

Climbing and Rappelling (Includes Crate Stacking)



Council Approval: Required

Activity Permitted For: D* B* J C S A

Progression chart included at end of Safety Activity Checkpoint.

Certificate of Insurance (COI) is required from vendor providing this activity. Visit <https://www.girlscoutsni.org/resources#COI> to check list of the COIs on file or to request one.

Troops must reserve a trained facilitator for this crate stacking or rappelling activities at GSNI camp properties.

Waiver: Required. Attached to this Safety Activity Checkpoint

About Climbing and Rappelling

Girls may participate in various types of climbing, rappelling, and rope adventures.

Note:

- Daisies and Brownies can do bouldering, slacklining, and low-challenge elements.
- Daisies and Brownies may participate only in activities that are designed for their ages, with equipment suitable to the size and ability of each girl.
- Outdoor high ropes, high elements, and rappelling are only permitted for Girl Scout Juniors and older.

Bouldering. This sport involves climbing without a rope but at a height not greater than 6 feet off the ground. Spotters (participants who safeguard the movements of a member of the group) provide support and protect the head and upper body of a climber in case of a fall. Spotting is used when descending and ascending high elements or climbing routes.

Top Roping. In this climbing method, the rope is anchored from the top of the climbing route, using belays (safety ropes to secure a person to an anchor point). The belayer (person who controls the belay/safety line to prevent long and dangerous falls) is set up at the bottom of the route with the other end of the rope tied to the climber.

Multi-Pitch Climbing. For experienced climbers only, this is a climb on a long route that requires several pitches the length of a rope or less. (A “pitch” is the rope-length between belay stations). The group climbs to the top of the first pitch; the lead climber climbs the next pitch, anchors in, and belays each remaining climber individually to the anchor.

Free Climbing. This method, which involves climbing on rocks or walls without a belay system in place, is not approved.

Slacklining: A sport and an art that can involve balance training, recreation, and moving meditation. It is similar, at first glance, to tightrope walking and is accomplished by stretching and tensioning a 1-inch to 2-inch length of nylon/polyester webbing between two anchor points, most often trees. It is a way of passing time while maintaining concentration, fitness, core strength, and balance. It can be used as a team-building activity in which spotters safeguard the movements of each member of the group.

Artificial climbing walls and harnessed indoor ropes are great learning options too.

Learn More:

- [International Mountaineering and Climbing Federation](#)
- [RockClimbing.com](#)
- Indoor climbing advice: [REI](#)
- All about rock climbing: [Mpora.com](#)

Include Girl Scout Members with Disabilities

Communicate with girls of all abilities and/or their caregivers to assess any needs and accommodations. Learn more about the resources and information that [Disabled Sports USA](#) provides to people with disabilities.

Equity

In addition to physical and social-emotional disabilities consider the history, culture, and past experiences of the Girl Scout members in your troop that could affect their ability to equally participate in an activity. Work with members and families to understand how an activity is perceived. Ensure that all Girl Scout members and their families feel comfortable that they have access to whatever is needed to fully participate such as the proper equipment, prior experiences and skills needed to enjoy the activity.

Safety Checkpoints

Standard Safety Guidelines. Refer to the Standard Safety Guidelines at the beginning of Safety Activity Checkpoints which apply to all Girl Scout gatherings and activities. When the adult-to-girl ratio, or other safety parameters, are stricter for a specific activity than in the Standard Safety Guidelines always follow the stricter parameters in the activity chapter.

COVID-19 Guidelines. Review the Coronavirus Safety in Girl Scouts section under the Standard Safety Guidelines. Be certain to consult your council's specific COVID-19 guidance which can be accessed under the same section. Always call ahead to the vendor, property or facility involved to check for their COVID-19 safety requirements as you prepare to take girls for this activity.

Emergency Action Plan (EAP). Review and document your Emergency Action Plan (EAP) ahead of time before taking girls out for this activity. Think through scenarios of what can go wrong such as an accident, physical injury to a girl, missing girl, or sudden illness.

