

INTRODUCTION

Highball Climbing Centre is a dedicated indoor climbing centre. Our centre contains bouldering walls (no ropes or harnesses), training equipment, and fitness areas. We offer a progressive, supervised activity program for Novice Adults and Under 18's, as well as coaching and development for independent, competent climbers.

This document informs you of the risks of climbing and how you can reduce them. If anything is unclear, ask a staff member before climbing.

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.*

“Climbing, hill walking and mountaineering can provide life-long physical, social and mental health benefits through exercise and adventure in amazing environments. The BMC recognises these activities involve a risk of personal injury or death. Participants should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement.” - *The British Mountaineering Council's (The BMC) Participation Statement*

LIABILITY

Climbing is inherently risky. By choosing to participate, or allowing a child in your care to do so, you accept full responsibility for that informed decision. Highball Ltd accepts no liability for injury or loss except where caused by negligence.

OUR DUTY OF CARE

Our conditions of use 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 then the staff may ask you to leave.

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 at key points. These describe the accepted methods of use of equipment and climbing areas.

GENERAL SAFETY

- All participants must complete a registration form which includes an acknowledgement of risk, providing their contact details and a photograph before climbing.
- 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.
- Spectators are welcome in the centre and can use the cafe and seating areas but are not allowed onto the soft mats.
- If you have young children with you, you must keep them close enough to affect or control their behaviour at all times.
- You must exercise care, common sense and self preservation at all times.
- Only food and drink purchased from the cafe can be consumed at designated cafe seating (tables with menus). You can picnic in other areas.
- **Please help us keep the centre tidy.** Use the recycling and compost bins correctly and return used crockery to the cafe promptly.
- Quiet, well behaved dogs are allowed in the centre at the duty manager's discretion, but must be on a lead and have a human with them at all times. Dogs are not allowed on the soft matting. Any damage will need to be paid for.
- 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.
- **All accidents and injuries must be reported to a member of the team before you leave the centre.**

GENERAL RULES (CLIMBING)

- Remove all objects from your pockets and all jewellery before climbing.
- Always wear climbing shoes when climbing but do not wear them outside or in the toilets.
- Aside from climbing on the top out boulder, you must not hold or climb on to the top of the climbing walls.
- Do not leave any objects on the safety matting, e.g. phones, drinks bottles, food etc.
- We would **prefer chalk bags are not taken onto the mats.**
- Anyone deemed to be under the influence of narcotics or alcohol will not be allowed to climb.
- 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.
- Groups under instruction or being coached by Highball staff have priority on the walls.

BOULDERING:

- Bouldering is climbing **without any safety equipment**, e.g. rope and harness.
- **Any jump or fall** whether controlled (a jump) or uncontrolled (a fall) **may cause serious injury.**
- The soft mat installed at the base of the wall **does not make the activity safe.** 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.

- 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; avoid climbing into a situation you cannot safely get out of.
- 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.

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

- Route setting is a creative process. All climbs are designed to challenge participants and test their various skills and climbing styles. Falling is always a risk and should be expected.
- Holds, Macros, and Volumes are designed to enhance the quality of your climbing. When climbing above them, there is an additional risk of falling onto them.
- Climbing holds may spin, break or detach from the wall.
- **Climbing close to or beyond your limit significantly increases the risk of an uncontrolled 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.
- Climbing while pregnant can **increase the risk** posed to a mother and unborn child.
- Sporting injuries from jumps, falls, and overuse are common, including breaks, sprains and dislocations.

UNSUPERVISED CLIMBING

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) 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.

To boulder unsupervised, you must understand the risks and demonstrate safe practice. You are required to register to say you know how to boulder safely, that you will 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 knowledge and experience to a member of the team by answering a series of questions. Anyone who is deemed not competent to climb unsupervised must be supervised by a competent person.

SUPERVISED CLIMBING

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

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

If you are not a **competent** climber or are under 16, then do not attempt to climb without supervision.

Note: Some young climbers may be granted the privilege of unsupervised climbing once they can demonstrate competence to do so safely. A Parent/Guardian may need to be present to complete the registration. This privilege can be removed at any time.

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 or use our facility for a 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.

ADVANCED CLIMBING AREAS

Highball has some specialist areas including a large 12m overhanging wall and a climbing specific training area with hang boards and training boards. Guidance and good practice posters are on display at the entrance to both areas. **We do not recommend these areas for beginners.** Please speak to a member of the team if you would like to know more about using these safely.

THE GYM & CONDITIONING AREA:

The gym is **not a supervised area**, it is for the use of customers **aged 16+**. Teenagers aged 14+ may use the gym under the supervision of a registered adult at the discretion of the Duty Manager. If you feel you need an induction or instruction on any of the equipment please speak to a member of the team.

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.