

BASIC TERMS OF CLIMBING

belay: securing a climber by the use of a rope
bouldering: climbing without a rope, up to 20 feet
anchor: a means by which climbers are secured to a cliff
beta: information about the climb
bolt: an artificial anchor placed in a drilled hole
carabiners: steel or aluminum rings with a spring loaded snap gate (sometimes called biners)
chalk: magnesium carbonate, used for sweaty palms
crimper: a small but in-cut edge
crux: the most difficult section of the climb
jug: a large, positive hold, much like a handle
lead climb: climbing while bringing the rope, and protection up the face with you
protection (or pro): devices used to catch the leader
rappel: to descend from the top
top-rope: to set gear at the top of a climb to protect climbers from falls
traditional climbing: climbing with protection needed to affix to the rock itself (not anchor points)
traverse: moving sideways along rock face



Melissa Main climbing in Wild Walls. Melissa recently placed third in the World Youth Rock Climbing Championships.

Melissa Main

Climbing to great heights

Melissa Main, 17, is a standout climber in our area. A senior in the Running Start program at Eastern, she attended Lewis and Clark her Freshman and Sophomore year.

Recently, Melissa returned from Ibarra, Ecuador, where she placed third in the World Youth Rock Climbing Championships. She also placed third at Nationals in Michigan earlier this summer.

Melissa is no stranger to climbing competitions. She has competed in many, and most ended with her standing on the podium.

When she is not pulling hard and winning competitions, she can often be found down at Wild Walls training or at Deep Creek, sending (climbing) hard routes. She started climbing with her father at the age of 10 and soon after started to compete.

"I just love climbing and the climbing community. It also gives me a feeling of accomplishment," Melissa said.

Climbing has provided numerous travel opportunities, taking her to Austria, South America and China as well. She will be traveling to Slovenia for her first Euro youth cup this November.

With all the traveling and training, a supportive family is very important.

"My parents always support me, and do what it takes so that I have the opportunities to compete. Also my grandparents come and watch me a lot. They came to China and Austria with me," she said.

Being in Running Start, Melissa is very busy, but somehow she finds the time to climb. "It's all about what your priorities are, and right now, climbing is one of mine," she said.

Even with all of her success, she remains remarkably modest. She is always willing to help any one, regardless of their skill level.

As well as being an outstanding climber, Melissa, is also a scholar, planning to go college in Colorado and pursue a degree in International studies.

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HISTORY OF CLIMBING

In early History, climbing was a necessity. Man had to climb to escape predators and to obtain food. Modern day climbing owes its genesis to European sheep herders, travelers and adventurers who lived in isolated villages in the European Alps in the seventeenth century. Adventurers aspiring to climb the harder peaks discovered they needed some basic form of rock climbing to obtain their goal.

Around the start of the eighteenth century the first of what could be called modern climbing began, when mountaineers used the lower boulders, crag, and cliffs to train. This training, then turned into its own sport. Climbing ropes and safety techniques were soon to follow.

During the early 1900s further advances in technique and safety equipment, allowed climbers to establish climbs harder than ever thought possible. Until the 1940s most of the attention and glory was focused upon the mountaineers (those who climb summits) opposed to the true rock climbers (those who climb sheer rock faces). Throughout the 1940s '50s, and '60s grew in popularity thanks to the new advanced in safety equipment. The most important of which was the development of Nylon ropes, (in the '40s) and specialized climbing shoes (in the '60s).

During the '50s and '60s new climbing techniques were developed the Yosemite Valley, which eventually led to a merging style of English and American climbing techniques. This in turn helped to develop "sport climbing" during the late '70s and early '80s. Which is now the most popular form of rock climbing.

Today, sport climbing is no longer just about getting to the top, is often about choosing the most difficult route, to get there.

Thanks to the great advances in safety equipment and the development of indoor climbing gyms, climbing is now available to most everyone.



Chris Lemley climbing at Minnehaha, where there are about 20 routes, rated from 5.8 to 5.12.

