

# Acadia Mountain Guides Climbing School

92 Main Street • PO Box 121 • Orono • ME • 04473 • 207-866-7562  
228 Main Street • Bar Harbor • ME • 207-288-8186  
AcadiaMountainGuides.com • ClimbAcadia.org • AlpenglowsGear.com



---

Dear PCIA Base Managed Climbing Instructor Course Candidate,

Hello and thank you for your registration in a Professional Climbing Instructor Association (PCIA) **Base Managed Climbing Instructor Course** through Acadia Mountain Guides Climbing School. This letter contains course information for the following PCIA programs:

August 27 – 29,      Base Managed Climbing Instructor Course

September 11,      Base Managed Climbing Instructor Exam

Welcome to the Base Managed Climbing Instructor course and congratulations on your opportunity to learn and share best practices in climbing instruction. Attached is information for your course. Please read all the information in detail. The following materials are included:

1. Cover letter
2. Course Information and Equipment List
3. PCIA Outdoor Climbing Instructor Manual (you will receive a hard copy at the course)
4. Outdoor Climbing Instructor Manual Pre-test
5. Acadia Mountain Guides, Inc. Health Statement and Participant Agreement, Release and Assumption of Risk

You are responsible for studying the manual, completing the written pre test, and arriving ready to build on that foundation. Please come prepared, this is a professional level course.

Please remember to go online and purchase your PCIA membership (<http://pcia.us>). It is \$50.00 for a year or \$99.00 for three years. You will need to bring verification of your membership or payment to the course.

If you have any questions, please contact Jon Tierney (Course Leader) at 207-461-4338.

Yours truly,

Jon Tierney  
AMGA/IFMGA Internationally Licensed Mountain Guide  
PCIA Educational Director  
Owner, Acadia Mountain Guides, Inc.  
[climb@AcadiaMountainGuides.com](mailto:climb@AcadiaMountainGuides.com)

---

A division of Acadia Mountain Guides, Inc.  
Owned by Jon Tierney, IFMGA Certified International Mountain Guide

AMGA Accredited since 1993 PCIA Accredited since 2008

## PCIA COURSE INFORMATION PACKET

Thank you for your registration in a Professional Climbing Instructor Association course through Acadia Mountain Guides Climbing School. This packet contains course information for the following PCIA courses:

| <b>Dates</b>   | <b>Course</b>                           | <b>Fee</b>     |
|----------------|---|----------------|
| August 27 – 29 | Base Managed Climbing Instructor Course | Princeton Univ |
| September 11   | Base Managed Climbing Instructor Exam   | Princeton Univ |

**Registration:** This course is being sponsored by Princeton University. Contact Rick Curtis at Princeton University for registration or cancellation information. *(For course content questions contact Jon Tierney at 207-461-4338).*

**PCIA Membership:** Course participants are required to be members of the Professional Climbing Instructors Association. Please go online and purchase your PCIA membership (<http://pcia.us>). It is \$50.00 for a year or \$99.00 for three years. You will need to bring verification of your membership or payment to the course.

**Schedule:** Days will average 9-10 hours in length plus 2 - 3 hours of individual practice, lesson preparation and study time in the evening. Please arrive rested and free of other responsibilities during the course. If you are traveling, it is best to plan to schedule departures on the day following the last day of the course or exam if possible.

**Meeting Location:** The first day of the course will meet at 9:00am at Ralph Stover State Park, Picnic Pavilion #2. Locations may change for subsequent days.

Ralph Stover State Park is two miles north of Point Pleasant on State Park Road and Stump Road, in eastern Bucks County. If you are using GPS, use the following address: 5998 State Park Road, Pipersville PA 18947.

**Transportation:** Provided by participant and/or Princeton

**Meals/Lodging:** You are responsible for your own meals and lodging during the course. Bring water, lunch and snacks for each day. Your food, equipment and extra clothing should be packed in a day pack that can be carried in to various course sites along with your climbing gear.

