

## Indoor Lead Climbing Review Handout

### Lead Belaying

Lead belaying requires the belayer to be *much more involved and attentive* than when top rope belaying. A lead belayer has more responsibilities, and they must be more aware of the climber as they move through the route. REMEMBER! Putting someone on belay is promising them that you will take care of their life until they safely reach the ground again. Take this responsibility seriously.

#### Remember:

The leader never wants to feel the lead rope -- allow some slack in the system so that the leader never feels a taut rope.

Never give the leader a take **except** right at a bolt. Doing so could pull the leader off the wall.

Feed out about 2 arm lengths of rope when the climber tells you "clipping" or you see them reaching down to pull up rope for their clip. Step towards the wall to help them get rope faster.

The belayer should watch the leader for back clipping, Z clipping, skipping clips and improper foot placements. Communicate mistakes to your climber!

The belayer must always try to read the needs of the climber in regards to giving and taking in slack, taking, reading the clip and catching a fall.

Position of the belayer in respect to the climber is important to keep the leader from landing on the rope or the belayer and also to keep the belayer from slamming into the wall in the event of a fall.

Forces generated in a lead fall greatly exceed those generated in a top rope fall. A belayer will be pulled off the ground. Use a ground weight if there is a large weight difference between partners.

Tie a knot in the end of the lead rope using a double overhand knot to avoid lowering off the end.

### Lead Climbing

#### ***Anatomy of a Quickdraw:***

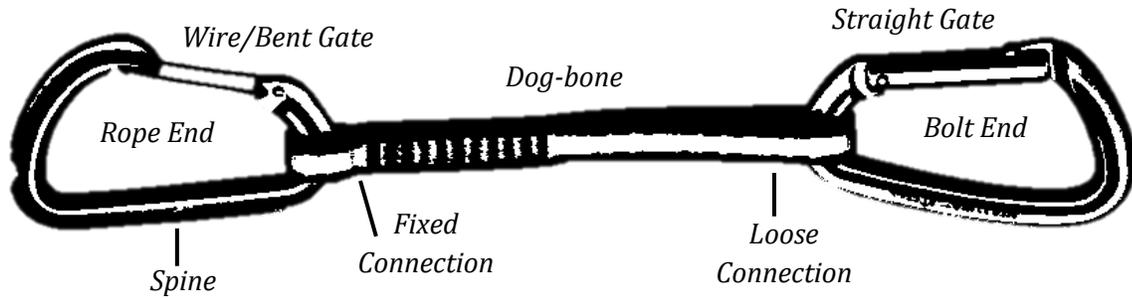
Quickdraws are not symmetrical. Notice that the dog-bone has a fixed connection to one carabiner and a loose connection to the other. The end with the loose connection should always be clipped to the bolt hanger while the end with the fixed connection clips the rope.

The carabiner that clips the rope should always face away from the direction of travel: you want the rope rubbing against the spine of the carabiner, not the gate.

**Carabiners should never be loaded over an edge or protruding hold. If the carabiner is weighted it could break. If you see this issue in the gym, please alert staff immediately.**

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## Clipping:

Practice! You want your clipping to become smooth so that you can focus on the climb and not get pumped at clips. Also, fumbling with clips can lead to unnecessary falls. When clipping, you have two goals – get the rope into the draw, and keep your hand out to avoid injury if you fall.

Types of clips include finger clips and thumb clips. Be able to do these right and left handed, and practice finding stable stances on the wall to release one hand to clip with.

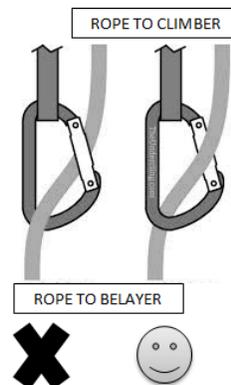
Clipping when the quickdraw is between your eyes and your thighs will make it easier to find a stable stance and easier to control the draw while clipping – clipping too high or low is dangerous.

Do Not use your teeth to hold the rope while you pull up more slack. In the event of a fall you may bit down hard and not let go of the rope as it goes taught. This will cost you teeth.

The rope must run from the wall, up through the carabiner, and out the front towards the climber. The climber's rope (the end tied to the harness) must be on top (See back clipping).

## Back Clipping:

This is when the **belayer's** rope is coming out the top or front of the carabiner when the rope is clipped into the draw. Twisting draws (when the dog-bone has a twist) can disguise back-clips. Make sure the draw is hanging correctly when you clip. Remember! The climbers rope should always be on top (the side of the carabiner closest to the climber).



