

# CLIMBING

## 4 Partner check, cleaning tick marks, and stripping very steep single pitches

**Most climbing accidents in Kalymnos can be prevented by always doing a partner check.** The illustration and descriptions below are courtesy of PETZL. Don't skip them!

During a partner check, the climber and the belayer must check each of 4 key areas to ensure climber safety. **Do this before starting each climb.**

- **Belay system setup:** Check that the rope is installed in the right direction in your belay device; the carabiner is connected to the right place on the harness; and the carabiner is locked.
- **Harness:** Check that the harness waistbelt is above the hips, and that the harness is adjusted to fit snugly.
- **Tie-in knot:** Check that you are tied in to the right place on the harness; that the knot is proper; that the knot is completed and tightened.
- **Rope:** Make sure a knot is tied in the end of the rope. Failure to tie a knot is *the most common cause of climbing accidents on Kalymnos* (which are 100% preventable!)

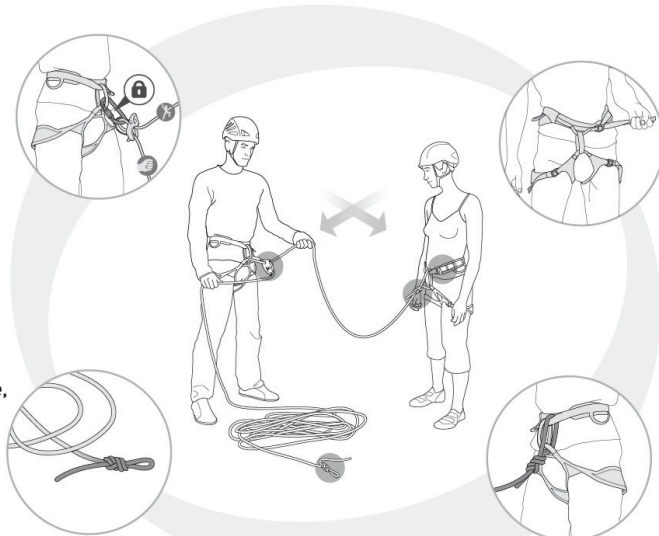
### REMOVE YOUR TICK MARKS AND CHALK

This isn't a safety issue, of course, but it's the right thing to do. Please remove your tick marks and chalk from holds after you are finished with a route! No need to spoil the next climber's attempt or to deface the cliffs with all the white marks.

### STRIPPING VERY STEEP SINGLE PITCHES

When you remove the quickdraws from an overhanging route, do not unclip from the 1st bolt as you lower back down. Keep yourself clipped in through the quickdraw in the 1st bolt until you reach the ground. If you don't, there's a chance of a big swing which, with the rope stretch, can easily lead to hitting the ground at speed. Keep in mind that on almost all the routes in Kalymnos the first bolt is placed close to the ground (2-3m), so you can strip the quickdraw by re-climbing the first few metres after you've untied. Alternatively, re-clip the third bolt on the way down, then lower down to strip the bottom two, before re-climbing to the remaining quickdraw to take the swing at a safe height.

© Aris Theodoropoulos 2016  
Kalymnos Rock Climbing Guidebook



**Always tie a knot in the end of your rope, or tie it in to your rope bag.**

## 5 Lowering, top-roping, and keeping the anchors of Kalymnos safe

After tens of thousands of ascents, permanent carabiners at the anchors of popular routes are showing clear signs of use. Most climbers clip their rope directly through the carabiners at anchors, but they may not know that this damages the carabiner metal and decreases its lifespan.

### How can you help keep the anchors of Kalymnos safe?

It's very simple. Do not lower directly off the anchor's carabiner, but **place one of your quickdraws or carabiners in addition to the permanent carabiner to lower from**. Use the permanent carabiners at the anchor only after your last go, when you are ready to strip the route.



**Top-roping:** When top-roping, don't simply clip the rope through the single permanent carabiner at the anchor. **As a back-up, also add a runner/quickdraw.** Make sure the gates of the carabiners are opposed to each other so they don't accidentally open or, better still, add one quickdraw with a locking carabiner. To avoid wear and tear on the carabiner, do not top-rope from it directly. You should place a short quickdraw or screwgate carabiner on the bolt of the anchor (see photo) as well as clipping your rope through the fixed lower-off carabiner. When you are finished with the route the last climber in your party removes the quickdraw and lowers from the permanent carabiner.

© Aris Theodoropoulos 2016  
Kalymnos Rock Climbing Guidebook

## 6 Guidelines for equipping new routes on Kalymnos

Everybody's goal is for the climbing on Kalymnos to be as safe as possible, so that climbers can concentrate on the technical difficulty of the routes without worrying about being injured or risking their life. To this effect, we have proposed a set of detailed equipping guidelines for equipers who would like to put up new routes on Kalymnos.

In brief, the most essential guidelines are:

a) Use only EU-certified 316L stainless-steel bolts (10-12mm) or EU-certified titanium bolts. Please do not use homemade bolts.

b) Use only proper 2-bolt lower-offs:

2 bolts + chain + stainless steel clippable carabiner

or

V-type with 2 bolts + chain + 2 stainless steel carabiners



c) Clean the cliffs very thoroughly of loose rock.

d) Follow the "Kalymnos-style" bolting philosophy.

e) Notify the local climbing community about your plans before putting up routes. Let us know at Climb Kalymnos about your equipping experience and the new route(s) you are planning, and notify the Kalymnos Rescue Service about the hardware you plan to use to ensure it is appropriate and safe for the particular environment of Kalymnos.

The full set of equipping guidelines can be found online at [climbkalymnos.com/climbing](http://climbkalymnos.com/climbing)

# CLIMBING

## 7 The Kalymnos Rescue Team and Emergency Numbers

An excellent mountain rescue team, the Kalymnos Rescue Service, was formed in Kalymnos in 2014. The team is staffed by volunteers and relies on donations from climbers to continue offering its very important services. The volunteers staffing the Rescue Service have been professionally trained to rescue an injured person from crags and approach paths, with or without the use of ropes, and to provide first aid.

The Rescue Service relies on donations to keep operating. To support them, visit [www.kalymnosrescueteam.org](http://www.kalymnosrescueteam.org)

## 8 What to do in case of an accident

Do not try to move the injured climber. Call one of the Emergency Numbers and be ready to answer the following questions.

- **Who?** Name of injured climber and a telephone number where you can be contacted.
- **What?** Type of injury, how many people were hurt, how serious is the injury? Be as accurate as possible.
- **Where?** Name of crag, sub-sector, and route.
- **When?** Time of the accident.

### EMERGENCY NUMBERS

**Hospital:** (+30) 22430 22166, 22430 23025

**Police:** (+30) 22430 22100

**Universal Emergency Number:** 112



In the image above, the Kalymnos Rescue Service rescues two climbers in 2014 after they tried to abseil down the 80m rappel at Grande Grotta. Their rope was much shorter, and the couple got stuck hanging in the void of the cave. The rescue operation took several hours and it was dark by the time the climbers were lowered to the ground.

In the image below, the Rescue Team transports a climber with a leg injury from the hard-to-approach sector Eros, in Telendos, in July 2015. The climber is expected to make a full recovery and be back on the rocks soon.



© Aris Theodoropoulos 2016  
Kalymnos Rock Climbing Guidebook

*Always tie a knot in the end of your rope, no matter how long your rope is or how short the route is. Help prevent the most common climbing accidents on Kalymnos!*