**Risks:** YOU MAY BE EXPOSED TO SUBSTANTIAL PERSONAL RISK DURING THIS COURSE. You will be working close to cliff edges and on steep, exposed ledges. You may be asked to construct anchors and to rappel and belay from them without direct supervision from the instructor. This is not an introductory-level program. You cannot abdicate responsibility for yourself and must take full responsibility for your own security. If, in the instructor's opinion, you do not display the skill and prudence necessary for the course, you may be asked to leave the course.

**Release and Assumption of Risk Form and Health Form:** Please complete these forms and bring with you to the first day of the course. Forms are attached and available on-line at [acadiamountainguides.com/info/info.html](http://acadiamountainguides.com/info/info.html).

**Instructor Contact:** Jon Tierney, IFMGA certified guide. PCIA Educational Director. c/o Acadia Mountain Guides Climbing School, PO Box 121 Orono, ME 04473. Cell Phone: 207-461-4338. Office

Phone: 207-866-7562. E-mail: climb@acadiamountainguides.com. (Cell phone contact is best as I am often traveling.)

**Assistant Instructors:**

Ian Kirk, Andy Kahora (days 2 & 3)

**Lesson Plans**

Candidates will be asked to prepare lessons on at least the following:

Knots: Day 1: Figure 8s, Bowlines, Clove / Munter Hitch, Grapevine, Blocking Knot (Munter Mule), Friction Hitch (Prussik, Autoblock). Each candidate will be asked to present one of the above. Random selection. No pre lesson plan required. We want to see what you do off the cuff.

During Course: Carabiners-Types/Uses/Care; Belay Tools-Types/Uses/Care; Rope Dynamics (Fall force, impact, etc); Cordage and Webbing materials used in climbing; Understanding climbing grades; Understanding climbing route topos. These will be assigned on Day 1 for delivery on day 2 or 3. Lesson plan required.

In preparation for BMCI Exam:

Full lesson plans on basic belaying, full lesson of introduction to climbing movement, full lesson on climbing orientation (harness, knot).

**Equipment List**

Please bring the following materials to the course:

**Clothing:** Be prepared to be outside and active during inclement weather. Course will take place even if raining. Wear clothing that is in good condition and that is appropriate for a professional climbing instructor. Bring extra warm clothing.

**Footwear:** Closed toe shoes appropriate for wearing all day at the cliff and a pair of comfortable climbing shoes.

**Daypack:** Include water bottle, food, sunglasses, headlamp, notebook/pencil, first aid kit, etc.

**Climbing:** Helmet  
Harness with belay loop and gear loops  
Climbing Rope (50 or 60 meter)  
Climbing Rack (including wired tapers, cams, tri-cams, carabiners, runners, etc.)  
(racks are available for rent from AMG for 75.00, 2 – 3 people may share a rack, please contact Jon if you want to rent a climbing rack)  
5 pear-shaped locking carabiners  
2 cordelettes (15-25 feet in length)  
Belay/rappel device  
Assisted locking belay device (such as a Gri-gri or Cinch)  
Accessory cord (at least 3 feet of 5-6mm cord or prusik loops)  
Anchor line (60+ feet of 9-11mm static cord)  
Webbing (20 feet of 1" tubular webbing)  
Resource materials (any books, etc that may be helpful to prepare lessons)

**Rack Rental:** If you do not have a climbing gear rack, you may rent a full one for \$75.00. Please let us know in advance to provide one.

**Equipment Discount:** PCIA members receive a 20% discount from our retail store Alpenglow Adventure Sports. Orders may be placed in-person, by phone or on-line at AlpenglowGear.com. Certified members receive a 30% discount of all product lines – climbing, camping, mountaineering, clothing and hiking. A limited amount of small gear can be brought to the course for you if you want to purchase anything in advance.

## **Course Descriptions**

### **Base Managed Climbing Instructor Course**

This thirty-hour (3 day) course builds upon the existing skills of competent recreational climbers taking an in depth look at site selection, equipment, knot selection, anchor construction, rope systems, Leave No Trace practices, rescue and assistance skills as well as key instructional skills. Most importantly the course stresses blending these skills together to form a more seamless and efficient climbing experience for participants. Upon completion of all course components participants are considered PCIA Assistant Instructors.

