to teach others about climbing and climbing safety. (not climbing specific)

Inverting - v. Flipping upside down when falling off the wall.

Jamming - v. Placing and wedging a body part into a crack in order to hold yourself on the wall.

Jug - n. A big hand hold, usually a great relief to find. (See also, bucket.) Also a verb meaning "to jumar" or the act of ascending a fixed rope with jumars.

Jughaul - n. A route that has nothing but big, easy holds on it.

Jugging - v. See jumaring...

Jumar - n. A device with a handle and a toothed cam that bites the rope when weighted used to ascend a fixed rope. Replaced prussik knots in the 60's, and was one of only two mechanical ascenders on the market for years. Useless on iced ropes. Also a verb meaning "to jumar." "I was jumaring when it started to rain."

Jumaring - v. Ascending a rope using jumars.

Karabiner - n. Alternate spelling of carabiner.

Krab - n. Slang for a carabiner.

Lay back - n/vb. a move requiring pulling with arms to the side and pushing with the feet in the opposite direction. (syn. lieback)

Lead - vb/n. to climb starting with the rope on the ground clipping into protection points on the way up.

Leader - n. The climber who ascends a route first putting up the rope and protection.

Lever - n. A hangboard exercise involving a person hanging by both arms and 'levering' their body into a completely horizontal position. This requires very strong abdominal muscles.

Leverage - n. The action of the climbing rope on protection placed in the rock, this action can cause the protection to work loose.

Locking Carabiner - n A carabiner with either a screw gate or twist lock, locking mechanism.

Lower Off - v. To come down from a route after reaching the top or not being able to climb anymore.

Lower Off Point - n. Fixed or placed protection placed on some point of a climb for use when lowering off.

Mallion Rapides - n. A type of carabiner that is screwed shut with a wrench. Also referred to as a Quick-Link.

Manky - adj. The opposite of Bombproof. A piece of gear is said to be manky if it is not placed well and could fall out at any moment.

Mantel - n./vb. a climbing technique involving the transfer of upward force from a pulling action to a pushing action much like a child would climb the kitchen counter to reach the cabinets above.

Match - v. To place both hands or feet on the same hold.

Mixed Climbing - adj. Refers to a route with both rock and ice sections. May also refer to a route with both sport and trad sections.

Mono / Monodoigt - n. French for "one finger" pocket, a pocket in which only one finger can fit.

Move - n. Refers to the motion between holds. ie; "That's a tough move from the gaston to that sloper."

Multi Pitch Climb - n. A climb with more than one pitch, or ropelength.

Natural Protection - n. Gear that is placed in cracks or pockets which can be removed with no harm to the rock. ie: cams, nuts, hexes.

Nubbin - n. A very tiny protrusion that may be used as a sketchy foot or hand hold.

Nuts - n. a flared piece of metal placed into a bottle neck constriction as a means of protection.

Nylon - n. Material used to make slings, aiders and daisychains. Many climbers are shifting over to Dyneema or Spectra however.

Off Belay - n. Common climbing call from a climber to a belayer letting them know they are safe and no longer require belaying.

Offwidth - n/vb a crack that is neither wide enough to fit the whole body (chimney size) nor narrow enough to hand jam. Notorious for the necessity of awkward technique to climb.

Onsight - n/vb. a clean ascent with no falls, first try, with no prior knowledge of the route.

Open Book - n. An inside corner on a right angle. The rock flares out from a central corner looking like an open book.

Open hand - n.vb. a technique that requires a maximum amount of skin contact from the hand. Often used on slopers. (antonym: crimper)

Outdoor Climbing - n. Climbing on real rock, ice or snow. Often a foreign concept to gym rats.

Passive - adj. Passive protection has no special action like a cam, it is merely wedged into a crack and functions only one way.

Pendulum - v. To swing in an arc on the end of a rope to gain access to an anchor or rock feature to one side of your current position. Also a dangerous situation that may occur during a fall, if the top piece of protections is off to one side.

Peg - n. See piton.

Pin - n. See piton.

Pin scar - n. The remaining damage to a crack after a piton (or pin) has been removed. *I don't like that climb; all its holds are pin scars.*

Pinch - n. Any hold that must be pinched.

Pinkpoint - n.vb. A clean (no-falls) ascent of a route on lead with gear pre-placed. The climber need only clip the rope into the preplaced protection while climbing. Note: This term has disappeared from sport climbing terminology with all clean leads called redpoints.

Pitch - n. Generally a ropelength between belay stations on a multi-pitch climb.

