

THE AZR TOP ROPE BELAY TEST

AZR takes the safety of its customers very seriously and requires all climbers and belayers to adhere to the policies and procedures put forth in the waiver, orientation video, and posted throughout the gym.

Because our top rope belay test is a reflection of our insurance requirements, it is highly likely that only the most experienced climber will pass the test on their first attempt. You are being given this information as a means to improve the likelihood that you will pass.

The AZR top rope belay class is not a test of climbing strength/grade. It is a test of an individual's ability to demonstrate safe top rope belaying, belaying technique meeting AZR's insurance requirement, and proper gym/climber etiquette.

This is designed to be a test, not a class. Belayers must demonstrate all skills, without instruction from staff!

The AZR Top Rope Belay Test-What You Need To Know

Failing the belay test means making ONE OR MORE of the following mistakes:

- Not checking the climber's harness (waist belt) is above his/her hips and SNUG and that the climber leg loops are fit properly.
- Not checking the climber's buckles and stating why they are safe/locked (in other words, do you know the difference between auto-locking and manual locking harness?)
- Not checking that the climber has tied through both hard points or the proper loop on rental harness.
- Not checking that the climber has correctly tied their figure-8 follow-through knot and backed it up with either a Fisherman's knot or Yosemite Finish (properly threaded).
- Not showing the climber their harness (waist belt) is above their hips and SNUG and the fit of their leg loops is how they want them.
- Not showing the climber all their buckles are safe/locked (see #2 above).
- Not showing the climber their belay set up is in proper order and straight-floor anchor on bottom, carabiner loaded properly, Gri-Gri clipped in and facing the proper direction, with ropes fed correctly into the Gri-Gri.
- Not checking that climber and belayer are on the same rope and that ropes are not twisted.
- Failure to exchange, "on belay?- belay *ready*," "climbing?- climb on," commands (do not have to be these exact words but must use communication of some sort).
- Letting go of the brake hand while belaying (pinching underneath the right hand with their left hand, "ghosting").
- Not taking out slack quickly enough or not communicating with climber to slow down if unable to take slack out quickly enough.

- Not locking off when climber falls.
- Letting go of brake hand while prepping to lower climber (if belaying in the “up” position they will need to switch their right hand from palm up to palm down. This can get messy and it is common to switch without bringing the left hand over as a back up. This is unacceptable because you are letting go of the brake rope, must bring left hand over as back to flip right hand over).
- Pulling back on the brake release lever before having brake hand in proper position (palm down, anchored securely on right hip).
- Pulling back on brake release lever before the climber weights the rope.
- “Dropping” the climber too quickly or in an unsafe manner (bouncing the climber, dropping and stopping the climber repetitively).

Again, making ONE OR MORE of the above mistakes may result in failing the belay test. You have been provided with this information because we WANT you to know, going in, what we expect you to know in order to pass. However, AZR also wants you to know that it reserves the right to FAIL, suspend or revoke any individual’s opportunity to top rope belay in its facility.

If You Fail The Top Rope Belay Test

If you do not pass the top rope belay test on the first try, do not be discouraged. As we have stated, this is something that is taken very seriously and AZR has extremely stringent belay policies.

You will be allowed to practice your skills to work on the areas missed by having your climber clip into an autobelay, as well as tying into a rope. THE CLIMBER MUST BE BACKED UP BY THE AUTOBELAY.

Tests cannot be retaken in the same day. You are welcome to retake the test after a 24 hour period.

If You Pass The Top Rope Belay Test

Congratulations! You re certified to top rope belay at AZR. Now what?

We will make a note in your account that you are top rope belay certified, as well as require that you display a tag on your harness.

When you check in, if you need to use one of our carabiners and/or Gri-Gris you will be required to leave collateral (keys/cell phone/wallet).

Please always be sure that your climbing partners are properly certified to belay at AZR. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are not allowing someone to belay you unless you are certain of their certification status.

AZR requires that anyone who has not belayed at our facility in the last 6 months either go through the 1-hour belay class or pass the belay class. Be sure to stay active now that you are certified so that you don't need to go through the test again.

Top rope belaying at AZR is a privilege that can and will be taken away if the staff feels that you are not following the rules, are participating in unsafe practices, etc.