

INTRODUCTION

Highball Climbing Centre is a dedicated indoor climbing centre. Our facilities include sport climbing walls (with rope & harness) and bouldering walls (no rope and harness), training equipment, and fitness spaces. We offer a progressive, supervised activity program for Novice Adults and Under 18's, as well as coaching and development for independent, competent climbers.

THE RISKS

"All climbing activities have a risk of serious injury. Participants must recognise that even if they follow all good practice there may still be the risk of accident and injury. It is the responsibility of the participant to adhere to the conditions of use." - *The Association of British Climbing Walls (The ABC) Participation statement.*

It is important you understand this document. There is inherent risk involved with climbing centres and associated activities. By using our centre, you are acknowledging that you understand these risks cannot be completely removed. If you do not understand any of the terminology or content, ask a member of staff to clarify.

The bouldering wall is the site of most injuries at a climbing wall. **THE SOFT MATTING DOES NOT REMOVE THE RISK OF INJURY.** Injuries can still occur even after a controlled/planned jump but are more likely after an uncontrolled fall. You should always be doing your utmost to avoid the risk of uncontrolled falls. This includes paying attention to how you will land and always assessing the risk of each climb you undertake.

Lead climbing also contains inherent risks, which are always present. Any leader fall can result in an injury and you must exercise great caution and preparation before you expose yourself to that risk. In top roping and leading, the greatest risk is presented by the belayer. **Always make sure they are skilled enough to keep you safe;** if you are unsure consult a member of staff.

OUR DUTY OF CARE

The **conditions of use** of the climbing centre **are not** intended to limit your enjoyment of the facilities; they are part of the duty of care that we, as operators, owe to you, the customer by law. As such, they are **not negotiable** and if you are not prepared to abide by them our staff may ask you to leave.

We reserve the right to refuse entry to customers for reasons of safety or inappropriate behaviour. CCTV is used to record and store moving images for the purpose of public safety and crime prevention.

YOUR DUTY OF CARE

You have a duty of care to act responsibly towards the other users of the centre, follow good practice and abide by the conditions of use of the centre. Statements of good practice are posted around the centre. They describe the accepted methods of use of equipment and climbing areas.

UNSUPERVISED CLIMBING

The Health and Safety Executive states 'competence' can be described as the combination of training, skills, experience and knowledge that a person has and their ability to apply them to perform a task safely.

Before you can use the top ropes or lead wall without supervision the centre expects you to be competent in the use of a climbing harness, a suitable knot to attach a rope to the harness and a belay device to secure a falling climber or lower a climber from the wall using a rope.

Before you can use the bouldering walls without supervision, you must be aware of the risks and have the appropriate knowledge to use this area safely. You are required to register to say you know how to top rope, lead climb or boulder, that you are prepared to abide by the conditions of use of the centre, and that you understand the risks involved in your participation. You will need to demonstrate your relevant skills, knowledge and experience to a member of the team by answering a series of questions and taking part in a practical assessment. Anyone who is deemed not competent to climb unsupervised must be supervised by a competent person.

Unsupervised climbing and bouldering is just that! Staff can provide help and advice, but instruction, coaching or training will only be provided where it has been booked and paid for in advance.

SUPERVISED CLIMBING

NOVICE CLIMBERS & JUNIORS U18'S

If you are not a **competent** climber or boulderer or are under 18, then do not attempt to climb without supervision. Supervision can be provided by either:

- A trained member of the Highball Crew via a pre-booked climbing course or activity, or
- A responsible adult (aged 18+) who has registered with Highball and proven their competency. .

Note: Youths aged 14+ may apply for a 'Green Card' and register for unsupervised climbing once they can demonstrate competence to do so safely. Green Cards are a privilege - not a right - and a Parent/Guardian may need to be present to complete the registration.

