

Get Started:

Rock Climbing

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS by ALDEN PELLETT

Climbing is a great workout for the body and the mind. The physical challenge combined with the puzzle-solving aspect of finding a route gets you to places you didn't think were possible. Enjoy a bird's eye view of Vermont, and reach new heights this summer.

HOW TO START

The smart way to begin is at a gym with a teacher, spending a few weeks learning to gain confidence. Two popular indoor training centers are Petra Cliffs Climbing Center in Burlington (866-657-3872) or Green Mountain Rock Climbing Center in Rutland (773-3343).

THE NEXT STEP

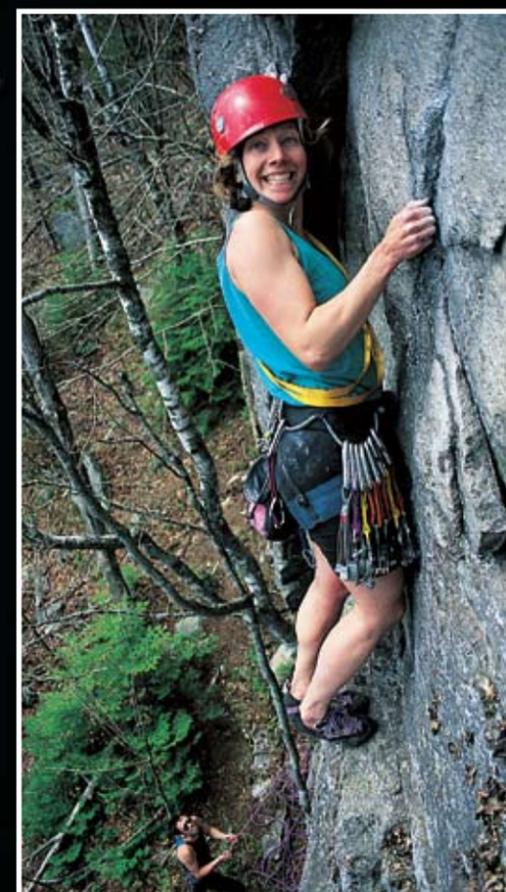
Consider the entry-level activity of bouldering. Bouldering is a growing facet of the climbing scene, and merely involves trying a series of moves to get to the top of a selected boulder, maybe seven feet or so from a sitting start. Some folks employ a crash pad, which can be purchased at most outdoor stores, and other than that, all you really need is climbing shoes.

WHERE TO GO

Exciting cliffs can be found throughout Vermont, including Lower West Cliff and CRAG-VT Bolton Quarry, Wheeler Mountain near Lake Willoughby, Deer Leap Rock in Killington, Falls of Lana near Lake Dunmore and Smugglers Notch between Stowe and Jeffersonville (restrictions during peregrine falcon nesting season; watch for postings).

QUICK TIPS

- Get fit, especially by adding pull-ups to your workout routine.
- Use your feet. Too many guys who want to look rugged work the climb with their arms; women are often the best beginner climbers because they don't try to muscle every move.
- Watch others. Note the body position of experienced climbers as they flow past a difficult section.
- It's OK to fall. That's what the safety rope is for. Try a new move you've never done before. Solving the riddle of the rock is half the fun. 🌟



Want to climb with a guide and tap into Vermont's climbing community? Alden Pellett recommends some climbing centers and resources at www.VermontLife.com