Assistant Instructors may elect to take an optional certification exam to achieve Base Managed Climbing Instructor™ Certification. The one-day examination stresses efficient site and gear utilization, client and instructor safety, site management and educational delivery. The exam may be taken any time after completing all course components.

This course may be taken as stand alone course or coupled together with the one day Top Managed Climbing Instructor Module and the two day Single Pitch Instructor Module.

### **Base Managed Climbing Instructor Course Pre-Requisites**

Candidates must:

- be at least 18 years old at the time of the course.
- show an adequate experience level to the course provider illustrating that they are ready for the course. Examples include regular climbing for 2 – 3 years, a high intensity of climbing in the past few months, etc.
- be able to comfortably set-up base managed climbs, to belay, and to rappel without guidance and can demonstrate familiarity with anchoring principles, natural anchors and artificial anchors (wedges, hexes, passive and active cams). These skills may be assessed at the start of the course.
- Arrive with the personal equipment necessary for the course.
- be capable of comfortably climbing 5.8 terrain while on a top rope.
- Lead climbing experience is highly recommended but not required.

Candidates not meeting the pre-requisites are allowed to participate with the understanding that the course pace is based on knowledge of the pre-requisite skills. Many people do this as a means to fast forward their personal mastery of climbing skills.

### **Base Managed Climbing Instructor Certification**

Certification is granted to candidates who successfully complete pre-course requirements, complete course component skills, perform acceptably on the skill and educational assessments, and score a minimum of 75 on the written exam.

The target goal for the certification standard is for candidates to be able to generalize learned information - in other words to be able to utilize various principles to create solutions for problems at hand – some of which you may not have seen prior. Generalization is considered the fourth learning stage following memorization, comprehension, and application.

### **Base Managed Climbing Instructor Exam Scoring:**

Skills are graded and evaluated on a daily basis. The assessments are based on the ability of the candidate to provide a safe and rewarding experience for the participants. Because passing is mainly an issue of safety and demonstrating a professional and competent attitude, any reasonable doubt in the mind of the assessor as to the ability of the candidate to perform the duties listed on the assessment form will result in a not pass. Candidates will be assessed by a minimum of two instructors in three designated skill areas. At the end of the program candidates will be informed as to whether or not they passed the assessment areas and certification will be mailed to those who passed along with a copy of the score sheets.

### **Marking scale:**

The marking scale used is acceptable, marginal, and unacceptable. Marks will be based on the following criteria:

**A= acceptable performance.** The candidate displays consistently strong performance in all assessment skills and techniques. A high level of judgment with respect to safety and objectives is demonstrated, and the candidate displays comfort in the leadership role.

**M= marginal performance.** The candidate displays weakness in important areas of technique, knowledge, and or experience. Poor or inconsistent judgment is exercised in regards to participant safety, technical knowledge, or professionalism. The candidate is preoccupied with his/her own needs and displays poor leadership skills.

**U= unacceptable performance.** The candidate makes a major error, or is stopped in the process of making a major error, which has potentially life threatening ramifications. As well a mark of unacceptable can be given for the candidate that makes chronically poor decisions of a lesser magnitude. The candidate displays low levels of professionalism and or has little to no experience in the field.

### **Top Managed Climbing Instructor Course**

There are a number of climbing areas where managing climbs from the top is the best choice. A site over water is a great example as are locations where the approach leads to the top and the cliff sides are too difficult to easily hike down or are pristine and would suffer from impact. However, top managed sites hold different risks and require different skills from base managed sites to effectively manage climbing groups. The PCIA Top Managed Climbing Instructor Course addresses these needs in a one day course designed to build upon skills acquired in the Base Managed Climbing Instructor Course. Like other PCIA courses, the course continues to reinforce the importance of teaching technically accurate information and to debunk many common climbing myths. The emphasis is again on refining core skills and improving educational delivery of material.

The 10 hour (1 day) module focuses heavily on the use of direct belays by both instructors and students and presents the subtle but important differences in systems that make life easy on the top. The course also addresses rescue and assistance skills such as escaping direct and indirect belays and raising systems. The basics of mechanical advantage systems are taught and raises are practiced through assisted locking devices as well as aperture style devices.

