



# climb trek ski run

## course info booklet - chamonix edition

This booklet is designed to answer your queries before your course in Chamonix. It is an exciting time for you, looking forward to your course, and we really hope that this booklet gives you the best advice possible. Let us know if we can help you with any pre-course advice; call our office on 01539 44 22 17, e-mail info@icicle.co.uk, or Skype 'Icicle-Windermere'. You can also arrange a meeting in to our Windermere office and shop to discuss your course in person with us.



Sarah



Kingsley



Jill



Donna

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# History and background



**Lake District**  
Established back in 2000 in the UK Lake District, where our office & shop is based. Everyone in the team is passionate about the mountains and highly trained to advise you.



**Guiding team**  
In the Alps our guiding team are all qualified as IFMGA or UIMLA guides, a legal requirement for working in Switzerland, France and Italy. We are proud of our guide team.



**Connect socially**  
Now you have booked, it is normal to have even more questions. Connect with us via social media, so you can ask queries in a method that suits you, even while commuting!



**International clientele**  
The majority of course clients are British, but we welcome a broad range of international clients on our trips, who all speak English too. It adds to the experience of the trips.



**Company awards**  
Our office walls display a selection of business and tour operator awards we have won over the years. In addition you can view our ATOL and TTA travel bonding certificates too.



**Global trips**  
Although your course is Chamonix based, we also offer many trips in other Alpine regions, and we operate global trips such as Mt Toubkal, Iceland, Kilimanjaro & Aconcagua.



**Icicle ethos**  
What really sets us apart, as you'll have noticed on our website, and also in this booklet, is the quality & quantity of information, to help you best prepare and train for your course.



**Pre-trip training**  
All the training planners here and on the website have been produced by personal trainers. It is a USP of ours that we help prepare you for your trip better than anyone else.



**Reports & articles**  
We've had a huge range of reports and articles written about our trips, which have featured in the press. Read all about them by visiting the press and media website page.



**Coffee & chat**  
As a real company, rather than a virtual entity, we invite you to arrange to come in and chat through your course plans over a coffee in our Lakes shop, with expert trip advisers.





# Next steps & insurance

## Next steps now you have booked

✓ **Flights** – Now you are confirmed, you can book your flights to the Alps. Once you have done this, see the next page for airport transfers that can be booked (e.g. ChamExpress, EasyBus).



✓ **Balance** – Your course balance is due 56 days before departure. This is exactly 8 weeks before your trip.

- The payment due date is shown on your invoice, which is sent to you with your e-confirmation at the time of booking, with this Course Info Booklet, so if you are reading this, you have your invoice already.
- The 'Pay Now' link is circled on red on the example invoice shown to the left. Click this on your invoice.
- The online booking system e-mails you payment chasers in the days before the balance is owed.
- You can pay the balance with a card of your choice (no charge for debit card, 3% charge for credit card).
- Please note that we do not accept cheques, cash or bank transfers for any payments.

✓ **Equipment** – Details of any equipment that is loaned free of charge will be on your course itinerary page of the website. If you need to hire any equipment, then please visit page 6 of this booklet for full details. Please note that you are required to provide all the items appearing on the course specific kit list that was sent with your e-confirmation.

✓ **Instruction Booklet** – Print this off from; <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/pack.html>

✓ **Paperwork** – Ensure your passports and any visas (if required) are all in date for your trip.



## Activities insurance

It is a condition of booking that you get travel and activities insurance as soon as you have booked the course, and ensure that it covers you for cancellation, illness, injury, mountain rescue, and all of the activities of your course itinerary. Note that if you arrive on the course without insurance, you will not be able to start any guiding, as it is not possible to arrange in resort once you have travelled. A key feature to check your activities insurance provides is helicopter mountain rescue cover, and in most regions of the Alps, this service is privately operated, and it is very expensive. No bank or general travel insurance we have seen to date covers you for this. Specialist insurance for the activities you will undertake is available from the BMC, Snowcard or Austrian Alpine Club.

For more details and advice of providers, please visit this link on our website; <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/insurance.html>.