Piton - n. a long-nosed, spike shaped, piece of metal driven into cracks for protection or aid.

Plastic - n. common name for the material of which artificial holds are made.

Pocket - n. an indented climbing feature that requires insertion of appendages to use.

Pop - adj. What happens to protection when it comes out of its placement. 2.(v.) to make a small throw to the next hold. ie: Pop for the jug.

Portaledge - n. A portable and colapsable ledge used for sleeping on a big wall or multi-pitch climb requiring more than one day to complete.

Pro - n. short for protection.

Protection - n. Gear placed on a climb to protect the climber in the event of a fall. ie: nuts, pitons, cams, bolts, quickdraws.

Protection Point - n. The last place on a climb where the leader placed and clipped their rope into a piece of protection.

Prusik Knot - n. A friction knot that when loaded, will lock on a rope. It is used when climbing a rope, backing up a rappel or locking off the belay system.

Psychological protection - n. A very poorly placed peice of protection that will never hold a fall but makes the climber feel better about having gear beneath them.

Pulley System - n. Where the rope runs through a series of pulley's and carabiners to gain a mechanical advantage when pulling the rope.

Pumped - adj. tired. referring to the state of forearms in a desperate state, swollen and unresponsive.

Quick Link - n. An oval shaped, metal ring with a screw gate requiring a wrench to fasten. These are often used to secure quickdraws to bolt hangers on indoor walls or as bail biners when a climber needs to descend from a route which is too difficult.

Quickdraw - n. two caribiners connected by a webbing or rope. used to link elements of protection.

Rappel - n/vb the act of self belaying down the length of a rope to descend.

Redpoint - n/vb. a clean ascent with no falls, placing protection while climbing.

Roof - n. a 180 degree overhang.

Runner - n. a sewn or tied loop of webbing or rope used to connect protection elements.

Runout - n/vb/adj. without adequate protection.

Safety rating - Rockclimbing.com uses the following "safety ratings" for routes: G - Well-protected route with low risk as long as climbers follow proper safety precautions; PG13 - Small potential for non-lethal injury; R - Run-out between protection and/or potential injury from falls; X - Little or no protection, dangerous run-outs and potential for serious injury or death from a fall.

Sandbag - n/adj/vb a climb that receives a rating inappropriately low rating for the difficulty.

Screamer - n a very long fall. Also a common name for a device which reduces peak force by controlled tearing of stitching, more specifically the brand name for one of these products by Yates.

Second - vb following the leader on a multi-pitch route, and typically cleaning any protection that was placed on the pitch. 2. (n) a person (one or more) who is seconding a climb.

Send - vb to complete a route successfully.

Self Arrest - vb. the act of stopping oneself with the axe in the case of a fall while on a snow slope.

Sidecling - n. Any hold that requires the climber to pull on it in a sideways manner.

Slab - n any climb that is less than vertical, especially those devoid of features requiring smearing of the feet.

Sling - n/vb a loop of webbing or rope (see runner)

Sloper - n. a downward sloping hold.

Smear - n/vb the act of placing a large surface area of shoe rubber on a hold to create maximum friction.

Solo - n/vb Climbing alone, without a partner. Often used as abbreviation for free solo, which refers to climbing without a partner or protection.

Sport Climbing - n a school of climbing that generally emphasizes shorter routes, physically difficult movement, and bolted protection. This includes gym climbing and competition.

Stacking - n/vb. placing fingers above each other in a crack to lock while crack climbing.

Stem - n/vb movement requiring opposing outward pressure much like a child climbing a door jam.

Top rope - n/vb a climb that has the rope anchors preset at the top of the climb. In general this requires shorter falls than a "lead"

Topo - n a map of routes and their names.

Traditional/ trad / trad climbing - n/adj Climbing that emphasizes longer routes and removable protection.

Tuffa - n. Generally rounded hanging features formed by calcium leaching out of limestone. Basically the climber's version of Stalactites.

Undercling - n/vb a hold that requires fingers to face upward rather than downward.

V ratings - n. an open ended scale used to rate the difficulty of boulder problems. See "ratings" in the beginner section for a conversion chart.

Verglas - n. a thin layer of ice covering rock.

Whipper - n a fall.

Wire - n. Slang for Nut. See Nuts.

Wired - adj. describing a well rehearsed climbing sequence.

X - No entries.

Yosemite Decimal System (YDS) - n. the most common system used to rate difficulty in the U.S. Most technical rock climbing is rated on a scale of 5.0 to 5.14c/d with higher numbers representing harder climbs.

Zipper - vb. to pull out protection sequentially while falling.