Verify instructor knowledge and experience. For bouldering, top roping, and multi-pitch climbing, an instructor with documented experience—indicating competence in equipment use, safety and rescue techniques, proper use of the course, and hands-on training (must provide certification) or documented experience according to your council’s specific guidelines—directly supervises the group. Ensure that there is a regular process of review and update for all instructors. A minimum of two instructors needs to be present and instructors should be skilled in selecting appropriate activities, teaching and supervising spotting and belaying techniques, and modifying tasks to provide an appropriate experience for the ages and skill levels in the group. Before use, instructors must inspect all equipment, course components, and landing areas.

Facilitators of indoor or outdoor artificial climbing walls and auto belay or harnessed indoor ropes courses should have experience, indicating competence in equipment maintenance, safety and rescue techniques, proper use of the course, and hands-on training. A minimum of one facilitator and an additional adult must be present, and facilitators need to be skilled in selecting appropriate activities, teaching, and supervising spotting and lowering techniques, and modifying tasks to provide an appropriate experience for the ages and skill levels in the group. Before use, facilitators should inspect all equipment, course components, and landing areas.

Indoor or outdoor artificial climbing walls and auto belay or harnessed indoor ropes courses are activities that do not incorporate an element of high risk and can be done by Brownies through Ambassadors. However, all ages must have appropriately sized harnesses. If no harness properly fits a child, that child cannot participate in climbing and/or rappelling. Daisies are not permitted to participate in climbing and rappelling.

The instructor-to-participant ratios are:

- **Bouldering and top roping:** one instructor to ten participants
- **Multi-pitch climbing:** one instructor (qualified lead climber) to three participants.

Select a safe site. Permits and permission requests are filed as required for outdoor natural climbing sites and facilities. All permanent structures and the belaying system are planned and constructed by experienced individuals. Plans and procedures are established to avoid unauthorized use of the site, structures, and equipment. The artificial climbing site must be posted to warn against unauthorized use.

Participants learn about and prepare for climbing and rappelling. Instructors teach a set of readiness and action commands to all participants for climbing, spotting, and belaying. All participants take part in muscle warm-up and stretching activities before beginning physical activities. Instructors describe the objectives, safety procedures, and hazards to the participants before beginning an activity.

Participants practice safe climbing and rappelling techniques. Spotting techniques (if necessary) are taught, demonstrated, and practiced by participants prior to any climbing or rappelling activity. All activities should be appropriately spotted. For activities where partners are needed, instructors must match participants according to size and skill level, if appropriate. Instructors should supervise all tie-ins, belays, and climbs on climbing sites and spotting on bouldering sites.

Safety Gear

- Climbing helmets with the UIAA-approved label—worn for all outdoor natural climbing situations where the participant is more than 6 feet off the ground and by participants standing in the “fall zone” beneath a climbing element. Helmets are also required for belay, unless the hosting facility or instructor indicates the use of helmets is hazardous for belay.

- A disposable liner, such as a shower cap or surgical cap, to wear underneath the helmet to protect against the spread of head lice.
- A chest harness with a seat harness or a full-body harness, required for specific climbing or ropes activities.
- Sturdy shoes
- Close-fitting clothing—loose clothing should be avoided, especially around the head and neck.
- Portable drinking water
- Raingear, as necessary
- Long pants or bike pants are strongly recommended for activities involving potential skin abrasions on legs.

All equipment used for belaying, such as ropes, webbing, harnesses, hardware, and helmets, should be designed and tested for the purpose of this type of activity and appropriate for the size of the user.