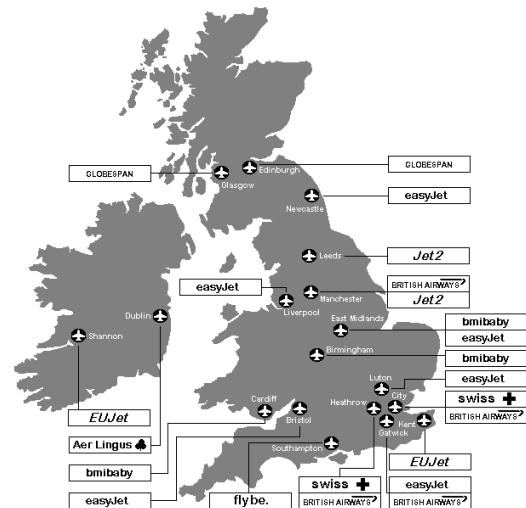


# Travel to Chamonix

## Travelling to Chamonix and airport transfers

The meeting time for week long courses is 17:00 local time on Sundays. The accommodation check-in is from 16:00 onwards on the arrival day, and the check-out is by 10:00 on the day of departure. As with hotels, we cannot get you in to your room before 16:00 as it is being cleaned. Please note that there is no baggage storage before the check in, but if you've arrived early there are lots of good cafes and restaurants within a two minute walk. If you are getting a flight that gets in to Geneva before 14:00, note that if you get an airport transfer immediately, you will arrive in Chamonix before the accommodation check in, and have nowhere to store your bags.

The nearest airport to Chamonix is Geneva Airport in Switzerland. The diagram shows the airlines that fly to Geneva from all the UK regional airports. Flights take approximately 90 minutes. The cheapest fares are generally found as soon as they are released, around eleven months before the departure date. Once in Geneva, the airport transfer to Chamonix takes about an hour and a quarter. We can book airport transfers for you, or you can book these directly yourself. There are two key options; transfers that can drop you to the door cost c.35€ per person each way, and providers include ChamExpress, Mountain Dropoffs, & Alpybus. You can also book EasyBus (part of EasyJet group) from just 5€ each way. The downside is that it only drops off and collects from Chamonix-Sud bus station, just a 3 minute walk from the meeting point.



If you would like us to book an airport transfer which drops to the door (i.e. not EasyBus), all you need to do is to email us your full flight details, the name(s) of the passenger(s) and a contact mobile phone number for a driver to contact you on if there are any delays. All our transfer partners are fully licensed, and they drop you off and collect you directly from the course meeting point. Other alternatives to the airport transfers are buses or trains, but these take over two hours.

## Lost / delayed baggage? What do I do if your bags are lost or delayed at Geneva airport.

Call the driver to alert them to the issue immediately. Your airport transfer ticket will normally provide details of what to do in this scenario. Then report your baggage to the tracing services. Give them your personal mobile phone number for the baggage delivery, and the Aiguille du Midi cable car as a delivery point as it is easy for the delivery driver to find, and close to all the accommodation we use. This occurs only once or twice a year, but generally delayed baggage arrives within 24 hours. In the meantime, your insurance should cover any extra essentials.

## What alternatives to flying are there? Drive your car, take the train or catch the bus.

Three cheap alternatives to flying are travelling by car, train, or coach. If you drive cheap ferries are provided by [www.norfolkline.com](http://www.norfolkline.com), and you should allow 8 hours from the Channel Ports using the autoroutes (toll motorways). The fastest route from Calais goes via Reims, Dijon, Bourg-en-Bresse via the A39 and then the A40 to Chamonix. The tolls cost about £75 each way. This is a cheap option for a group, or a good option if you are extending your stay for sightseeing. The speed limit is 130km/h. If you prefer the train, the best overnight route is the Eurostar to Paris (Gare du Nord), sleeper (Gare du Austerlitz) to Le Fayet, and local train to Chamonix (c. £140 return). Travel during the day is Eurostar to Paris, then TGV to Bellgarde (from Gare du Lyon), then train to Chamonix (c. £120 return). Eurostar now offer a service to Geneva via Lille. Travel can be booked (as one ticket) at the Eurostar office (St Pancras station), or online. There are regular coach services with Eurolines from London Victoria to Chamonix, via Lyon (c. 16 hours travel time) – from £60 return. Generally this is the cheapest travel option, especially in peak season, and does take you ‘door to door’ without connections.