### **Top Managed Climbing Instructor Certification**

Upon completion of all TMCi course components graduates are upgraded to certified Top Managed Climbing Instructor™. There is no separate exam for this level unless challenging.

### **Top Managed Climbing Instructor Course Pre-Requisites** *(same as Base Managed Instructor)*

#### **Single Pitch Climbing Instructor**

Offered concurrently with the Top Managed Climbing Instructor Module.

#### **Single Pitch Climbing Instructor Course Pre-Requisites**

- You are currently at least age 18.
- Are a PCIA Certified Base Managed Climbing Instructor or AMGA certified Top Rope Site Manager.
- You possess the personal equipment necessary for the course.
- You are capable of comfortably leading 5.6 terrain that requires use of artificial gear to protect the climb and to construct anchors.

#### **Single Pitch Climbing Instructor Course Length**

The course runs concurrent with the Top Managed Course – no additional time is required.

#### **Single Pitch Climbing Instructor™ Certification**

Upon completion of all SPCI course components graduates are upgraded to certified Single Pitch Climbing Instructor™. There is no separate exam for this level unless challenging.

#### **PCIA Recertification**

PCIA certifications can be maintained in multiple ways. Option 1 is a standard recertification course taken anytime within three years of the last date of certification. Certified individuals also have the option of participating in approved continuing education courses as well. Recertification by continuing education requires hours focused on technical skills and education skills. Requirements vary for each certification. Candidates may also take a higher level course and/or certification. Certified individuals may petition the PCIA for credit for activities that are not pre-approved.

**PCIA Pre Course Written Assessment**  
**(Provide to participants in advance of course)**

Please answer the following questions and return the completed material to your instructor in advance of the course or bring it to the first day of the course as requested by your instructor. The test is open book.

This questionnaire is used in part to help determine your strengths and identify gaps in your knowledge base. It also serves to help define the scope of knowledge that is expected of certified top rope site managers in areas that may be difficult to assess in field observations.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

***Please attach extra sheets if necessary***

1. How would you find out about the access situation of a rock-climbing venue?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What is meant by the term "American Triangle"? Is this set up desirable or not? Explain why or why not and include other options if appropriate.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. To whom would you recommend wearing a full body harness rather than just a sit harness?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. When teaching novices to belay with a GriGri, identify at least four important points to address?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Describe how fall factors are calculated? Are high fall factors common in top rope climbing?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. How would you assess the condition of a climbing rope? What would you be looking for? What information would you like to know about its past use?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. What is the difference between a knot and a hitch?





23. A student of yours slipped on the rocks and hit the back of her head. She was knocked out for about 30 seconds. She regained consciousness and is now oriented, calm, and has a normal mental status. She has no spine pain/tenderness, and normal motor/sensory function. The exam is normal except for a small bump on the back of her head. Vital signs are normal.

- a. She has had a concussion and should be evacuated
- b. She has a head injury with increase ICP
- c. She is okay and does not need to be evacuated
- d. Her spine will not be able to be cleared

24. How are each of the following rock types formed? Give an example of each.

Igneous

Metamorphic

Sedimentary

25. Who was Conrad Kain and how is he related to climbing sports?

**Acadia Mountain Guides Climbing School**  
**PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT, RELEASE AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK**  
**NON-NPS FORM**

In consideration of the services of Acadia Mountain Guides, Inc. (dba Acadia Mountain Guides Climbing School and Alpenglow Adventure Sports), their agents, owners, officers, volunteers, participants, employees, and all other persons or entities acting in any capacity on their behalf (herein after collectively referred to as "AMG"), I hereby agree to release, indemnify, and discharge AMG, on behalf of myself, my spouse, my children, my parents, my heirs, assigns, personal representative and estate as follows:

1. I acknowledge that hiking, camping, challenge activities, backpacking, rock climbing, ice climbing and mountaineering entails known and unanticipated risks that could result in physical or emotional injury, paralysis, death, or damage to myself, to property, or to third parties. I understand that such risks cannot be eliminated without jeopardizing the essential qualities of the activity.

