

Intermediate Climbing School

Class Co-Coordinator: Ann Marie Caplan (she/her) + Theo Pham (they/them)

Student Co-Coordinator: Patricia Akers (she/her) + Alyssa Koida (she/her)



Welcome to ICS!

Class Co-Coordinators



Ann Marie Caplan
She/Her



Theo Pham
They/Them

ics@mazamas.org

Student Co-Coordinators



Patricia Akers
She/Her



Alyssa Koida
She/Her

icsstudentcoordinator@mazamas.org



Welcome to ICS!

ICS Committee Chair



Melinda Hugo
She/Her

Admissions Committee



Ceci Estraviz



Heidi Griffith



What's going on tonight?

What is ICS

Testimonials

2026-27 ICS Class Information

Questions



What is the Mazamas?

- A non-profit mountaineering organization founded in 1894
- Mission: To inspire everyone to love and protect the mountains
- Membership is open to everyone! No glaciated peak requirement
- Only members can participate in Mazamas climbs
- Climbing education has been offered since the 1950s
- Members get a discount on education programs
- BCEP = Basic Climbing Education Program; not a prerequisite



Why am I here?

What is ICS?

- A place to learn SKILLS
- A pathway to increase AUTONOMY in the alpine
- An inclusive space to build COMMUNITY



What is ICS?

Tangible Skills:

- Anchors - rock and snow
- Gear placement - rock and snow
- Belay and rappel technique and rescue
- Multi-pitch technique
- Crevasse rescue
- Glacier travel
- Steep snow technique
- Avalanche hazard management and rescue
- Trip planning and navigation
- And more ...



What is ICS?

Less Tangible Skills:

- Problem solving
- Accident prevention and management
- Leadership and teamwork
- And more ...



What is ICS?

Skills - Hands on practice

Field Sessions:

- Broughton Bluff
- Horsethief Butte
- Smith Rock
- Timberline & White River on Mt. Hood

Includes many overnights, either camping or staying at the Mazama Lodge.



What is ICS?

Autonomy

- Plan and execute intermediate rock and snow climbs independently or within your community
- Act safely and confidently in alpine environments
- Increase accessibility to places and activities previously unexplored
- Be an active participant or assistant on intermediate or advanced Mazama climbs



What is ICS?

Community

- Foster an inclusive community
- Meet great friends and climbing partners
- Become a leader in your climbing community
- Learn from and connect with a variety of experienced climbers
- Main pathway to Leadership Development within the Mazamas



Testimonials



Kellie O'Donnell



Scott Nasello



Nicole Diggins

Course Format

- Lectures with skills practice
- Homework & Individual practice
- Field sessions
- Assessment



Fall Schedule

August						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

October						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1

September						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

November						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

-  Lecture (required)
-  Field Session (required)
-  Lead Belay options (attend 1)
-  Skills Test (required)
-  Optional Session
-  Reserve (required)
-  WFA / MFA options (Recommended)
-  Common Holidays



Winter Schedule

January						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

March						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

- Lecture (required)
- Field Session (required)
- Lead Belay options (attend 1)
- Skills Test (required)
- Optional Session
- Reserve (required)
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Additional Sessions

Lead Belay Class - Required for those who don't have a lead belay card (optional for those who do and would like a refresh)

Climbing Technique - Session taught by Juan Rodriguez to teach efficient movement, encouraged but not required.



Expectations of ICS Students

- Treat all fellow students and instructors with respect
- Follow [Mazamas Community Agreements and Harassment Policy](#)
- Attend all required sessions
 - Availability of makeup sessions is extremely limited or non-existent and handled on a case-by-case basis
 - Missed sessions may impact ability to continue course
- Behave in a safe manner at all sessions
 - Unsafe behavior may impact ability to continue course & graduate
- Practice skills at home
- Come prepared to all sessions with homework completed
- Speak up in real time about concerns



Gear Requirements

Standard Climbing Gear - harness, climbing helmet, locking carabiners, non-locking carabiners, slings, tubular belay device with guide mode, prusik slings, cordelette, ice axe, rock climbing shoes, insulated boots, crampons.

Other Essential Gear - backpack, sturdy boots/shoes, active clothing, inclement weather clothing, 10+ essentials, camping equipment.

Optional Gear - GriGri or similar assisted braking belay device

- Discount for ICS students at Mountain Shop.
- Use the gear you already own.
- If you need help with gear, the committee can help.
- Try instructors' gear to learn what works for you.