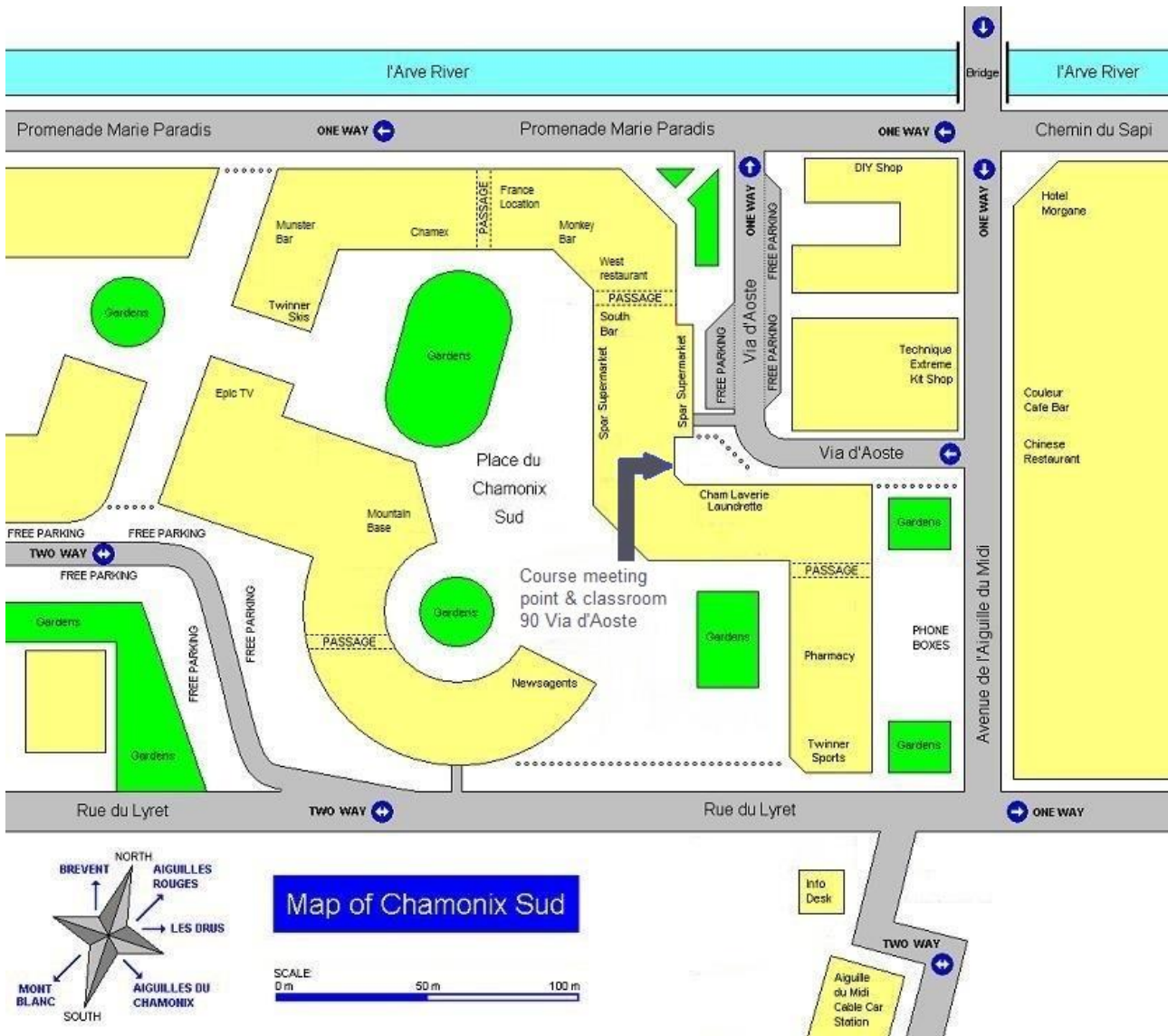


# Meeting and check-in

## Meeting point in Chamonix and the check in

**16:00** - Collect keys for your course accommodation from 16:00 on the course arrival afternoon (usually Sunday). An Icicle host will be at the meeting point (marked on the map below), which is just 50m from the normal airport transfer drop off point at Aiguille du Midi. The meeting point is 90 Via d'Aoste, a blue shop front between the back of the Spar supermarket and Cham Laverie.

**17:00** - The course briefing is at the same venue, at 17:00 prompt. Ensure you arrive on time.



When you are travelling, if you have any issues at all such as late arrival or you are lost, then please call our in-resort emergency number 00 33 7 87 37 95 45. This number is exclusively for those actually travelling. Before your trip, only call the Windermere office direct on 01539 44 22 17.

If you plan to arrive late and miss the course briefing, you should inform us of this in advance to pre-book a separate briefing, which is usually at 08:00 on the Monday morning (if pre-booked) at the meeting point. Note that guiding cannot commence until you have been briefed.

**Acclimatisation Weekends** - All these groups should refer to an e-mail sent one week before travel, to confirm any details for meeting for their guiding on the Sunday, and the packing list for this day. Ensure you arrive promptly or you will miss the group departing.



## store Hire kit & UK shop

### Hire equipment

A small stock of hire kit is transported out to the Alps each season from our Windermere shop and office. It is possible to pre-book and pay in advance of travel by card, to use our hire equipment at preferential rates. This hire equipment is for use in guided times only, but externally hired kit (e.g. skis) can be reserved to be collected before the course to use in your own time. Full details of all the kit we can hire is on the website at; <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/hire.shtml>

If you wish to hire any kit, the prices we offer are by the week, and the Alpine kit bundles are the best budget option for those who need to hire all the kit. To benefit from our prices, that are far cheaper than the daily rates charged by local shops, it is imperative that you do the following...