RATINGS

When considering a climbing area, you should consult a Rock Climbing guide, or book, available at most Outdoor recreation stores, or libraries.

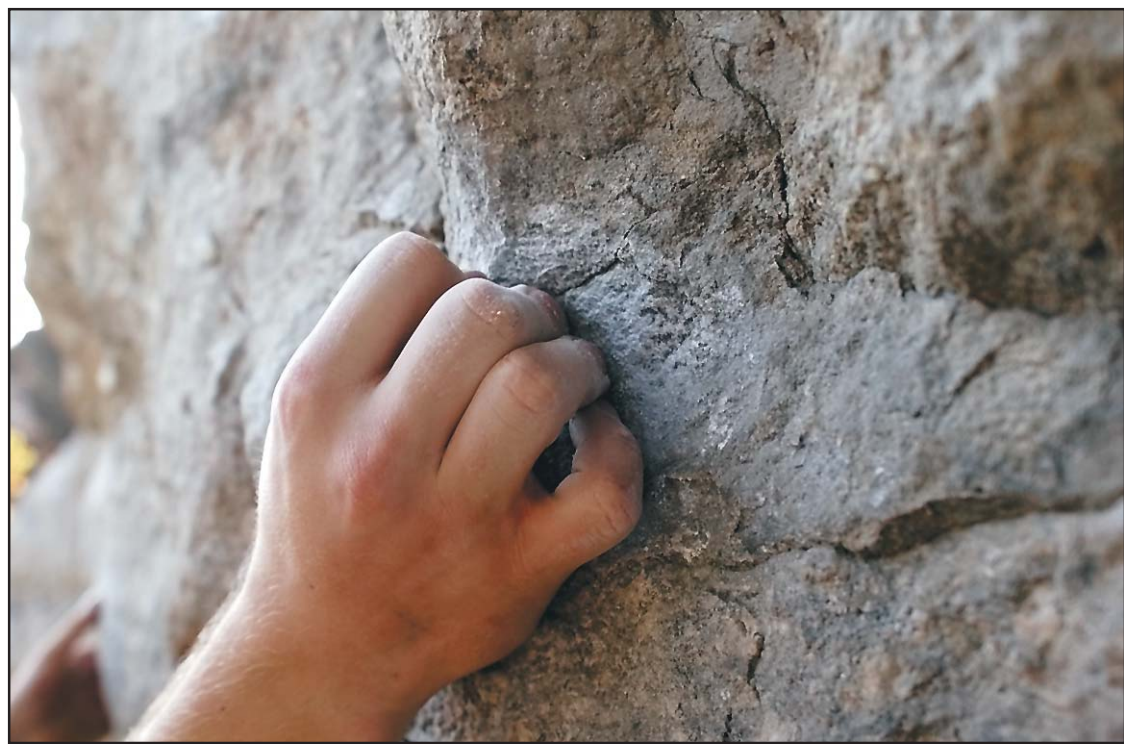
Technical "Rock climbing" is rated on a scale of 5.0 to 5.15 scale. It is subdivided by using decimals to indicate higher levels difficulty. Thus, 5.0 would be the easiest.

(If you are a beginner, a climbing class covering the basic safety, gear and techniques is recommended. In addition, climbing with experienced climbers is always a big plus.)

- 5.0 - 5.5 Beginning levels, easy for experienced climbers
- 5.6 - 5.9 For experienced weekend climbers, but requires a basic mastery of safety, techniques, and use of climbing gear
- 5.10 - 5.11 Immediate climbers, advanced climbing techniques, and safety practices
- 5.12 - 5.13 Advanced climbers
- 5.14 - 5.15 Crazy good climbers, the best of the best!

Bouldering ratings vary from V0 to V16, here V0 is the easiest.

- V0 -V2 beginners
- V0 -V6 intermediate
- V6 -V10 advanced
- V10 extremely difficult



A climber's hand finding a hold.