Gear Not Required

Mazamas Provide:

- Climbing rope
- Avalanche transceivers
- Shovels, pickets, probes

Instructors Provide:

- Trad gear
- Slings, quickdraws, ice screws, other personal gear



Cost

ICS tuition:

- \$1900 for Mazama members, \$2150 for non-members

Cost includes:

- 18 lectures put on by experienced and passionate members of the climbing community
- 9 weekend field sessions
- Overnight camping and lodging - Maryhill State Park, Haystack Reservoir, Mazama Lodge (meals included at Lodge)
- Professional instruction - Lead belay instruction at a local gym, rock climbing technique instruction from Juan Rodriguez, climbing instructor and guide



Payment Options

Payment Plan

The option to split the cost of tuition over 4 payments is available. Please mark this selection on your application.

Tuition Assistance

Some tuition scholarships are available for those for whom cost may be prohibitive to taking ICS. The goal of Mazamas and ICS is to ensure that the skills learned and community fostered are accessible and inclusive to all members of the climbing community.

Tuition Assistance may cover up to 70% of tuition. To be awarded a scholarship, applicants must apply online (in addition to course application) and meet course requirements for acceptance. Scholarship status does not affect the application process.



Tuition Assistance Details

- Apply for a scholarship as part of the application process.
- The supplemental application is where an applicant requests a scholarship and answers additional questions.
- Applications are confidential and not considered in acceptance decisions.
- Notification to scholarship recipients is completed prior to the start of class.
- Please visit mazamas.org/scholarships for the most up-to-date information.
- Please email scholarship questions to: help@mazamas.org



Optional courses (not included in tuition)

The following courses are not required for ICS graduation and are not included in tuition.

Lead Climbing Class

- Juan Rodriguez professional climbing instructor and guide - \$90

First Aid Certifications

- Mazamas offers the following first aid certifications:
 - Wilderness First Aid (WFA) offered in November, March and June
 - Mountaineering First Aid (MFA), an outdoor recreation-specific Mazamas skill builder offered in November and March
 - Wilderness First Responder (WFR) offered in July and August



Additional Considerations

First Aid certification (continued)

- WFA & MFA are required for Leadership Development
- WFA is a prerequisite to MFA
- **WFA is required for assisting on Mazamas climbs**
- These are potentially life-saving skills!



Additional Considerations

Assisting Mazamas Basic Climbing Education Program (BCEP)

- Not required but highly encouraged after graduating ICS
 - **Solidifies your own skill set**
 - Helps build leadership skills
 - Builds more community
 - Gives back to the outdoor community
 - Is a lot of fun!
- We can help connect you with a BCEP team



Application Process

- You'll need to set up a Mazama profile.
- Submit application with all required information.
 - Use climb resume template from registration site
 - Registration opens June 26, 2026
- Applications are randomized with personal information removed.
- Complete admissions skills test.
- Admission team reviews and selects applicants.
- Applicants notified of acceptance, waitlist, or not accepted.



Application requirements

- **Three climbs within the last three years**
 - One snow, one rock, and another of either
- **Ability to commit to all sessions**
- **A statement of experience and intended future use of skills learned**
- **While not required, volunteer work, especially outdoor-related, weighs heavily**
- **Pass the admissions skills test**

Once minimum qualification are met, ICS will strive to create a balanced class, including race/ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, and experience.



Admissions Skills Test

- **Knots:** overhand, water knot, figure 8 on a bight, reweven figure 8, alpine butterfly, double fisherman, prusik hitch, clove hitch, munter hitch, girth hitch
- **Top rope belay**
- **Rappel using a tubular belay device and an autoblock - you'll be asked to do this twice**



ICS Skills Test Prep Sessions

Great opportunity to not just practice skills, but also meet and ask questions of ICS grads. Register for free on the Mazamas website.

July 13 - BIPOC 6-9 pm

July 16 - She/They/Us 6-9 pm

July 18 - LGBTQ+ 9 am-12 pm

July 20 - Open to all 6-9 pm

July 22 - Open to all 6-9 pm

All sessions are at the Mazama Mountaineering Center (MMC)

Please respect spaces for those identifying as part of each affinity group



Key Admissions Dates

June 26 - Applications open (mazamas.org/ics)

July 24 - Applications close

August 2, August 4, and August 6 - Admissions test nights

August 12 - Notification emails sent

August 25 - Class starts



What questions do you have?



Contact Us

Visit mazamas.org/ics for more details

Email for ICS questions: ics@mazamas.org

Email for application questions or scholarship info:
help@mazamas.org

Let us know how we can help!



COVID-19 Response

We'll follow all Mazama COVID policies

- **Masks are optional at the MMC and will be available if preferred**
- **mazamas.org/coronavirusresponse/**

