

Climbing Types – A brief description

Top-rope, leading, bouldering, sport climbing and traditional climbing. All these terms fly pretty fast when you are surrounded by experienced climbers. Some people like to lead climb, some strictly bouldering, top rope or traditional climbing.

Sport Climbing

Sport Climbing is a type of Rock Climbing where a climber ascends a route that already has permanent bolts and anchors attached on the rock wall.

To sport climb, a rope is tied to a climber's Climbing Harness with the loose end handled by a belayer. As the climb progresses, the climber will eventually come across bolts where he or she could use a Quick-draw to clip one side to the bolt and the rope to the hanging end of the Quick-draw. This is basically how a climber is protected from falling too far. Normally, there is a short distance between each bolt in Sport Climbing route.

Located at the top of each sport route is usually an anchor that can accommodate a variety of equipment, but generally provides at least two points where the climber may place the last pieces of protection. Upon using the final anchor and clipping the rope to it, "cleaning" commences, or the process of taking out the equipment used by the climber on the way down.

Basic Equipment

Since permanent bolts are already placed on a route, it is safe to say that the tools used in Sport Climbing are relatively minimal. However, it also means that every tool that a sport climber would use is important and necessary to successfully accomplish a sport route.

Here is a list of the tools needed in Sport Climbing:

- Belay Device
- Quick-draws
- Harness
- Climbing Helmet
- Rope
- Climbing Shoes



Traditional Climbing (Trad)

Traditional Climbing, or "Trad" Climbing, is a form of Climbing where the routes are climbed without using fixed protection (pro) to protect the climbers in their ascent.

Only the climber's hands and feet and various pieces of Protection like Nuts and Hexes are used.

Tools used in Trad Climbing are employed as a means of assisting climbers by means of protection, rather than aiding them upwards. What separates Trad Climbing from other styles is that the safety of the climber relies on the tools used as well as the suitable placement of such tools on the cliff. This makes Trad Climbing, otherwise known as "Adventure Climbing" in Australia, a pretty gear-intensive form of Climbing.

Trad climbers even have a rack to carry pieces of protection, or "Pro", Slings of different lengths, as well as spare Carabiners. This rack is usually carried on a sling around the shoulders or clipped to the gear loops on the harness.

Protection - Slings, Hexes, Nuts, Camming devices

Passive Protection, or Passive Pros, is the other kind of anchor or protection used in Rock Climbing aside from the Active Protection. Unlike the Active Pro, Passive pro have no moving features and is usually connected to a wire or a sling.

Here is a list of the tools needed in Sport Climbing

- Belay Device
- Quick-draws
- Harness
- Climbing Helmet
- Rope
- Climbing Shoes
- Camming devices
- Hexes
- nuts or chocks
- nutting tool
- plus more



The skills you learn from sport climbing will not equip you for Traditional climbing - there are more skills required for Trad climbing