

# TOP-ROPE SUPERVISOR SCHEME

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## SYLLABUS

**South African Mountaineering  
Development and Training Programme**

**Mountain Training Scheme**



Only trainers and assessors approved and accredited by the South African Mountaineering Development and Training Trust (MDT) may provide training and assessment that will lead to MDT accreditation.

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# Top-Rope Supervisor Scheme

## Syllabus

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### Competence

### Anchors

The learner must be able to demonstrate an ability to choose suitable anchors in a variety of situations, including the use of:

- spikes and blocks;
- threads, Chockstones and trees;
- stakes, bolts and pitons

and be able to connect equipment to the above anchors.

### Belaying

The learner must be able to:

- set up a sound belay system to single and multiple anchors;
- set up a top-rope system;
- set up a bottom-rope system;
- demonstrate good belay technique, and choose an appropriate belay device;
- demonstrate an ability perform lowers.

### Climbing

The learner must be able to:

- read and interpret guide books effectively;
- choose and climb routes suited to their ability.

### Abseiling

The leaner must be able to abseil and protect personal abseiling.

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## **Environment**

### **Access**

The leaner should:

- understand and be able to use information contained in recent guide books and where appropriate carry out any recommendations contained therein;
- have an awareness and understanding of issues affecting access to climbing areas;
- have an awareness and understanding of issues affecting access to climbing walls and gyms, particularly related to groups under supervision.

### **Conservation**

The leaner should:

- be able to demonstrate good practice in the conservation of the crag environment;
- be aware of locally important, historical sites and features, species of plants and animals and the legal situation related to them;
- be familiar with and observe current access and conservation guidelines.

### **Etiquette**

The leaner should:

- be aware of local rock climbing ethics, particularly those relating to single pitch crags;
- be able to operate flexibly when planning programmes and choose routes to accommodate independent climbers;
- be aware of the need to operate in a style which minimises the impact on, and the risk to, other climbers
- manage groups so as to leave the crags in an improved condition.

## Supervision

### Group Supervision

The learner should be able to demonstrate:

- the ability to manage groups of an appropriate size in a safe manner, including tying on, climbing and belaying;
- the use of appropriate equipment suitable for the group and the chosen venue;
- the ability to manage all members of the group irrespective of whether or not they are involved in climbing or belaying;
- knowledge of rules governing the use of different climbing walls and gyms, particularly as related to groups under supervision.

### Communication

The learner must be able to organise and arrange effective communication between the group members.

### Route Choice

The learner must be able to choose routes at a crag or wall suitable for use by a group.

### Emergency Procedures

The learner must be aware of, and be able to deal with common problems in top rope situations, including a stuck climber.

### Bouldering

The learner must be familiar with, and demonstrate the use of bouldering activities: on crags, boulders and/ or climbing walls.

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## Climbing

### Climbing

The learner should be familiar with:

- rock features;
- basic climbing techniques
- injury avoidance;
- climbing walls;

### **Equipment**

The learner must be familiar with individual and group equipment and be able to care for and maintain it.

### **Guidebooks**

The learner must have knowledge of guidebooks, their availability, interpretation and use.

### **Environmental hazards**

The learner must understand the dangers from:

- loose rock;
- inclement weather;
- other crag and/ or wall users.

# Top-Rope Supervisor Scheme Acknowledgements

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1. **South African Mountaineering Development and Training Programme**  
Technical Committee.
2. **Mountain Club of South Africa. National Training Sub-committee (1994)**  
*Mountain Leadership Training Scheme . Proposed Policy and Guidelines a  
Consultative Document.*
3. **Union Internationale des Associations d'Alpinisme**  
Working Group Training Standards  
*Model Training Standards for voluntary Leaders and Instructors.*
4. **Mountain Leader Training Board (UK)**  
*Single Pitch Supervisors Award Prospectus and Syllabus.*
5. **United Kingdom Mountain Training Board (1995)**  
*National Guidelines.*

# Top-Rope Supervisor Scheme Documentation

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Compiled by Euan Waugh; February 2002

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