

# NZAC Intermediate Snowcraft

## Who is this course for?

The NZAC Intermediate Snowcraft course is designed for **NZAC Basic Mountaineers (or those with an equivalent skill set)** who are looking to gain additional skills to travel safely in alpine terrain where straightforward steep snow and ice is encountered, and where abseiling on descent could be required.

Prior to attending this course\* participants must have **Tramping experience, undertaken personal trips on Mount Cook Grade 1+ terrain**, be a **NZAC Novice Mountaineer** (or equivalent skill set) and have the **fitness to enjoy multiple full days (7 hours) 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 or Professional Instructors with NZOIA Alpine 2 (or equivalent qualifications)

**Ratio:** 1-4

**Cost:** Set by NZAC Section

**Progression:** Backcountry Avalanche Course, Intermediate Navigation Course

## Syllabus

### Preparing for the alpine environment

- Clothing/equipment
- Trip planning resources (avalanche forecasts/weather forecasts/guidebooks)
- Weather
- Navigation
- Physical training

### Being and moving in the alpine environment

- Use of two ice axes, for daggering and piolet traction on moderately steep snow
- The use of crampons on steeper terrain
- Building basic snow or rock bollard anchors
- Pitched climbing on simple terrain
- Single-pitch abseiling with the use of prussic
- Identification of the safest and most efficient route for travel on moderate alpine terrain

### Changing Circumstances

- Building basic snow anchors: horizontal/vertical mid clip snowstake, vertical top-clip snowstake, ice axe belay, snow bollard, abseiling off rock bollards
- Use of basic climbing calls
- Techniques for comfortable and unplanned camping in snow, and emergency shelters (snow shelters/ bothy bag)

## Course Outcomes\*

### Preparing for the Alpine Environment

- An ability to plan trips into the alpine environment
- An ability to locate and interpret a range of weather forecasts, avalanche forecasts, and other relevant information
- An ability to identify simple features on a map and a basic ability to relocate using the map and terrain features
- An awareness of basic physical training principles applicable to the mountain environment

### Being and moving in the Alpine Environment

- An ability to use two ice axes and crampons to effectively ascend and descend moderately steep snow where pitching is not normally required including front-pointing and French Technique
- Can demonstrate multiple cramponing techniques appropriate to the snow type and gradient
- Can build a basic snow or rock bollard anchor
- The ability to demonstrate appropriate abseil technique
- Can demonstrate safe, efficient travel techniques in the alpine environment with particular attention to avoiding avalanche terrain

### Changing Circumstances

- Has an awareness of a variety of possible anchor types and can select an appropriate anchor for the situation
- Understands the importance of and demonstrates clear communication when ropes are used
- An awareness of snow shelters and how to comfortably camp in the snow, including unplanned bivouacs

Someone who has these skills is considered a **NZAC Intermediate Mountaineer** and is likely to have the skills and ability to travel on Mount Cook Grade 2+ Terrain (that has no glacial related complications)

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