



### **Pre-use checks - Harness**

These checks are essential and should be carried out each time, before the harness is used. Pre-use checks should be tactile and visual. The whole harness should be subject to the check, by passing it slowly through the hands to detect:

- Check for any fraying or tears along all of the webbing straps, waist belt, and leg loops. If you pull on a fray and it starts to unravel, the harness needs to be retired.
- Inspect the belay loop for wear and tear. Some belay loops have brightly coloured warning threads that will show through to alert you when the outer threads have been damaged—but most harnesses do not have this feature.
- Closely check each stitch point for fraying or loose ends.
- Look for discoloration or sun-fading.
- Check the metal buckles for cracks or burs, which may cause damage to the harness fabric.
- Ensure that each gear loop is intact.
- If any critical point of the harness has excessive wear—belay loops, tie-in points, buckles, and waist belt—the harness needs to be retired.

**IF IN DOUBT CONTACT THE EQUIPMENT OFFICER.**

### **Pre-use checks - Rope**

Your rope should be lightly inspected before each climb, as you flake it out feeling for any soft or flat spots. After every couple weeks of regular climbing, or after catching a big fall, do a closer inspection of your rope.

- Visually inspect, looking for frayed areas the sheath or an exposed core. If you can see the core at all (the white inner strands underneath the coloured sheath), it is time to retire your rope.
- Look for discoloration or sun fading.
- Do a tactile inspection: Slowly flake the rope end to end, looking for any soft or flat spots. This will most commonly be found in the 20 feet closest to the ends of the rope, as these are high wear and tear areas.
- If you feel a flat or soft spot, you need to test for a coreshot. Create a small bight in the rope (fold it into the shape of a little alien head) where the weakness is, and see if you can touch both sides of the rope together without any gap in between. If you can, the rope is coreshot.



- If the coreshot is close enough to one of the ends, you can cut it off with a heated rope cutter. You can also use a knife and then burn the end of the rope with a lighter to prevent fraying. If you do cut off one end, note that this will make any middle marks inaccurate. This is extremely important and rappelling accidents have occurred for this reason. Your rope may also not be long enough for rope-stretcher abseils and lowers after this.
- If the coreshot is closer to the middle of your rope, it is time to retire the rope.

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### **Pre-use checks - Carabiner**

- Do a visual inspection ensuring that there are no cracks or corrosion in the metal. If you find any of these in your inspection, the carabiner needs to be retired.
- Check the areas within the carabiner that hold the rope, as these are the highest traffic zones and will inevitably groove out over time. A slight groove is not necessarily a cause for concern, but once grooves become deep or have sharp edges, retire the carabiner.
- Look for any loose or missing rivets on the carabiner.
- Make sure that the gate opens and closes fully and quickly. Often sand and other debris can work its way into the gate's hinge and prevent smooth action. If this is the case, you can clean carabiners by boiling them, scrubbing with a toothbrush and solvent-free dish soap, and lubricating with a dry lubricant (dry lubes do not attract dirt and dust).
- Make sure that if there is a locking mechanism it is fully functional. If it sticks, it can often be cleaned by the same method described above.

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### **Pre-use checks - Belay Device**

To ensure the safety of you and your partner, inspect your belay device. You will be looking for much of the same issues as you would in a carabiner.

- Check for any cracks, excessive wear, metal burs, or grooves where the rope contacts the device. If you find any of these, retire the piece.
- If there are any mechanical parts to your belay device, like the camming mechanism on a Grigri, make sure the action is smooth and works properly.



- If there are any plastic components such as the lever on a Grigri, check closely for any cracks.
- Like a carabiner, the rope can wear grooves into belay devices over time. If you notice it becoming more difficult to brake the rope or the edges become sharp, retire the device.

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### **Storage**

When transporting your gear, keep it **stored safely in a backpack, bag, or bin**. To avoid mildew, never store your gear wet. Hang dry ropes, harnesses, shoes, slings, cams, and anything else with a fabric component.