

Mountain Safety Guidelines

- Never climb alone. Four is an ideal size for a party.
- Choose a route according to ability, fitness, experience etc. of the party.
- Go with someone who knows the way, or carry a guide book, map or description of the route from a person who has done the route.
- Until you know your way around keep to the straightforward routes on well used paths. Follow the same route down, or one you know well. Heed signs advising of danger and do not take short cuts or go down unknown ravines.
- Tell someone exactly where you are going (up and down routes and expected time of arrival back) and stick to this route and plan.
- Every party should have a leader. The larger the group the greater the need for one. Keep together and travel at the pace of the slowest. Do not split the group and go in different directions.
- Always go prepared for bad weather and therefore take proper weatherproof clothing (wind and rain proof), torches – with spare batteries and globes, good footwear – strong boots or shoes with non-slip soles, food, a flask of tea or some beverage, a rucksack to carry spare clothing, food etc. so as to leave your arms and hands free.
- Watch the weather and time – turn back in time particularly in case of threatening bad weather, route taking longer or route difficult to follow.
- Stay put in case of trouble. Do not try to force your way down in darkness, mist etc. Find shelter - especially out of the wind.
- If you get lost or find yourself in an area that looks unsafe, retrace your steps – do not push on into the unknown. If you cannot find the path you left look for a safe route – preferably down broad open slopes – making sure at all times that you can retrace your steps.
- Should someone have an accident, keep calm, stay together as a party until things are sorted out and ascertain to the best of your ability exactly what the injuries are and attend to them where possible. Do not move the person unless it is necessary to do so for safety reasons. Do not rush off immediately to report an accident. Fifteen minutes or so spent observing reactions and making the person comfortable is time well spent. It happens quite often that even if someone is knocked out temporarily they are not seriously injured and after a rest are able to walk down.
- Someone should always be left with an injured person and it is imperative that they remain with them until the rescuers arrive.
- For safety it is preferable to send two persons for help. On their way down they should identify landmarks so that they are able to describe the exact location of the accident or to guide a rescue party to the scene.



Issued by the Search and Rescue Committee of the Cape Town Section of the Mountain Club of South Africa