SUPERVISING GUESTS & GROUPS:

A **competent** adult climber or boulderer (age 18+) who has completed appropriate registration may supervise:

- Up to two guests (Novice/Junior Climbers) if both are over the age of 8
- One guest if under the age of 8.

Guests must be 'signed in' each visit by their supervising adult. Supervision must be provided in line with our Supervising Guests Policy at all times.

Professional Coaches and Instructors:

Groups of three or more can only be supervised by a professional coach/instructor holding the relevant training/qualifications. If you want to bring a group / use our facility for commercial basis, you must register as a 'Professional'. Anyone found to be using our facility in a professional nature without prior agreement will be asked to leave. Returning to use the centre will be at the discretion of the Highball Management.

GENERAL RULES

- Check in at reception before using any facilities.
- Make yourself aware of the location of the fire exits in the building and fire assembly points
- You must exercise care, common sense and self preservation at all times.
- Spectators visiting the centre are not permitted to enter the activity areas without permission..
- If you have children with you, you must keep them under control and supervise them directly, whether they are climbing or not. Be close enough to affect or control a child's behaviour at all times.
- Report any problems with the walls, equipment or other customers' behaviour to a member of the crew. This is particularly important with broken/spinning holds.
- Quiet well behaved dogs are allowed in the centre at the duty managers discretion, but must have a human with them at all times. Dogs are not permitted in the activity areas. Any damage will need to be paid for.
- Anyone deemed to be under the influence of narcotics or alcohol will not be allowed to climb.
- Spectators are welcome in the centre and are free to use the cafe and seating areas but are not permitted to enter any activity area without permission from the Duty Team. 'Visitor' vests must be worn when observing certain sessions and, during busy periods, we may limit the number of spectators.
- **Please help us keep the centre tidy. Use the recycling and compost bins correctly and return used crockery to the cafe promptly.**

CLIMBING

As a user of this climbing facility, you must be aware of and accept the following:

- Volumes and Macros (Large climbing holds) are designed to enhance the quality of your climbing. You must be aware of and accept that when climbing above them, there is an additional risk of falling onto them.
- Climbing holds may break or spin.
- Climbing beyond your capabilities on any wall is likely to result in a fall. Any fall may result in an injury despite the safety systems in place. You must make your own assessment of the risks whenever you climb.

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GENERAL CLIMBING:

- You have to be aware of and adhere to the safety rules and statements of good practice on display at all times.
- You must only climb on the dedicated climbing surfaces, not on support structures or parts of the building.
- Be aware of other climbers around you and how your action/behaviour will affect them.
- Never climb directly above or below another climber.
- Never sit, stand or walk directly under someone who is climbing.
- Stand well back from the climbing walls unless you are belaying or spotting a climber.
- Do not distract people while they are climbing or belaying.
- You are responsible for adequately maintaining your own equipment
- Please remove objects from your pockets and all jewellery before climbing.
- Climbing while pregnant can increase the risk posed to a mother and unborn child.
- You must do everything reasonable and practical to avoid endangering yourself and others.
- Groups under instruction or being coached by Highball staff have priority on the walls.
- Always wear climbing shoes when climbing. Please do not wear them outside or in the toilets.

BOULDERING:

- Whenever possible, downclimb and step off. If this is not possible, use a controlled/planned jump.
- It is your responsibility to ensure you can climb down or land safely; don't climb into a situation you cannot safely get out of.
- All climbs finish by 'matching' the last hold. Do not touch, hold, or climb onto the top of the walls.
- Always take your harness off before climbing.
- Do not take any objects onto the safety matting, e.g. cameras, drinks bottles, food etc.

TOP ROPE AND LEAD CLIMBING:

Customers who have registered for 'Bouldering Only' are not permitted to use the top rope/lead climbing walls or auto belays without supervision from a competent adult who has completed appropriate registration.