**The risks include, among other things: the hazards of walking on uneven terrain and slips and falls; being struck by rock fall, icefall, or other objects dislodged or thrown from above; the use of climbing ropes and equipment; the forces of nature, including lightning, weather changes, and avalanche; the risks of falling off the rock or mountain; the risks of exposure to insect bites; the risks of altitude and cold including frostbite and hypothermia; my own physical condition, and the physical exertion associated with this activity.**

Furthermore, AMG employees have difficult jobs to perform. They seek safety, but they are not infallible. They might be unaware of a participant's fitness or abilities. They might misjudge the weather or other environmental conditions. They may give incomplete warnings or instructions, and the equipment being used might malfunction.

2. I expressly agree and promise to accept and assume all of the risks existing in this activity. My participation in this activity is purely voluntary, and I elect to participate in spite of the risks.

3. I hereby voluntarily release, forever discharge, and agree to indemnify and hold harmless AMG from any and all claims, demands, or causes of action, which are in any way connected with my participation in this activity or my use of AMG's equipment or facilities, including any such claims which allege negligent acts or omissions of AMG.

4. Should AMG or anyone acting on their behalf, be required to incur attorney's fees and costs to enforce this agreement, I agree to indemnify and hold them harmless for all such fees and costs.

5. I certify that I have adequate insurance to cover any injury or damage I may cause or suffer while participating, or else I agree to bear the costs of such injury or damage myself. I further certify that I am willing to assume the risk of any medical or physical condition I may have.

6. In the event that I file a lawsuit against AMG, I agree to do so solely in the state of Maine and I further agree that the substantive law of Maine shall apply in that action without regard to the conflict of law rules of that state. I agree that if any portion of this agreement is found to be void or unenforceable, the remaining document shall remain in full force and effect.

**By signing this document, I acknowledge that if anyone is hurt or property is damaged during my participation in this activity, I may be found by a court of law to have waived my right to maintain a lawsuit against AMG on the basis of any claim from which I have released them herein.**

**I have had sufficient opportunity to read this entire document. I have read and understood it, and I agree to be bound by its terms.**

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Parent of Guardian, if participant is under 18 years of age**

In consideration of \_\_\_\_\_ (Minor) being permitted by AMG to participate in its activities and to use its equipment and facilities, I further agree to indemnify and hold harmless AMG from any and all claims which are brought by, or on behalf of Minor, and which are in any way connected with such use or participation by Minor.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Acadia Mountain Guides Climbing School**  
**HEALTH STATEMENT AND EMERGENCY CONTACT – Non NPS form**

Program Type: \_\_\_\_\_ Group Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Program Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Participant Last Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **First Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Age:** \_\_\_\_ **Birthdate:** \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent / Guardian Last Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **First Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**(if different than above)**

Address (if different than above): \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Contact Last Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **First Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**(if different than above)**

Address (if different than above): \_\_\_\_\_

**HEALTH STATEMENT**

This trip / activity involves participation in outdoor activities which are, by their nature, physically and mentally demanding. Therefore all participants must be free of medical or physical conditions which might create undue risk to themselves or to others who depend on them. If there is any doubt whatsoever about your ability to safely participate in this activity, you should have a physical examination by a physician. We may also require a physician's consent as a precondition for participation. I declare that I am in good physical health and believe that I am able without reservation or limiting conditions to physically withstand and cope with the indicated rigors of this program. My signature indicates that I have read and understand the above.

1. Do you have any physical disabilities, conditions, past injuries or any other physical limitations that you have which could effect your participation in any way?  No  Yes (please explain)
  
2. Do you have any pertinent allergies or medications?  No  Yes (please explain)
  
3. Do you have any dietary restrictions?  No  Yes (please explain)
  
4. Describe your current physical fitness and level of activity:
  
5. Do you carry any medical insurance?  No  Yes ( please name provider)

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

**CONSENT FOR PHOTOGRAPHS, VIDEOTAPE AND FILM**

I hereby authorize and give full consent to Acadia Mountain Guides, Inc. to copyright or publish all photographs, videotapes, voice recordings and film in which I, the undersigned, appear. Further, I agree that Acadia Mountain Guides, Inc. may transfer, use or cause to be used these photographs, videotapes, voice recordings, and film for any and all exhibitions, websites, public displays, publications, commercial, art and advertising purposes, and television programs without limitations or reservations.

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_