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Standard Terminology Relating to Climbing and Mountaineering Equipment and Practices¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This terminology defines the terms that are unique to climbing and mountaineering and the statistical basis for rating a product's performance.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards*:²

E456 Terminology Relating to Quality and Statistics

E1150 Definitions of Terms Relating to Fatigue

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions of General Climbing and Mountaineering Terms*:

3.1.1 **aid climbing**, *n*—a technique of climbing that utilizes auxiliary devices as a means of ascent to supplement the natural features of the surface being climbed.

3.1.2 **belay**, *n*—a technique where a stationary person controls a rope connected to a moving climber in order to provide protection against a fall, or in the event of a fall, to catch the climber.

3.1.3 **belay**, *v*—to protect a climber with a belay.

3.1.4 **belayer**, *n*—a person who is belaying.

3.1.5 **bouldering**, *n*—a technique of climbing where climbers remain close to the ground and do not use a rope to safeguard their progress.

3.1.6 **climber**, *n*—a person engaging in the sport of climbing and mountaineering.

3.1.7 **climbing and mountaineering**, *n*—the sport of ascending, descending, and traversing on mountainous terrain, snow and ice, and natural and simulated rock surfaces.

3.1.8 **climbing and mountaineering equipment**, *n*—the equipment exclusively designed for use in climbing and mountaineering.

3.1.9 **free climbing**, *n*—a technique of climbing that uses only the natural features of the surface being climbed. In free climbing, equipment may be utilized to provide protection in the event of a fall, but is not used to assist progress.

3.1.10 **lead climbing**, *n*—the skill of climbing first up a pitch, utilizing a belayer, climbing rope, and intermediate protection anchors.

3.1.11 **rappel**, *n*—the set up of anchors and equipment used to rappel.

3.1.12 **rappel**, *v*—to descend by sliding down a rope using equipment or special technique, or both, which applies friction, thereby controlling the speed of descent.

3.1.13 **route**, *n*—the path chosen by a climber.

3.1.14 **self belay**, *n*—a technique of self protection employed by a climber using climbing and mountaineering equipment.

3.1.15 **soloing**, *n*—a technique of climbing where the climber is alone. A belay may or may not be used.

3.1.16 **top rope climbing**, *n*—a technique of climbing where the climber is safeguarded by a roped belay from above.

3.2 *Definitions of Climbing and Mountaineering Equipment Terms*:

3.2.1 **accessory cord**, *n*—ropes used for climbing and mountaineering purposes that are not designed to absorb fall impact energy.

3.2.2 **artificial climbing wall (ACW)**, *n*—a wall exclusively designed and built for climbing. The ACWs may be designed and used for lead climbing, top rope climbing or bouldering. The ACWs may be transportable or permanent.

3.2.3 **ascender**, *n*—a device used to ascend a rope.

3.2.4 **belay anchor**, *n*—an anchor used to secure the rope or belayer, or both, while belaying a climber. It also may be used with ropes while descending or lowering.

3.2.5 **belay bar**, *n*—a belay anchor made from pipe or a bar.

3.2.6 **belay device**, *n*—a mechanical device used to control the friction on a rope.

3.2.7 **belay station**, *n*—a place where belay anchors are located.

3.2.8 **bolt hanger**, *n*—a device which, when attached to a surface by the means of a bolt, is used to provide an anchor point.

3.2.9 **carabiner**, *n*—a self-closing, gated, load-bearing, connective device.

¹ This terminology is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee F32 on Search and Rescue and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee F32.01 on Equipment, Testing, and Maintenance.

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² For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.