

NZAC High Alpine Skills

Who is this course for?

The NZAC High Alpine Skills course is designed for **NZAC Intermediate mountaineers** (or equivalent skill set) who are looking to learn the skills to travel safely on glaciated terrain and lead climbs on New Zealand's high alpine peaks.

Prior to attending this course* participants must have **experience of moderate alpine (non glacial) mountaineering**, be a **NZAC Sport or Trad Climber** and a **NZAC Intermediate Mountaineer** (or equivalent skill set), and the **fitness to enjoy multiple full days (7 hours) in the mountain environment**.

*Full course pre requirements can be found in the course info pack

Course Overview

Duration: 6 Days

Season: October - January

Location: Aoraki Mt Cook National Park

Course Tutors: NZMGA Climbing Guides / IFMGA Mountain Guide

Ratio: 1-4

Cost: TBC

Progression: NZAC Leading on Technical Ice Course

Syllabus

Preparing for the High Alpine environment

- Clothing/equipment
- Trip planning resources (avalanche forecasts/weather forecasts/guidebooks)
- Weather
- Navigation
- Using aircraft for access
- Selecting appropriate objectives

Being and moving in the alpine environment

- Pitched climbing on rock and snow
- Glacier travel
- Snow anchors
- Rock anchors
- Route section in the high alpine environment
- Snow pack observation and avalanche hazard evaluation
- Descending technical terrain

Changing Circumstances

- Crevasse Rescue
- Use of avalanche safety equipment including transceiver search
- Techniques for emergency shelters (snow shelters/ bothy bag) in the high alpine environment
- Emergency procedures for the high alpine environment

Course Outcomes*

Preparing for the High Alpine Environment

- The knowledge to pack appropriately for a trip to the high alpine environment
- An ability to plan trips and set objectives for the high alpine environment
- An ability to interpret and plan according to weather forecasts and observations
- An ability to identify features on a map and an ability to relocate using the map and terrain features
- An understanding of high alpine hut booking procedures, use and etiquette
- The awareness of basic safety principles regarding the use of aircraft to access the high mountains

Being and moving in the Alpine Environment

- An ability to use two ice axes to efficiently climb steep snow, ice and mixed terrain.
- Competent to travel on both wet and dry glaciers
- An awareness of safe travel through glaciated alpine terrain with particular attention to avoiding avalanche terrain and travel through crevassed terrain.
- An understanding of building a variety of snow (snow stake, ice screw, v-thread, snow bollard) and rock (nuts, cams, rock bollard) anchors.
- The ability to place protection to protect a leader and second climbing snow, ice and rock.
- The ability to retreat and descend routes using appropriate techniques (retrievable abseils, down climbing)

Changing Circumstances

- An ability to arrest a crevasse fall
- An ability to efficiently rescue yourself and a companion from a crevasse
- The ability to confidently perform a companion rescue in the event of an avalanche
- An awareness of snow shelters appropriate for emergency situations

Someone who has these skills and the skills listed for the Leading on Technical Ice Course is considered a **NZAC Advanced Mountaineer** and is likely to have the skills and ability to travel on glaciated Mount Cook Grade 3 Terrain

*Course outcomes may vary dependant on participant ability and course conditions. This is a guideline, individuals must assess their own ability after a course.