

Trad Follow – Instructor Handout

We are making some changes to this requirement in 2017:

- Students are only required to do **one** "follow a leader".
- The emphasis is on more **thoroughly preparing students for trad seconding** instead of just going through the motions.
- We now require a **second instructor/assistant** to supervise the student while lead belaying. This "belay coach" should give the student feedback on belay technique, amount of slack, belayer positioning and stance, etc. (The "belay coach" is only needed for maybe half the time, so that instructor/assistant can fill this role for multiple leaders.)
- The next time this student does a lead belay may be for real at the Gunks. Is the student ready? If not, take the time now to get that student ready.

Notes:

- Students should go through the entire trad follow process, just like they'd do on a multi pitch climb in the Gunks
- Students' belays should be watched and coached by a separate (non-climbing) instructor or assistant to ensure student can belay competently (would you be happy with this student belaying you at the Gunks?)
- All students should perform safety checks and use the full set of calls.

Skills Confirmed:

- Tie into the rope with a rewoven figure 8, and check knots
- Competent belay – **observed by the 2nd instructor or assistant**
 - Correctly gives and responds to all verbal commands
 - The student gives the appropriate amount of slack, letting out and pulling in rope at the correct times, leaving the correct slack in the system
 - Appropriate positioning at the base of the cliff
 - Knows what to do if they cannot hear the leader at the top of the climb
- Cleans and reracks gear
 - Removing gear (nuts, cams, tricams) correctly
 - Tripling alpine draws and racking gear
- On reaching the anchor, student can
 - Tie in with a clove hitch, Pass the gear to the leader without dropping it
 - Re-flake the rope so that the leader is ready to climb the next pitch
 - Puts the leader on belay and is ready to belay them

Suggested agenda:

1. **Leader reviews procedure, quizzing the student (they should have learned this already) and instructing when necessary**
2. **Have the 2nd instructor or assistant at the base of the cliff coaching the student in good belay technique**
3. **Leader climbs, placing a selection of nuts and cams, and possibly other gear if they have it**
4. **Student follows, clearing gear**
5. **Student reaches belay and ties in, passes gear, reflakes rope and puts leader on belay**
 - a. Note, it is not necessary to climb a second pitch, just to set up to be ready to climb, this means you can build your final anchor at the top of the cliff and cover the final points, including the student setting up to belay, from there
6. **Leader begins to climb a second pitch**
 - a. Note, leader may take a few steps then can finish, then Student cleans anchor etc.