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## GUIDED ICE CLIMBING

Ouray, San Juan Mountains, CO

## EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

It is essential that you do a careful job in selecting and preparing your equipment for this course. The weather in the mountains is a major objective hazard, even in the summer, and in the winter it can present extreme challenges to survival.

**CLIMATE:** Temperatures are typically in the teens but can easily drop to  $-10^{\circ}\text{F}$  to  $-20^{\circ}\text{F}$  and be accompanied by high winds and blowing snow. These conditions, in combination with the long periods of inactivity required to belay a climber on a difficult pitch, can easily lead to problems of hypothermia or frostbite.

**GEAR PREPARATION:** Please take the time to carefully prepare and understand your equipment. If possible, it is best to use it in the field beforehand. Take the time to properly label and identify all personal gear items. Many items that climbers bring are almost identical. Your name on a garment tag or a piece of colored electrical tape is an easy way to label your gear; fingernail polish on hard goods is excellent. If using tape or colored markers, make sure your labeling method is durable and water resistant.

**ASSISTANCE:** At AAI we take equipment and its selection seriously. Our Equipment Services department is expertly staffed by climbers, skiers and guides. Additionally, we only carry products in our store have been thoroughly field tested and approved by our guides. This intensive process ensures that all equipment that you purchase from AAI is best suited to your course and future mountain adventures. Please contact us to select equipment for your course.

**Please contact the Equipment Shop at 360-671-1570 for assistance in selecting equipment for your course.**

**Rentals:** Equipment items that may be available for rent are designated with an **(R)**. *If you will be needing any rental equipment please fill out a [Rental Request Form](#) as soon as possible so that we can best guarantee rental availability for your course.*

Clothing and Footwear	Packing Checklist
<p><b><u>MOUNTAINEERING BOOTS</u></b></p> <p>These can be either single leather boots or single boots with a built in gaiter. Plastic boots are discouraged.</p> <p>★ <i>Materials: Leather/ Synthetic Boot</i></p> <p>★ <i>Examples: <a href="#">La Sportiva's Nepal Cube GTX</a>, <a href="#">Scarpa Phantom Tech</a></i></p> <p>★ <i>NOTE: There are many makes and models out there and not all are created equal. Please consult with our Equipment Shop if you are uncertain about the acceptability of your chosen model.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b><u>SOCKS</u></b></p> <p>Bring two complete changes. Adjust your sock system ahead of time to perfect your boot fit. Bring additional changes of socks for your approach shoes. No cotton.</p> <p>★ <i>Materials: Wool or synthetic are ideal</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b><u>UNDERGARMENTS</u></b></p> <p>To wear under your base layer.</p> <p>★ <i>Materials: Wool or synthetic are ideal</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b><u>BASE LAYER TOP</u></b></p> <p>This will be your base layer and should be "lightweight or silk weight" synthetic or wool. No cotton.</p> <p>★ <i>Materials: Synthetic, wool</i></p> <p>★ <i>Examples: <a href="#">AAI's synthetic t-shirt</a>, <a href="#">Outdoor Research Essence Top</a>, <a href="#">Patagonia Lightweight Capilene</a></i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b><u>BASE LAYER BOTTOM</u></b></p> <p>Look for the same features of your Base Layer Top. They should fit comfortably under your soft shell pants and should be at least midweight. One pair is sufficient.</p> <p>★ <i>Materials: Synthetic, wool</i></p> <p>★ <i>Examples: <a href="#">Patagonia Capilene</a>, <a href="#">Mammut Go Dry</a>, <a href="#">Mountain Hardware Power Stretch Tight</a></i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b><u>2nd LAYER TOP</u></b></p> <p>Expedition weight long underwear top, 100 weight powerstretch, very light weight fleece, Schoeller, or a lightweight windshirt. A chest pocket is a helpful feature.</p> <p>★ <i>Materials: Nylon, micro weave fabrics, fleece, wind stopper</i></p> <p>★ <i>Examples: <a href="#">Mountain Equipment Eclipse Zip Tee</a>, <a href="#">Outdoor Research La Paz Sun Hoody</a>, <a href="#">Rab PowerStretch Fleece</a>, <a href="#">Patagonia R1</a></i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b><u>SOFT SHELL / WINDPROOF JACKET</u></b></p> <p>Thin, light, stretchy, breathable but wind and snow resistant layer that is comfortable to wear. Hoods are highly recommended. Size your jacket to be trim fitting, but large enough to fit over your base and second layers. This layer will go over your base and 2nd layers, but under your shell and parka if wearing this layer in combination with those layers. No waterproof coated nylon, as it is not breathable.</p> <p>★ <i>Materials: Schoeller, Powerstretch, Powerdry, or similar</i></p> <p>★ <i>Examples: <a href="#">Patagonia Houdini</a>, <a href="#">Rab Cirrus Wind Top</a>, <a href="#">Rab Vapor Rise Lite-Alpine</a>, <a href="#">Mountain Equipment Squall</a></i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b><u>SOFT SHELL PANT</u></b></p> <p>Look for the same features as your soft shell jacket. This will be your outermost layer most of the time for your legs. A thigh pocket is a useful feature for storing small items. Your base layers need to fit under these pants comfortably.</p> <p>★ <i>Materials: eVent, Gore-tex, h2No, or similar</i></p> <p>★ <i>Examples: <a href="#">Black Diamond Alpine</a>, <a href="#">Arc'Teryx Gamma</a>, <a href="#">Mountain Equipment Comici</a></i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy

