
Alaska Range Mountaineering Program Itinerary

Meeting Location: [Hyatt House Anchorage](#) (AAI Preferred Hotel)

Meeting Time: There will be a pre-trip meeting at 10am on the day before the first day of your program. Guides and climbers will meet in the main lobby at the hotel and commence with the gear check and packing procedures shortly thereafter.

*As a reminder, this itinerary can and will change from trip to trip. Ski/climbing days and rest days are often dictated by weather and conditions. This day-to-day plan is rough and should be used for general reference only.

Day 1: Meet at the hotel in Anchorage at 10am for a complete gear check. Travel to an equipment shop in Anchorage for last minute needs. Skills to be Covered: Equipment selection for snow camping, snow and glacier travel and an Alaskan ascent.

Day 2: Drive from Anchorage to Talkeetna. (2 hours). Meet with the Denali National Park staff to pick up permits and complete a briefing. Travel to the airstrip and fly to the glacier. Skills to be Covered: Snow camp construction and fortification. Sled rigging for expeditions.

Day 3: Develop techniques for operating in glaciated terrain on skis/splitboard. Skills to be Covered: Snow school techniques to be covered include: snow travel with and without an ice-axe, parts of an ice-axe, self-arrest, glissading, shuffle step, plunge step, diagonal ascent, piolet canne, and piolet manche. Snow anchors to be covered include: deadmen, pickets, snow flukes, ice-axes and snow bollards. Glaciology discussion will include the following terms: crevasse, bergshrund, moraine, ice fall, serac, compression zone, accumulation zone and ablation zone.

Day 4: Study and practice the skills required for steep angle climbing and skinning. Skills to be Covered: Continue to practice glacier travel techniques. Practice anchor construction and belay techniques for steep snow descents on skis or a snowboard. Develop the skills required for the ascent and descent of fixed lines. Take a short ski tour on the glacier.

Day 5: The fifth-day of the program will primarily concern glacier travel and crevasse rescue. Students will spend the full day on the glacier and everyone will have the opportunity to go down inside a crevasse. Skills to be Covered: Crevasse rescue studies will include prusiking, a 2:1 Drop C, a 3:1 Z Pully and a 6:1 C on Z. Additionally, students will practice stopping falls on skis or a snowboard. If there is time, the team will complete a short ski tour. Upon return to camp, a map, compass, altimeter and GPS lecture will cover the uses of each of these instruments.

Day 6: We will travel to an ice climbing area a few miles from our camp and practice our steep ice climbing techniques and methods for protecting and belaying steeper terrain. Skills to be Covered: Topics to be covered include: French, German and American technique, step cutting, pied a plat, pied en canard, pied assis, piolet ramasse, piolet rampe, piolet panne, piolet poniard, piolet appui, piolet ancre. If there is adequate time, participants may practice piolet traction. Note: The amount of time spent on this curriculum will be determined by snow cover.

Day 7: Pack up camp, rig the sleds and make an approach to a ski and climbing objective. *Skills to be Covered:* Glacial navigation, sled rigging, sled pulling and a review of camp construction.

Day 8: Ski and Climbing day. Objectives may include the following:

- **Pika Glacier:** The Munchkin, The Hobbit King, Italy's Boot, unnamed couloirs
- **Kahiltna Area:** Kahiltna Dome, Mt. Crossin
- **Ruth Area:** Explorer's Peak, Mount Barrill, Mount Dickey, Consolation Peak

Day 9: Ski and Climbing Day. We will have an opportunity to make a second attempt of our climbing objective if the weather is poor, or even a second ascent of another peak in the area.

Day 10: Weather Day – If needed. If not needed this day may be used for additional instruction or an additional objective.

Day 11: Pack for the flight off the glacier. Return to Talkeetna and possibly even Anchorage if so desired. Most climbers opt to spend the night in Talkeetna and enjoy the local atmosphere including hamburgers and refreshments at the famous West Rib pub or the Fairview Inn. AAI is happy to provide recommendations for entertainment and activities in the area if climbers would like to stay and enjoy Alaska for a few days after their trip. Possibilities include tours of Denali National Park, train rides, river boat tours and fishing, and scenic flights over the range. Some climbers do travel back to Anchorage after arrival in Talkeetna.

Day 12: Fly home. Plan flights for the afternoon.