

Learning to Lead (Snowdonia)

Is this the right course for me?

This course is ideal for people who have some climbing experience and want to start leading their own routes outdoors. It is important that you have seconding experience, are able to put on a climbing harness, tie into a climbing rope, remove gear and belay a climber from above and below. The transition from seconding to leading your own climbs is a significant one and this course is all about making that transition as safe and informative as possible.



What do we cover on the course?

We feel that it is important that you build towards leading routes gradually. There are many skills involved in leading routes and your first experience on the sharp end is not the place to learn them. We build your skills over the weekend, reducing the amount of input from your instructor as your confidence and capabilities grow. A 1:2 ratio allows us to concentrate on individual needs and tailor the weekend accordingly.

We visit two different crags over the weekend and cover the following topics:

- Personal equipment and racking it
- Placing gear (nuts, hexes, cams, slings etc.)
- The process of leading
- Different types of belay device and suitability
- Lead belaying
- Building a belay
- Bringing up a second
- Stance organisation
- Organising abseil descents (using prussic for backup)
- Climbing technique
- Simple emergency procedures

What is the format of the course?

The course runs over two days from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. We meet in a café at 9:00 am on the first day and at the crag on the second day. No accommodation is provided.

Venues used

Snowdonia is a great place to develop your leading skills because of its variety. We begin the weekend on a single-pitch crag where we cover many of the fundamental skills. Later in the weekend we move on to leading in a multi-pitch situation and often visit Ogwen, the Llanberis pass or Tremadog.

What will I need?

If you already have rockboots, harness, helmet, climbing rack, climbing guidebooks then bring them along. If you are missing any of these items, we can supply them. Orion Mountaineering will also supply ropes and lead racks. We suggest that you bring the following along:

- Walking boots
- Warm outdoor clothing, hat and gloves (all times of year)
- Waterproof jacket and trousers
- Change of clothing for evening meal etc.
- Day rucksack (somewhere between 20 and 40 litres)
- Notebook and pen
- Water bottle or flask
- Packed lunch



What happens between booking and the start of the course?

After booking, you will be sent your course information by post or email. This will contain further information about the course including meeting arrangements on the first day, useful accommodation information and some handy climbing shop discount vouchers.