

MT. RAINIER DISAPPOINTMENT CLEAVER CLIMB SAMPLE ITINERARY

OFFICE
280 7th Avenue
Ouray, CO 81427

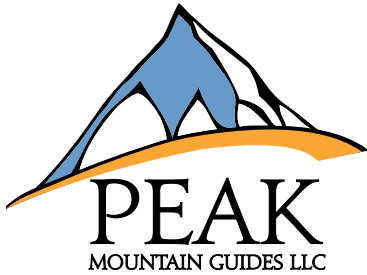
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Day 1: The group will meet at the Copper Creek Inn Restaurant in Ashford, WA at 3:00 pm for introductions and a warm welcome to all team members. To begin the process of becoming an effective climbing team, we'll hear from each member about their background and goals for the program. On a big mountain like Mt. Rainier, good communication is essential to safe and successful climbing so we strive to establish a foundation of friendly, open dialogue right at the beginning of the program. Once we have gained some familiarity with one another, we'll do a gear check to make sure everyone has all the required equipment. We also use the gear check process as an opportunity to begin discussing packing techniques for proper balance and comfort. With gear organized and backpacks ready to go, we will review the approach trail and climbing route on the map. You will be introduced to a technique for route planning that will enable you to make time estimates and forecast hazards for a given climbing route. This technique will be helpful to you as you embark on future alpine climbs after the program. Finally, we'll discuss important considerations for climbing on Mt. Rainier such as geologic hazards, Leave No Trace practices, and interactions with other climbers.

Day 2: The group will depart from the hotel and drive to the Paradise trailhead at 5400' where we embark on our big adventure. After a lesson on map reading and routefinding, we will travel past beautiful alpine meadows to the beginning of the Muir Snowfield at about 7200'. Once on the Muir Snowfield, we will climb for another 2880' on low angle snow slopes to Camp Muir at 10,080'. Along the way, we will practice wilderness navigation techniques and we'll learn Leave No Trace principles for the alpine environment. We'll also practice techniques for snow travel such as pacing, kicking steps, using the rest step, walking with the ice axe, and self arrest. Once we arrive at Camp Muir, we'll select a campsite and we'll discuss alpine camping fundamentals like safe and sanitary cooking, water purification, and waste management. After camp is established and we have had a nice dinner, we'll relax and enjoy the evening.



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Day 3: Today we begin with a lesson on cramponing and everyone will have the opportunity to learn “French technique”, the primary technique used for efficient footwork on firm snow. After the morning lesson, we will organize the rope teams for an ascent to our high camp at Ingraham Flats. Our route crosses the Cowlitz Glacier adjacent to Camp Muir and then ascends for 1000’ vertical feet through the Cathedral Rocks and onto the Ingraham Glacier. During this ascent, you will learn basic glaciology as it applies to route finding, how to rig the rope for glacier travel, and how to travel efficiently as a rope team by managing rope tension and making smooth turns. Upon arrival at Ingraham Flats, we’ll locate a campsite and review LNT practices for a snow and ice environment, including the use of blue bags. Then we’ll spend the afternoon building snow and ice anchors and practicing small-team crevasse rescue. Your guide will describe and demonstrate these techniques and you will have the opportunity to practice each technique with helpful coaching and guidance. After our afternoon practice session, we’ll go back to camp to plan for the summit attempt. As a team, we’ll come up with a strategy for our departure time, route plan, and rope teams. Once we’re organized and everyone is ready, we’ll have dinner and get to bed early in order to be well rested for our big summit day.

Day 4: We will wake early to make our summit attempt on the Disappointment Cleaver route. Following our route plan, we’ll travel across the Ingraham Glacier to the base of the Disappointment Cleaver. Once we gain the Cleaver we will ascend its rocky crest to a high point at 12,400’. From here, we step into big glaciated terrain that is spectacular and awe-inspiring. Our route will weave around large crevasses in its path to the summit. As we travel together on the rope, this section of the climb provides good insight into the decision making required to manage a rope team in heavily glaciated terrain. Gradually, the angle lessens and soon we are standing on the Columbia Crest, the true summit of Mt. Rainier at 14,410 feet. With 9,000’ feet of climbing below, all of which required your new skills and knowledge, you will feel an incredible sense of accomplishment! After enjoying the spectacular views and taking pictures, we’ll begin our descent to Ingraham Flats and the comfort of our tents.

Day 5: The final day of the program is spent packing up camp and descending to Paradise. From there, we’ll drive to a restaurant in Ashford where we’ll have a final celebratory lunch. This day can also be used as an alternate summit day if the weather prevents a summit attempt on Day 4.