

ANCHORS

No matter what happens, the Anchor Must NOT Fail!

Purpose:

Roped climbing depends ultimately on the Anchor. Without a Bombproof Anchor, roped climbing is simply a suicide pact. Every aspiring climber must know about anchors - your life depends upon it.

When we are through with you, you WILL understand why it is important to thoroughly understand anchors even though you have no intention of setting up yourself. You will know a set of criteria for evaluating anchor systems. You will be able to evaluate an anchor system for its strengths and weaknesses. You will also be able to perform a simple failure analysis of the Anchor System.

Key Points:

Properties of a **Bomb Proof Anchor System** -

1. Strength
2. Independent Redundancy
3. Simplicity
4. Primary & Backup vs. Self Equalizing.
5. Avoid Sharp Edges
6. Graceful Degradation vs. Catastrophic Failure
7. **SRENE - Solid, Redundant, Equalized, No Extension**
 - Solid -
 - Redundant-
 - Equalized -
 - No Extension -
8. Fail-safe
9. Single, most important part of the climbing protection system
10. Directional Anchors
11. Non-Directional Anchors
12. Natural Anchors
13. Other types of Anchors - chocks & etc.
14. How to Equalize 2 and 3 points with a double or triple sling

In teams of 3 or 4, use slings and chocks around the room to set an equalized anchor of 3 pieces in 10 minutes. Each team will critique the other teams handiwork. Instructors will evaluate for directional properties and equalization.

Some questions:

1. You are climbing with borrowed climbing gear. A storm is approaching and you must get down in a hurry. Would you leave some gear or look for a way to down climb?
2. There is only one crack to place an anchor, and only one piece you have that will fit. Would you belay from that location or climb higher to find a better anchor?
3. What does SRENE stand for?
4. When might you consider belaying from a marginal anchor? When not?

Reference:

How to Rock Climb, John Long, Fourth Edition, Pgs 90-117