Climbing and Adventure Sports—Master Progression Chart

	Grade Levels	Safety Standards and Gear	Additional Information
Slacklining	D, B, J, C, S, A	Sneakers Comfortable clothing Specific uniform or costume Slackline Check anchors	Baseline for Beginners Slacklining Outdoor Slacklining
Initiatives and Low Elements (any element that has a fall distance of 6 feet or less)	D, B, J, C, S, A	Sneakers Comfortable clothing appropriate for weather Activity elements and supplies	Ultimate Campsource Team Building Team Building and Low Challenge Elements
High Elements (any element that has a fall distance of 6 feet or more)	B, J, C, S, A Brownies can participate only with indoor high elements specifically designed for small children.	Climbing helmets (Union of International Alpine Association–approved) Belaying equipment: ropes, webbing, harnesses, hardware, and helmets that are designed, tested, and manufactured for the purpose of climbing and size appropriate for user.	Association Challenge Course Technology. <i>Note:</i> if the hosting facility or instructor indicates the use of helmets is hazardous for belay – follow those instructions. They may not offer helmets for this reason. When the hosting facility or instructor indicates a helmet is required, always opt for the helmet.
Bouldering (any element that has a fall distance of 6 feet or less)	D, B, J, C, S, A	Comfortable clothing Sneakers Spotters	Bouldering Low Elements
Artificial Climbing Walls (indoor and outdoor)	B, J, C, S, A No free climbing above 6 feet, Brownies on indoor walls designed specifically for small children only.	Auto belay/harnessed indoor ropes Belaying equipment: ropes, webbing, harnesses, hardware, and helmets that are designed, tested, and manufactured for the purpose of climbing and size appropriate for user.	Expert Advice Indoor Climbing <i>Note:</i> if the hosting facility or instructor indicates the use of helmets is hazardous for belay – follow those instructions. They may not offer helmets for this reason. When the hosting facility or instructor indicates a helmet is required, always opt for the helmet.

**Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois
Permission, Waiver and Release of Liability Waiver for Crate Stacking at
Camp Dean/Mary Ann Beebe Center/Camp McCormick**

- This two page form is a waiver and release of liability contract between Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois and the participants. Please read it carefully.
- This two page form must be read and signed by the parent or legal guardian of the participant in order for the participant to participate in the activity listed. The form is to be turned in to the troop leader or he/her designee.
- Participants must be old enough to understand the safety procedures so as not to endanger themselves or others.
- Crate Stacking is not permitted for Girl Scout Daisies and Brownies.

Participant Name _____ Age _____ GS Level _____

Address _____ ZIP _____

Parent Name _____ Phone _____

Email address _____

Emergency Contact _____ Phone _____

Participation Date(s) _____ Year _____

Please list any allergies the participant has (food, nature, medications, etc.): _____

Any restrictions of participant we should be aware of as she takes part in this activity: _____

Any medications the participant will have with her: _____

Activity: Crate stacking is essentially a climbing activity. Participants wear helmets and harnesses and are attached to a belay system staffed by trained and qualified individuals. This rope/belay/harness system is used to hold the participants safely as they stack plastic crates (milk crates) upside down, one on top of the other. Participants work toward an individual goal with the help of a helmet-wearing buddy who hands them crates. The participant stacks one crate at a time and then places her/his feet in the handle holes on the crates and climbs to the next one, placing one at a time. They will all eventually fall, but the harness/belay system is in place to catch the participant and let them down gently.



Camp Dean/Camp Far Horizon/Camp McCormick reserves the right to deny participation in this activity if camp staff deem that the participant is not physically or mentally capable to participate.

Clothing: Participants should be wearing appropriate clothing:

- No short shorts (long pants or shorts that are at the mid-thigh or longer)
- Hair tied back in low pony tail to accommodate helmet
- Water shoes (provided, if needed)
- Helmet and harness (provided)

I acknowledge that this Crate Stacking Activity is a test of a person's physical and mental limits and carries with it the potential for death, serious injury and property loss. The risks include, but are not limited to, those caused by terrain, facilities, temperature, acts of God, weather, condition of participants, equipment, vehicular traffic, actions of other people including, but not limited to, participants, facilitators, volunteers and spectators. These risks are not only inherent to the participants, but also present for volunteers. I hereby assume all of the risks of participating and/or volunteering in this activity. I realize that liability may arise from negligence or carelessness on the part of the person or entities being release, from dangerous or defective equipment or property owned, maintained or controlled by them or because of their possible liability without fault.