**Z Clipping:**

Easy to do in the gym! Z clipping occurs when bolts are placed very close together. You Z clip when you reach below your last clip to pull up a bite of rope for your next clip. To fix a Z clip, unclip and reclip the highest draw and clip it correctly.

**Foot Placements:**

Use proper foot placements to avoid flipping upside down in the event of a fall. If you step between the rope and the wall with a draw under you, the rope or draw will catch your leg while the rest of your body tumbles past. Make sure that you place your feet so that you won't land on or be flipped by the rope. Be aware of the rope while leading: improper foot placements are dangerous.

**Reading a Route:**

Sequencing a route before you climb will help you climb more efficiently and fluidly. Look for sequences that will facilitate easier clips. Clip from comfortable stances (take as much weight on your feet as you can to free up your clipping hand). *Rope drag: plan your clips so that they follow the most direct route to the top. The more turns the rope makes, the greater the friction the climber will feel.*

**Commands:**

Be consistent and be LOUD. Make sure you and your partner speak the same climbing "language". Do Not overlook the importance of communication.

Climber: ON BELAY? (Climber asking belayer if the belay is set up and ready)

Belayer: BELAY IS ON (Belayer telling climber that the belay is set up and ready)

Climber: CLIMBING (Climber telling belayer that they are starting to climb)

Belayer: CLIMB ON! (Belayer confirming that they are ready to catch a fall)

Climber: CLIPPING! (Climber asking belayer to feed out extra rope to clip into protection)

Climber: FALLING! (Climber telling the belayer to break and catch fall)

Climber: WATCH ME! (Climber asking belayer to be prepared, because the climber may fall)

Climber: TAKE! (At the top, climber asking belayer for tension on the rope)

Belayer: GOT! (Belayer telling climber they have tensioned the rope and ready to hold climber)

Climber: LOWER! (Climber telling belayer they have weighted the rope and want to lower)

Climber: UPROPE (Climber telling belayer to remove slack from the rope)

Climber: SLACK (Climber telling belayer to feed out some slack into the rope)

### ***Falling***

Falling is a part of lead climbing. Having good falling technique can greatly reduce the risks that falling brings.

#### ***Remember:***

The distance that you fall = twice the distance you are above your last clip + the slack your belayer had out + the distance you pull your belayer + rope stretch

Do not grab holds/the rope/quickdraws/bolts when falling

Keep your body relaxed with your arms and legs out in front of you. Exhale, look at the wall to pick where you'll want to contact it.

Be prepared to contact the wall or your belayer. Remember to keep your arms and legs a little extended and bent, so at impact they absorb the force like shock absorbers.

Stay facing the wall and avoid tumbling. On a slab, you slide down on your feet, both hands pressing off the slab, keeping your chest and head far away from the surface.

When you have traversed away from your last clip, a fall will swing you, pendulum fashion. Be aware of your surroundings.

### ***Catching***

Giving a quality catch is a belayer's biggest responsibility. Your first goal is to keep the climber from hitting the ground or any horizontal ledges that could cause injury. Your second goal is to give the climber more time and space to slow down before hitting the wall by giving a soft catch.

#### ***Remember:***

When the climber is close to the ground or a horizontal ledge, your main concern is keeping them off the deck – keep them tight and don't worry about a soft catch.

Once the climber is at least two bolts off the ground and at least 15-20' up, go for a soft catch.

In a quality catch, you should end up getting picked up. Be prepared to contact the wall or your climber.

When you're belaying a climber who's much bigger than you, keep as little slack in the system as possible without short roping – the heavier climber will lift you up and guarantee a soft catch

When you're belaying a climber who's much smaller than you, add a little extra slack to the system and/or actively move towards the wall as they're falling to make it easier for them to pick you up.

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**Be responsible lead climbers- watch out for other climbers near your lead fall zone. Choose to not lead climb or to wait if there is a danger of hitting others.**

**Have fun!**

*PREPARING FOR THE LEAD TEST: both climbers will have to preform both roles.*

*Belayer: not too much slack in rope, but not too tight. Soft catches for falls. Watch your distance/orientation to the wall. Catch your climber's mistakes and tell them.*

*Climber: no back clips, no z clips, no skipping clips, correct foot placements, quiet/soft fall, clip anchor correctly (opposite and opposed).*