**Safe Klettersteig Climbing**

**Careful planning is key for safe and pleasant hours on klettersteigs. Make sure you plan carefully before you start to avoid unexpected events and accidents, weather and current conditions. You can find detailed descriptions including topos and safety considerations for each klettersteig.**

**If you are planning on a via ferrata, please note: When planning your via ferrata trip, carefully consider any difficulties of single passages that take two continuous of the difficulties and as such the overall demands of the klettersteig.**

**This should help you gather the information:**

- **Weather:**
  - How will the weather affect the klettersteig or old snow patches on the approach or descent?
  - Is thunderstorms expected in the course of the day?
  - Must snow be expected on the klettersteig or old snow patches on the approach or descent?
  - Is the planned tour suitable for the weather forecast?
  - Are you prepared to negotiate snow patches?

- **Tour:**
  - Is it the right tour for the group?
  - Are all group members up to the tour (fitness and psyche)?
  - Is the group size appropriate for the tour?
  - Are there any other legal requirements?

- **Equipment:**
  - Do you have your climbing equipment correctly and in impeccable condition?
  - Do you have a first-aid kit, bivouac bag, mobile phone (charged battery!) for an emergency?
  - Are your harnesses and lanyards modern and in impeccable condition?

- **Self:**
  - Are you prepared to negotiate snow patches?
  - Do you have information about approach and descent and the expected demands?
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4 do not start climbing if there is a chance of thunderstorms

Lightning equals natural danger. Risk, weather conditions and cold can be a reason for not starting. Electrical storms can often be expected in the course of mid- and late summer thunderstorms. They severely affect every climber in the area. Therefore, do not start climbing if there is a chance of thunderstorms. Even if you are convinced to do so, you should never start climbing if you are unsure about the weather situation and that you will have a safe way back to your car. As soon as you notice electrical storms, please leave the area and stop in a safe place immediately. If you should nevertheless get caught in a storm you can save your life by taking right action. Avoid getting stuck in steep, technical terrain, no matter what! If you are caught in a thunderstorm, please do not waste any more time!

5 critically examine the cable and stanchions

Nowhere, nowhere, nowhere. First thing every climber can ensure damage to protection. Do not climb closed klettersteigs. Yes, old, abandoned climbing routes may look great, but in fact, it is often dangerous. An old cable segment may be used too little. Lightning and thunder may damage the cables. Therefore, do not climb closed klettersteigs! Even if you can see the cable, it can be used too much. Do not climb closed klettersteigs. However, if you see a leader, please make sure to have a second climber behind you. Only one climber is allowed between two stanchions. Do not climb closed klettersteigs.

6 partner-check at the start

Check each other - harness, connection of via ferrata lanyard with harness, helmet, Via-ferrata principle. Check 1: that your partner’s harness meets all safety regulations. Single action always above. If the via ferrata beyond a led directly into the totty using a safety hitch (no carabiner) and 2, that it cannot be used and comfortably against their head and that the chamois is fastened. Wear your helmet. A helmet protects you against rockfall. Additionally, avoid dislodging rocks by climbing carefully and don’t move too freely. The same is true for approximating and descending. When a via ferrata no- vang, “nothing between” or “rock, rock, rock!”, Do not look too hasty and the mountain and wait until the world is safe.

7 keep sufficient distance

Only one climber is allowed between two stanchions. Make sure only one climber is distributed in the cable segment with section between two stanchions. The second, lower climber must keep enough distance to the top end of their own cable segment because if it touches, they will fall a few metre past this stanchion while climbing this device extends.

8 clear communication when passing

Do communicate and be considerate in order to avoid dangerous situations when passing or meeting climbers coming the other way. Even if you master the difficulty of passing the leading without this sign-off effort, make sure you are always clipped into the cable when you meet other climbers. Do not pass before a quick word with the other climbers. Wait until a safe section to do so. Avoid people coming towards you. Do not cross a rope by climbing carefully and don’t move too freely.

9 beware of falling rocks

Treating greatly promotes rockfall. A helmet protects you against rockfall. Additionally, avoid dislodging rocks by climbing carefully and don’t move too freely. The same is true for approximating and descending. When a via ferrata no-vang, “nothing between” or “rock, rock, rock!”, Do not look too hasty and the mountain and wait until the world is safe.

10 respect nature and the environment

Use public transport or car-share to get to the trailhead. Do not leave any waste behind. Respect nature and the environment. Please, do not destroy it. In mountain terms, “The Alpine Associations advocate that the right of access to nature and backcountry be preserved and restrictions be imposed after due consideration of interests only. Consideration, prudence and a willingness to turn back in justified cases are necessary to avoid conflict.” (Basic policy of AVS, DAV, ÖAV)

Cardinal & German language booklet: "Klettersteige" online on www.alpenverein.at/kskp