I certify that I am physically and mentally fit to participate in this Indoor Inflatable activity. I acknowledge that this Permission, Waiver and Release of Liability for Crate Stacking will be used by Girl Scout staff, activity facilitators or their assignees of the activity and it will govern my daughter's actions and responsibilities at the activity. I acknowledge that I must follow the directions and safety rules of the activity and the activity may be cancelled if I do not follow the safety instructions and policies or if my behavior endangers myself or the group.

In consideration of my participation in this program, I hereby take action for myself, my executors, administrators, heirs, next of kin, successors, and assigns as follows: (A) Waive, Release and Discharge from any and all liability for my death, disability, personal injury, property damage, property theft or actions of any kind which may hereafter occur to me including my traveling to and from this program, THE FOLLOWING ENTITIES OR PERSONS: _____; their directors, officers, employees, volunteers, facilitators, representative, and agents. (B) Indemnify and Hold Harmless, and Agree Not To Sue the entities or persons mentioned in this paragraph from any and all liabilities or claims made as a result of participation in this program, whether caused by the negligence of releases or otherwise. I hereby consent to receive medical treatment that may be deemed advisable in the event of injury, accident and/or illness during this program.

The Permission, Waiver and Release of Liability for Crate Stacking shall be construed broadly to provide a release and waiver to the maximum extent permissible under applicable law. I acknowledge that this Accident Waiver and Release of Liability form will be used by the persons or entities being release in the activity listed above and that it will govern my actions and responsibilities in said activity.

I hereby certify that I have read this document; read the GSNI Climbing and Rappelling Safety Activity Checkpoints; and, I, understand its content. I am aware that this is a release of liability as well as a contract and I sign it of my own free will.

Print Participant's Name Age Signature (if under 18 years old,
Parent/Guardian must also sign) Date

Parent/Guardian Waiver for Minors (Under 18 years old)

I give permission for my daughter to participate in this Crate Stacking activity. I understand that there are inherent risks of injury or disability in this activity. I further understand that my daughter must follow the directions and safety rules of the activity. I have reviewed the GSNI Climbing and Rappelling Safety Activity Checkpoints. I also understand that the activity may be cancelled if my daughter does not follow safety instructions and policies and/or my daughter's behavior endangers herself or the group.

The undersigned parent and/or legal guardian does hereby represent that he/she is, in fact, acting in such capacity and is fully responsible and agrees to save and hold harmless and indemnify each and all of the parties referred to above from all liability, loss, cost, claim or damage whatsoever which may be imposed upon said parties because of any defect in or lack of such capacity to so act and release said parties on behalf of the minor and the parents or legal guardian.

Print Participant's Name Age Signature of Parent/Guardian Date

If you have any questions, please contact _____

For girls not currently registered as Girl Scouts: I understand my daughter is not covered by Girl Scouts of the USA activity Insurance, but she has my permission to participate in this activity.

Yes _____ No _____ Date _____ Signature of Parent _____

**Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois
Permission, Waiver and Release of Liability for Rappelling Program**

- This two page form is a waiver and release of liability contract between Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois and the participants. Please read it carefully.
- This two page form must be read and signed by the parent or legal guardian of the participant in order for the participant to participate in the activity listed. The form is to be turned in to the troop leader or he/her designee.
- Participants must be old enough to understand the safety procedures so as not to endanger themselves or others.
- **Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois does not allow girls under the age of ten (10) years to participate in rappelling.**

Participant Name _____ Age _____ GS Level _____

Address _____ Zip _____

Parent Name _____ Phone _____

Email Address _____

Emergency Contact _____ Phone _____

Participation Date(s) _____ Year _____

Please list any allergies the participant has (food, nature, medications, etc.). _____

Please list any restrictions of participant that we should be aware of as she participates in this activity. _____

Please list any medications the participant will have with her. _____

Activity: Rappelling is essentially a climbing activity. Participants wear helmets and harnesses and are attached to a belay system staffed by trained and qualified individuals. The rope/belay/harness system is used to hold the participants safely as they rappel down the tower. Participants work toward an individual goal with the help of the trained and qualified facilitators.



