

American Alpine Institute
Technical Rope Rescue Level I:
Operations
Itinerary

The Technical Rope Rescue Operations course will take place in two settings. The first will be in a classroom, where we will look at a variety of systems and discuss the issues surrounding them. The second will be at local crags where we will work in steep and high angle environments.

Participants will meet daily at 8am. Most days will run from 8am to approximately 5:00pm. The group will meet at the classroom site. In the Pacific Northwest, AAI will provide transportation to field locations. In other areas, participants will carpool to the field locations.

Temperatures at front-country steep and high-angle locations will vary by season. In the Desert Southwest, during the fall, winter and spring, temperatures can be anywhere from 30-degrees to 80-degrees. Wind is common.

In the spring and summer in the Pacific Northwest, temperatures usually vary from 50 to 80-degrees Fahrenheit. Temperatures in the backcountry may drop to as low as 30-degrees. Rain is not uncommon, even in the middle of the summer, so dress appropriately.

Participants may choose to camp locally or to stay at a hotel. Please contact your program coordinator to obtain recommendations for your program location.

Text Book: Technical Rescue Riggers Guide by Rick Lipke – AAI has library copies of this text available and may have some for sale. If you wish to buy a copy, call prior to the program to confirm. You may also order this online from several companies.

Day One:

Classroom Sessions: course introduction, safety discussion/rules, NFPA Standards, scene management, systems overview, definitions, ropes and carabiners, friction devices, commands, physics of rope rescue

Practical Application: overview of basic knots and hitches, improvised harnesses, patient packaging with and without a harness, rope climbing with prusik system, classic rappel

Lodging: front country camp or hotel

Day Two:

Classroom Sessions: introduction to the politics of rescue, simple litter lowering systems, belay systems, high points, physics of rope rescue

Field Sessions: high-angle lowering systems with a main line and a belay line

Lodging: front country camp or hotel

Day Three:

Classroom Sessions: introduction to helicopter operations, understanding hauling systems, physics of rope rescue

Field Sessions: low-angle litter hauling systems with three attendants

Lodging: front country camp or hotel

Day Four:

Classroom Sessions: communications, introduction to guiding lines, physics of rope rescue

Field Sessions: steep-angle litter hauling with guiding lines

Lodging: front-country camp or hotel

Combined Course

Some people choose to do Level I and Level II together. Following is a combined curriculum:

Day One (Rope Rescue Level I – Days 1-4):

Classroom Sessions: course introduction, safety discussion/rules, NFPA Standards, scene management, systems overview, definitions, ropes and carabiners, friction devices, commands, physics of rope rescue

Practical Application: overview of basic knots and hitches, improvised harnesses, patient packaging with and without a harness, rope climbing with prusik system, classic rappel

Lodging: front country camp or hotel

Day Two:

Classroom Sessions: introduction to the politics of rescue, simple litter lowering systems, belay systems, high points, physics of rope rescue

Field Sessions: high-angle lowering systems with a main line and a belay line

Lodging: front country camp or hotel

Day Three:

Classroom Sessions: introduction to helicopter operations, introduction to SAR GAR, understanding hauling systems, physics of rope rescue

Field Sessions: low-angle litter hauling systems with three attendants

Lodging: front country camp or hotel

Day Four:

Classroom Sessions: communications, introduction to guiding lines, crossed guiding lines, physics of rope rescue

Field Sessions: steep-angle litter hauling with guiding lines, crossed guiding lines

Lodging: front-country camp or hotel

Day Five (Rope Rescue Level II – Days 5-7):

Classroom Sessions: knot pass with a litter, improvised high-directionals, physics of rope rescue, pick-off techniques (B.C. Pickoff, B.C. Tilt Lift, Panorama Pickoff)

Field Sessions: knot pass with a litter in both a lower and a raise, practical use of improvised highpoints, practice pick-off techniques

Lodging: front-country camp or hotel

Day Six:

Classroom Sessions: difficult edge issues, pike and pivot techniques, floating focal point systems, physics of rope rescue

Field Sessions: practical application of pike and pivot

Lodging: front-country camp or hotel

Day Seven:

Classroom Sessions: physics of rope rescue, introduction to highline systems including and introduction to reeves (English and Norwegian)

Field Sessions: practical application of highline systems

Lodging: front-country camp or hotel