Compagnie des Guides de Chamonix

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MOUNTAINEERING - AUTONOMY & SAFETY COURSE - LEVEL 1

Duration: 4 | Fitness: ▲▲▲△△ | Technique: ▲▲▲△△ | Price from: 1 020 €

THE AUTONOMY & SAFETY MOUNTAINEERING PROGRAM

Our Autonomy & Safety courses form a progressive training program designed to help you develop, step by step, the skills required to undertake mountaineering ascents independently. Each level introduces new technical and risk management skills, which are then put into practice on high mountain routes. With 3 to 4 participants per guide, the small group size allows for personalised instruction and active participation in the preparation and completion of each route.

AUTONOMY & SAFETY - LEVEL 1: GLACIER MOUNTAINEERING

Level 1 is the first stage of the program and focuses on progression and safety on glaciers. After two days dedicated to consolidating your climbing and cramponing skills, you head to the Albert 1er Hut and the Tour Glacier to learn glacier roping techniques, belaying and the basics of crevasse rescue. You are also introduced to the essential tools used to prepare a route and manage risks in the mountains.

This course is the natural progression from our 5-day beginner mountaineering course. You must already be confident with basic belaying techniques at a climbing crag or indoor climbing wall and have completed at least two mountaineering outings using crampons.

Course objectives
- Consolidate climbing belay techniques and cramponing skills
- Learn the fundamentals of glacier safety: roping up, belaying and basic crevasse rescue
- Learn the basics of route preparation and risk management: map reading, guidebooks and briefing tools

ITINERARY

Day 1

Rock climbing in the valley
Day at the Gaillands climbing crag dedicated to consolidating roping and belaying techniques. Practice dynamic belaying and learn abseiling techniques. Overnight in the valley.

Day 2

Glacier Skills
Day on the Mer de Glace dedicated to consolidating cramponing and ice axe techniques, with further practice on steep terrain. Learn how to rope up on a glacier and the basics of crevasse rescue. Overnight in the valley.

Day 3

Self-arrest on Snow | Overnight at the Albert 1er Hut (2702 m)
Consolidate glacier roping techniques and learn how to self-arrest a fall on snow. Hike up to the Albert 1er Hut (2702 m) and spend the night there.
Vertical ascent: 500 m

Day 4

Ascent from the Albert 1er Hut
Complete a route in the Tour Glacier basin, putting into practice the techniques learned during the course, particularly moving roped together on a glacier and on snow. Depending on the conditions and the level of the group, different ascents may be considered, including the Petite Fourche (3520 m) or Tête Blanche (3429 m). Return to the valley in the early afternoon.
Vertical ascent: 800 m / Vertical descent: 1300 m

GROUP BOOKING

The group option brings together participants who may not know each other. It allows you to follow a set program on fixed dates while benefiting from an attractive price and the friendly atmosphere of a group.

Dates
See the group booking module below.

Price 2027
€1020 per person, based on a minimum of 3 participants.

This price includes
- IFMGA English-speaking mountain guide
- Half-board accommodation in a mountain hut on Day 3 (dinner, overnight stay and breakfast)
- Lift access required for the routes included in the program

This price does not include
- Accommodation in the valley during the course
- Picnic lunches
- Transport to the meeting points
- Personal technical equipment

PRIVATE BOOKING

The private option allows you to take this course with your own group and benefit from instruction tailored to your needs. You can choose your departure date subject to hut availability, and the program can be adjusted according to your level and progression.

Prices 2027
2 people: €1755 per person
3 people: €1265 per person
4 people: €1020 per person

This price includes
- IFMGA English-speaking mountain guide
- Half-board accommodation in a mountain hut on Day 3 (dinner, overnight stay and breakfast)
- Lift access required for the routes included in the program

This price does not include
- Accommodation in the valley during the course
- Picnic lunches
- Transport to the meeting points
- Personal technical equipment

FURTHER INFORMATION

To prepare for your course, please read our guides' tips, which provide practical advice and recommendations for your mountaineering trip.

Meeting point
Meet at 8.30am on Day 1 at the Compagnie des Guides de Chamonix office, 190 place de l'Église.

Fitness level
Regular endurance training is required. You should be prepared for up to 7 hours of activity per day.

Technical level
Previous mountaineering experience is required. This course is not suitable for complete beginners.

Prerequisites
You must be confident with basic belaying techniques at an indoor climbing wall or outdoor climbing crag, including tying in and using a belay device. You must also have completed at least two mountaineering outings using crampons.

Guiding policy
The group consists of 3 to 4 participants per guide, allowing for progressive learning and personalised instruction. Registration is open to participants aged 18 and over.

Accommodation
One night in a mountain hut on a half-board basis is included on Day 3 (dinner, overnight stay and breakfast).

⚠ **Formalities**
Insurance covering mountain rescue and repatriation is mandatory. If you are not already insured, rescue, repatriation and cancellation insurance can be purchased when booking. A valid ID is also required.

EQUIPMENT

We recommend taking particular care when choosing your equipment, as it contributes to your comfort and the smooth running of the course. Weight is an important consideration: choose lightweight, suitable equipment while ensuring adequate protection for high mountain conditions.

Equipment
- A backpack of approximately 35 litres
- Climbing shoes, available for rent
- Mountaineering boots, available for rent
- Gaiters, if required with your trousers
- Telescopic trekking poles, available for rent
- Crampons with anti-balling plates, a helmet, harness and straight ice axe, available for rent
- Mandatory technical equipment: 1 double lanyard, 1 directional screwgate carabiner, 1 reversible belay device with a screwgate carabiner, 2 ice screws (16 cm) with straight-gate carabiners, 2 slings (120 cm) with straight-gate carabiners, 1 Micro Traxion with a screwgate carabiner, 1 Tibloc with a screwgate carabiner, 1 Prusik (minimum 50 cm) with a screwgate carabiner

Clothing
- A warm hat compatible with a helmet
- A sun hat or cap
- A neck warmer such as a Buff
- A long-sleeved technical base layer
- A fleece
- A waterproof hooded jacket such as Gore-Tex
- A lightweight down jacket
- Thermal leggings
- Trousers suitable for summer mountaineering
- Waterproof overtrousers such as Gore-Tex, available for rent
- Socks suitable for hiking and mountaineering
- Warm gloves, available for rent
- Lightweight gloves
- A change of clothes for the night in the mountain hut

Accessories
- Category 4 sunglasses
- A headtorch
- A sleeping bag liner
- A water bottle of at least 1.5 L
- Earplugs
- A personal first aid kit including at least sunscreen, lip balm, blister treatment, as well as your usual medication for headaches and nausea
- A waterproof pouch containing your ID and some cash

Our Rental Partners
You can rent your equipment at preferential rates from our partner shops: Millet (excluding crampons, ice axes and helmets),

Ravanel & Co, Sanglard Sports and Concept Pro Shop.

Our Equipment Partners
Millet, Dynastar, Julbo, Grivel and Monnet.