

NZAC Basic Snowcraft

Who is this course for?

The NZAC Basic Snowcraft course is designed for **experienced trampers and those with a passion for the outdoors** who are looking to gain additional skills to travel safely in alpine terrain where snow and ice is often encountered.

Prior to attending this course participants must have some **experience in backcountry tramping, enthusiasm for enjoying New Zealand's Alpine Environment** and the **fitness to enjoy multiple full days in the mountain environment.**

Course Overview

Duration: 2/3 Days

Season: July - September

Location: Various mountainous locations across New Zealand

Course Tutors: NZAC Section Snowcraft Instructors

Ratio: 1-4

Cost: Set by NZAC Section

Progression:

NZAC Avalanche Awareness Course, NZAC Basic Navigation Course

Syllabus

Preparing for the alpine environment

- Clothing/equipment
- Trip planning resources (avalanche forecasts/weather forecasts/guidebooks)
- Weather
- Basic navigation

Being and moving in the alpine environment

- Use of ice axe (dagger, plunging, step cutting)
- Walking and kicking steps on snow without crampons (edging/ step kicking)
- Walking on snow with crampons (flat, 50/50, front pointing)
- Identification of the safest route for travel in the alpine environment
- Avalanche Awareness

Changing Circumstances

- Self-belay and self-arrest technique with and without an ice axe
- Use of avalanche safety equipment including transceiver search
- Techniques for camping in snow, and emergency shelters (snow shelters/ bothy bag)

Course Outcomes*

Preparing for the Alpine Environment

- An ability to plan simple trips into the alpine environment
- The knowledge to pack and select appropriate equipment for a trip to the alpine environment
- An ability to interpret simple weather forecasts and observations
- An ability to identify simple features on a map and a basic ability to relocate using the map and terrain features

Being and moving in the Alpine Environment

- An ability to use both an ice axe and mountaineering boots as an effective tool for traveling in the alpine environment
- The ability to fit crampons and travel effectively in the alpine environment using them
- An awareness of safe travel through the alpine environment with particular attention to avoiding avalanche terrain and the identification of other potential hazards
- A basic awareness of the avalanche phenomenon and why angle, aspect, altitude, slope shapes, trigger points and terrain traps are significant

Changing Circumstances

- An awareness of techniques to prevent slips and trips
- The ability to stop an unintentional slide in mild snow covered terrain
- The ability to confidently perform a companion rescue in the event of an avalanche
- An awareness of snow shelters and how to camp in the snow

Someone who has these skills combined with the knowledge from a NZAC Avalanche Awareness course is considered a **NZAC Novice Mountaineer** and is likely to have the skills and ability to travel on Mount Cook Grade 1+ Terrain (Non Glacial)

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