Top Rope Climbing

- Always use a climbing harness to attach yourself to the rope, tying the rope directly into the harness using a suitable climbing knot. We will only accept a rethreaded figure of eight with a stopper knot or a bowline with a stopper knot.
- Soloing or Bouldering (no rope or harness) is not permitted on these walls

When Belaying

- Always use a belay device attached to your safety harness with a locking carabiner as per the manufacturers guidelines. 'Traditional', or 'body' belaying is not acceptable or safe.
- We expect all belay devices to be used as passive devices, i.e. **never let go of the 'dead rope' while your partner is climbing**. Active belay devices can and do fail.
- The sandbags on the floor are provided to give support to people belaying a climber who is much heavier than they are. Direct belays from these sandbags is not allowed.
- To ensure your partner's safety, always pay attention to what the climber is doing.
- Always stand as close to the climbing wall as is practical. Belaying whilst sitting or lying down is not acceptable.

Lead Climbing:

- Lead belaying & lead climbing requires a higher degree of skill and understanding from top rope belaying & climbing. It should only be undertaken if you have received training or are competent to do so. If you are unsure, do not lead climb or lead belay - ask a member of the crew for available instruction sessions.
- Do not use the centre's top ropes for lead climbing. You must supply and use your own appropriately rated dynamic rope.
- Running belay attachments (runners) are already provided so you must not use your own 'quickdraws'. You must clip **all** the runners, in order, on the route you are climbing. Do not skip clips.
- Many of the climbs in the centre have top ropes already in place. If you take one down to lead the route, please replace the centre's rope, clipping it into both anchors at the top and doing up the screw gate carabiner.

Auto-Belays:

- Only use the auto belays if you are registered to do so. If you do not know what activity you have registered for, please check with reception first.
- The carabiner must be clipped into your belay loop before you start climbing.
- Before climbing check the auto belay operates correctly by pulling down a short length and checking it retracts smoothly. In the event the line does not retract during climbing, stop climbing and request assistance
- Helmets should not be worn when using the auto belay.
- Ensure the auto belay carabiner is clipped back into the anchor flag when you have finished.
- The coloured box on the ground around the autobelays is a landing zone; be aware of the descending climbers when standing within it.

CLIMBING SPECIFIC TRAINING EQUIPMENT

Our training area consists of a campus board, 'woody board', and fingerboards. It is not a supervised area and is for the use of customers aged 18+. Older teenagers (14+) may use the training area under the supervision of a registered adult at the discretion of the Management Team. If you feel you need an induction on any of the equipment, please speak to reception.

STRENGTH & CONDITIONING AREA (SACA)

The SACA is not a supervised area, it is for the use of customers aged 18 years or above. Customers aged 14+ may use the SACA under the supervision of a registered adult at the discretion of the Highball Duty Manager. If you feel you need an induction or instruction on any of the equipment please speak to reception.

- Wear trainers - climbing shoes are not to be worn in the SACA.
- Bring and use a towel to keep equipment clean & dry, and protect the yoga mats.
- The equipment is provided for strength and conditioning exercises only.
- Keep the SACA area tidy and put things away after use.

MEDIA

Photos and Videos: We often create visual media for use by Highball Ltd for marketing and publicity. If there are any legal reasons we cannot use your image in any promotional materials, please notify us.

Email: When you register, we ask you to supply some personal information so we can identify you. This is used in various ways, such as helping us to identify you in the future and record your purchases and payment(s). With your permission we may use your email address to send you newsletters and messages about Highball related special offers, promotions and other correspondence, directly relating to the services we offer. You can unsubscribe at any time.

We will never sell, rent, or share your personal information with any third parties for any use without your permission.

A copy of our privacy policy is available to view at reception.

LIABILITY

In the absence of negligence, Highball Ltd accepts no responsibility or liability for any loss, damage or injury to any person, personal property, or equipment whilst using our facilities and the surrounding car park and grass areas. Climbing activities can be dangerous. If, after reading this document you choose to participate or allow a child in your care to participate, you are accepting full responsibility for that informed, voluntary decision.