<p><b><u>WATERPROOF / BREATHABLE SHELL JACKET</u></b></p> <p>This will be your outermost layer and it needs to be waterproof, breathable, and durable. Two or three-ply Gore-tex or other waterproof breathable materials are required. Your parka needs to have a hood and should be sized to fit over your clothes. Lightweight and compressible layers are ideal but don't sacrifice too much weight for durability.</p> <p>★ <i>Materials: eVent, Gore-tex, h2No, or similar</i></p> <p>★ <i>Examples: <a href="#">Arc'teryx Beta</a> and <a href="#">Gamma jackets</a>, <a href="#">Marmot Alpinist</a>, and <a href="#">Patagonia Stretch Rainshadow</a></i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b><u>SHELL PANT</u></b></p> <p>Full side zips recommended for easy on and off over boots and crampons, make sure they fit over all of your layers when fully dressed. Pants or bibs are acceptable and each has their advantages and disadvantages.</p> <p>★ <i>Materials: eVent, Gore-tex, h2No, or similar</i></p> <p>★ <i>Examples: <a href="#">Marmot PreCip Full Zip</a> and <a href="#">Minimalist pants</a>, <a href="#">Arc'teryx Beta AR Pants</a>, <a href="#">Rab Latok Alpine Pant</a></i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b><u>LIGHT INSULATING JACKET</u></b></p> <p>Lightweight down or synthetic in addition to the fleece jacket. Some good examples are an insulated ski parka, a down sweater, and any insulated jacket. This is different than your outer most waterproof shell jacket. Nice for belaying or while standing around during instruction.</p> <p>★ <i>Materials: Primaloft, down</i></p> <p>★ <i>Examples: <a href="#">Patagonia Nano Puff</a> or <a href="#">Nano Air Hoody</a>, <a href="#">Rab microlight Alpine</a>, <a href="#">Arc'Tryx Atom LT Hoody</a>, <a href="#">Outdoor Research Cathode Hoody</a></i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b><u>MID-WEIGHT INSULATION JACKET</u></b></p> <p>A warm puffy jacket with an optional hood. These come in many shapes, sizes and temperature ratings. If you tend to get cold easily, opt for a slightly warmer more substantial parka.</p> <p>★ <i>Fill Materials: Primaloft, down</i></p> <p>★ <i>Shell Material: Nylon epic eVent</i></p> <p>★ <i>Examples: <a href="#">Rab Xenon X Hoodie</a>, <a href="#">Patagonia DAS parka</a></i></p>	
<p><b><u>GLOVE LINERS</u></b></p> <p>You will wear these for much of your time on the mountain. They need to be dexterous and comfortable, but not necessarily very insulating. Bring two pairs.</p> <p>★ <i>Materials: Fleece, Powerstretch, or similar</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b><u>MIDWEIGHT / BELAY / LEATHER GLOVES</u></b></p> <p>The most desirable glove is one that is comfortable and dexterous, so that it can be worn all day. It should be durable enough (leather palms) to handle ropes, jumars, and ice axes. These come in different weights, so choose the thickness that works with your glove system. Bring one pair.</p> <p>★ <i>Materials: Softshell, windstopper fleece, leather or similar</i></p> <p>★ <i>Examples: <a href="#">Petzl Cordex Plus Gloves</a>, <a href="#">Mountain Equipment Super Alpine Glove</a></i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b><u>EXPEDITION / SHELL GLOVES</u></b></p> <p>Should be waterproof, dexterous, durable, and appropriately insulated for the temperatures expected while in the mountains. Leather palms are preferred and increase the durability of the glove. Climbers will often have two complete changes of climbing gloves.</p> <p>★ <i>Materials: Gore-tex, Schoeller</i></p> <p>★ <i>Examples: <a href="#">Outdoor Research Arete Glove</a>, <a href="#">Black Diamond Guide Gloves</a>, <a href="#">Marmot Ultimate Ski Gloves</a></i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy

<p><b>GAITERS</b></p> <p>Knee height. Keeps snow and ice out of your boots and socks and will also protect your pants from the sharp points on your crampons. Check the fit of the gaiter to your boot in advance to make sure the coverage is adequate. Can omit if your pants have a built gaiter and scuff guard.</p> <p>★ Examples: <a href="#">Outdoor Research Crocodile</a>, <a href="#">Mountain Hardwear Ascent Stretch Air Perm Gaiter</a></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>BEANIE HAT/ TOQUE</b></p> <p>Bring a thin, warm hat that will fit under your climbing helmet.</p> <p>★ Materials: Fleece, wool, windstopper, or similar</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>LIGHTWEIGHT BALACLAVA/ BUFF</b></p> <p>A balaclava is a warm hat that can be pulled over the head to the shoulders. It completely covers the head except for an opening for the face. It should provide excellent wind protection for the chin, ears and neck. A Buff can substitute for this.</p> <p>★ Materials: Powerstretch, fleece, polypro, windpro</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<h2>Climbing Equipment</h2>	
<p><b>CLIMBING HARNESS (R)</b></p> <p>For alpine climbing, choose a harness with adjustable leg loops and a belay loop. Make sure it fits your body when wearing bulky clothing. Gear loops are desirable features.</p> <p>★ Examples: <a href="#">Mammut Zephir Altitude</a>, <a href="#">Camp Alpine Flash</a>, <a href="#">Black Diamond Alpine Bod</a></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy <input type="checkbox"/> Rent
<p><b>CLIMBING HELMET (R)</b></p> <p>Must be UIAA approved for climbing and in good condition. Lightweight, well ventilated, and comfortable. Models with a plastic shell are more durable, but are heavier than all foam models. Kayak or bicycle helmets are not acceptable.</p> <p>★ Examples: <a href="#">Black Diamond Half Dome</a>, <a href="#">Petzl Elios</a></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy <input type="checkbox"/> Rent
<p><b>STEEL CRAMPONS (R)</b></p> <p>Rigid crampons work best for strictly water ice climbing. However, get good advice before purchasing rigid crampons. They have limited application to the mountains, so if you want a crampon that will work in both mediums choose carefully. Be sure they fit your boots. Crampons with step-in bindings should be used only with plastic boots or leather boots with soles designed specifically to accept heel and toe bales.</p> <p>★ Examples: <a href="#">Petzl Lynx</a>, <a href="#">Black Diamond Contact Strap</a>, <a href="#">Grivel G12</a></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy <input type="checkbox"/> Rent
<p><b>ICE TOOLS (R)</b></p> <p>Bring two modern, leashless ice tools with a slightly curved shaft and a comfortable handle.</p> <p>★ Examples: <a href="#">Cassin X-Dream</a>, <a href="#">Petzl Nomic Ice Tool</a></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy <input type="checkbox"/> Rent
<p><b>LARGE LOCKING CARABINERS</b></p> <p>Bring two locking carabiners. Must be large, pear shaped (or Münter) locking carabiners.</p> <p>★ Examples: <a href="#">Petzl Attache</a>, <a href="#">Black Diamond Vaporlock</a>, <a href="#">Camp HMS Nitro</a></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>BELAY DEVICE</b></p> <p>Bring one if you have one, but you don't have to buy one for the course. If you want to get one, be sure to get advice on choices from the <a href="#">Equipment Department</a>. (ATC's and like devices are recommended over Figure 8's.)</p> <p>★ Examples: <a href="#">ATC XP</a>, <a href="#">Trango Jaws</a>, and <a href="#">Petzl Reversino</a> work well with the smaller diameter and often icy ropes that go with ice climbing</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<h2>Other Personal Equipment</h2>	