Clothing - Participants should be wearing appropriate clothing:

- Close-fitting clothing (Avoid wearing loose clothing, especially around the head and neck.)
- Shoes must tie on and have rubber soles. No open toe or back.
- Long hair tied back

Additional Activity Information, if any: _____

I acknowledge that this Rappelling Activity is a test of a person's physical and mental limits and carries with it the potential for death, serious injury and property loss. The risks include, but are not limited to, those caused by terrain, facilities, temperature, acts of God, weather, condition of participants, equipment, vehicular traffic, actions of other people including, but not limited to, participants, facilitators, volunteers and spectators. These risks are not only inherent to the participants, but also present for volunteers. I hereby assume all of the risks of participating and/or volunteering in this activity. I realize that liability may arise from negligence or carelessness on the part of the person or entities being release, from dangerous or defective equipment or property owned, maintained or controlled by them or because of their possible liability without fault.

I certify that I am physically and mentally fit to participate in this Rappelling activity. I acknowledge that this Permission, Waiver and Release of Liability for Rappelling Program will be used by Girl Scout staff, activity facilitators or their assignees of the activity and it will govern my daughter's actions and responsibilities at the activity. I acknowledge that I must follow the directions and safety rules of the activity and the activity may be cancelled if I do not follow the safety instructions and policies or if my behavior endangers myself or the group.

In consideration of my participation in this program, I hereby take action for myself, my executors, administrators, heirs, next of kin, successors, and assigns as follows: (A) Waive, Release and Discharge from any and all liability for my death, disability, personal injury, property damage, property theft or actions of any kind which may hereafter occur to me including my traveling to and from this program, THE FOLLOWING ENTITIES OR PERSONS: _____; their directors, officers, employees, volunteers, facilitators, representative, and agents. (B) Indemnify and Hold Harmless, and Agree Not To Sue the entities or persons mentioned in this paragraph from any and all liabilities or claims made as a result of participation in this program, whether caused by the negligence of releases or otherwise. I hereby consent to receive medical treatment that may be deemed advisable in the event of injury, accident and/or illness during this program.

The Permission, Waiver and Release of Liability for Rappelling Program shall be construed broadly to provide a release and waiver to the maximum extent permissible under applicable law. I acknowledge that this Accident Waiver and Release of Liability form will be used by the persons or entities being release in the activity listed above and that it will govern my actions and responsibilities in said activity.

I hereby certify that I have read this document; and, I, understand its content. I am aware that this is a release of liability as well as a contract and I sign it of my own free will.

_____	_____	_____	_____
Print Participant's Name	Age	Signature (if under 18 years old, Parent/Guardian must also sign)	Date

Parent/Guardian Waiver for Minors (Under 18 years old)

I give permission for my daughter to participate in this Rappelling activity. I understand that there are inherent risks of injury or disability in this activity. I further understand that my daughter must follow the directions and safety rules of the activity. I also understand that the activity may be cancelled if my daughter does not follow safety instructions and policies and/or my daughter's behavior endangers herself or the group.

The undersigned parent and/or legal guardian does hereby represent that he/she is, in fact, acting in such capacity and is fully responsible and agrees to save and hold harmless and indemnify each and all of the parties referred to above from all liability, loss, cost, claim or damage whatsoever which may be imposed upon said parties because of any defect in or lack of such capacity to so act and release said parties on behalf of the minor and the parents or legal guardian.

_____	_____	_____	_____
Print Participant's Name	Age	Signature of Parent/Guardian	Date

If you have any questions, please contact _____

For girls not currently registered as Girl Scouts: I understand my daughter is not covered by Girl Scouts of the USA activity Insurance, but she has my permission to participate in this activity.

Yes _____ No _____ Date _____ Signature of Parent _____