<p><b>TREKKING POLES</b></p> <p>These are optional, but they can be very helpful on approaches that can involve deep snow and/or creek crossings. Poles with a twist-locking adjustment (as opposed to a lever, like Black Diamond models) tend to create problems in cold-weather environments.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>BACKPACK</b></p> <p>For approaches to climbs and around the ice park a pack with 2400 - 3300 cubic inch capacity is necessary. For longer routes you may want a lightweight day pack or a large fanny pack to carry those few extra items.</p> <p>★ Size: 40-55 liters</p> <p>★ Examples: <a href="#">Black Diamond Speed 40</a>, <a href="#">Arc'Teryx Alpha FL 45</a>, <a href="#">Cold Cold World Valdez</a>, <a href="#">CiloGear 40B Worksack</a>, <a href="#">Gregory Alpinisto 50</a></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>CLIMBING PACK</b></p> <p>This will be your bag while climbing longer routes. Choose a model that fits your body best. Minimal or not internal frame design is preferred.</p> <p>★ Size: 15-25 liters</p> <p>★ Examples: <a href="#">Cassin Egh 22</a></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>HYDRATION</b></p> <p>Bring two 1-quart bottles with wide mouths. Some people like to use Hydroflaks or <a href="#">Water Bottle Parkas</a> to keep liquids warm. It can be difficult to stay hydrated when you have to drink extremely cold water. <a href="#">No Camelbaks</a> or similar water bladders, they will freeze.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>SUNGLASSES</b></p> <p>Choose a model with 100% UVA/UVB protection. Keeper strings like “Croakies” are useful to prevent dropping your glasses while climbing. Those using contact lenses should bring a pair of prescription glasses if available.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>SUNSCREEN</b></p> <p>With Sun Protection Factor (SPF) 30 or higher. A couple of 1oz tubes are adequate and work better than one large one. For the fair skinned, the higher the SPF, the better. (Dermatone produces an effective 1” diameter stick as well as a translucent zinc oxide lotion.) Sunscreen is prone to freezing in the cold and smaller containers fit well into pockets for warming.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>LIP PROTECTION</b></p> <p>Bring 1 container/applicator with the highest SPF available.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>HEADLAMP</b></p> <p>A high output LED model. Bring fresh batteries and one set of extra batteries. Flashlights are not acceptable.</p> <p>★ Examples: <a href="#">Petzl Tikka XP</a>, <a href="#">Black Diamond Spot</a></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>PERSONAL MEDICAL KIT</b></p> <p>For sunburn, blisters, headaches, and minor cuts and scrapes. Please include duct tape, moleskin, bandages, and prescription at a minimum.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>HAND / FOOT WARMERS</b></p> <p>Recommended for people that are susceptible to cold hands and toes. These should be small, disposable type products.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Cooking Equipment and Food</b></p>	
<p><b>THERMOS</b></p> <p>A cup of hot cocoa or soup on a blustery day can change one's entire outlook on life.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy

<p><b>FOOD</b> Bring plenty of quick, high-energy lunch food. It helps to keep you warm.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>Other Optional Items</b></p> <p>The items listed below are not required, although many are nice “luxury” items that can make your trip more enjoyable. Remember that a few ounces here and there add up to extra pounds on your back and knees during your expedition.</p>	
<p><b>CAMERA</b> Digital cameras can work fine in cold conditions as long as you keep them inside of your coat and don’t expose them to cold temperatures for long periods of time. Make sure you bring any needed chargers or extra batteries. Smartphone cameras have come a long way and are also becoming a convenient standard.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>MULTI-TOOL or POCKET KNIFE</b> Leatherman Tool or Swiss army style is good.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy
<p><b>FOOT POWDER</b> A very small bottle will allow you to treat your feet daily, keep them dryer, extend the life of your socks, and help you avoid blisters/rashes from chronic wet feet.  <i>☆ Examples: Gold Bond, Dr. Scholls</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Buy

**Additional Details:**

The Equipment Shop at the American Alpine Institute provides clothing and equipment for purchase, rental gear, and advice. Shop staff members are great climbers themselves and deeply involved in evaluating and testing gear. They are considered by many outdoor gear manufacturers to be the most expert in the country. They thoroughly understand the needs of climbers who will be rock climbing, ice climbing, mountaineering, or exploring the world on international expeditions.

Please consider our staff members part of your resource team in preparing for your trip. AAI Equipment Specialists are on hand to consult with you on specific gear needs, to answer questions on the latest equipment and innovations, and to make recommendations on best choices of clothing and equipment. They can assure that you are equipped with the best possible gear for your climbs. If you have any difficulty determining whether some particular items of clothing or equipment you already own will serve you well on a particular trip, they can help you answer that question.

**Guides Choice International Field Testing**

The Equipment Shop at the American Alpine Institute also administers AAI’s prestigious [Guide’s Choice Award](#). Equipment and clothing that have been awarded the Guides Choice designation have proven to be the top item in their product category. The awards are made on the basis of excellence in design, performance, and durability demonstrated in rigorous international field tests carried out by the professional guides of the Institute.

**Call or E-mail the Equipment Shop for Advice or Gear**

Please feel free to contact us and to let us help you get ready for your climbing trip. Your comfort and safety depend on being well equipped. Whether you get your gear from us or just get advice, we’re here to help you prepare.

Call: (360) 671-1570  
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