- i) Please send an e-mail to [windermere@icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk](mailto:windermere@icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk), with a list of your exact kit requirements (including your normal training shoes size if renting boots), up to a minimum of 14 days (i.e. two weeks) before you travel.
- ii) In your e-mail, state the total cost of the items you wish to hire for the week, and that you authorise us to charge the same card with which you paid the course deposit, with the hire equipment fee.
- iii) You will be e-mailed an itemised receipt, which you should take with you to the course, to show the reps to be issued your hire equipment.

Note that we cannot provide any hire equipment in resort, which has not been pre-booked and paid for, and you will have to hire from more expensive local shops. We cannot waiver on this point.



### Icicle Windermere shop discounts

- ✓ When you booked, you were sent details of our shop discounts of up to 20% off, in our shop.
- ✓ These discounts are available to you in store or online, using the code supplied in the catalogue.
- ✓ Get in touch for any last minute items that you require, such as trekking poles (which are obligatory on mountaineering and trekking courses), gloves, maps and guidebooks.
- ✓ Page 17 of this booklet features some special offers that are available too.
- ✓ You will find that currently with the exchange rate, these deals make our client kit prices cheaper than you can purchase them in Chamonix.
- ✓ Don't leave it until the last minute, to order equipment, to allow time for the postage.
- ✓ FREE postage to UK address for orders over £30.





# Icicle website resources

When you were looking for a course, we hope that you looked at our website for advice and information. If you did, you will have seen that the site is way more than an online brochure, and there are lots of mountaineering, trekking and skiing resources as well. Here we direct you to a few pages to prepare you better for your course. Please try and work your way through them, as this homework will ensure that you get more out of the course, and progress well.

## **What am I doing each day of the course?**

Before the course you are strongly advised to read and print off a copy of your course itinerary, as we have spent a lot of time providing you with lots of detail about what you should expect each day. You can find your course itinerary by clicking on the Expeditions, Summer, Winter or Running buttons, then selecting the name of your course and then clicking on it.

## **What Alpine ropework do I need to know?**

On basic level climbing or ski touring courses we assume that you arrive knowing no knots at all, and that is fine, but for all other courses you should ensure you look at the "Knots & Ropework" page to check that you know the knots listed. If some are new to you, we will teach them. For all trekking or running trips, no ropework is required. <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/skills.shtml>

## **What conditions should I expect?**

The website has lots of sections to help you learn about the conditions. Just before the course you can look at the weather forecasts ([chamonix.net](http://chamonix.net) & [.com](http://chamonix.com)) and webcams pages. For general annual conditions, especially in Chamonix, look at the "Mont Blanc Focus" page. In addition you can read specific conditions reports on the monthly newsletters.

## **What kit do I carry for different routes?**

The "Routes and Grades" page explains what the different grades of Alpine routes mean, and as well as information on acclimatisation and route choice, there is an explanation of what kit and techniques are required for different types of route from ice to glacier.

## **Can I read any training information before?**

You can print off the Course Instruction Book before your trip. This is a free 36 page booklet which is a PDF linked from: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/pack.html>, which has been written by our logistics and guiding team specifically for Alpine trips.

## **What training do I need to do for the trip?**

Probably this is the most important point, as no amount of new shiny kit will make you a good mountaineer. If you are as fit as possible, you will get a huge amount more out of your course. See the training pages of this booklet. For Mont Blanc we recommend at least half marathon fitness. As the infamous saying goes, "you get out what you put in", and this could not be truer for any of our courses. We are famed for throwing loads of information at you during the week, but unless you have done your preparation, you cannot expect to remember all of it. You have been warned! All our courses are a physical effort.

## **What qualifications do instructors hold?**

During your course you will be led by people who hold the highest Alpine qualifications. To find out about this look at the "Selecting a Guide" page, and to learn about the Icicle staff, look at the "Guides & Reps" page. You will learn about the legal restrictions for guiding in the Alps, and also gain an appreciation for the level of staff who run the courses.

## **What equipment can I purchase from you?**

As a course client, you are entitled to a 20% discount off all clothing and equipment from our Windermere mountain store in the Lake District. This offer is not open to anyone else, and is exclusively for our clients. Visit pages 6 & 17 of this booklet, or link; <https://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/icicleshop.htm>

**Annual photo competition:** As you will have seen from our website, we use many hundreds of photos each year, and so we are in constant need of new images. We invite all clients to enter our annual photo competition by e-mailing us their photos or a link, or by posting us a CD of their course photos. Every entrant has a selection of their best photos put on the website, and you could win a range of climbing kit or books. Look at the "Photos" pages to see past entrants & winners.

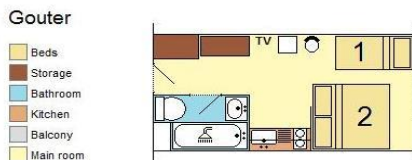


# Course accommodation

You are usually based in an apartment in the centre of Chamonix, except during very busy periods, when all our flats are full, where some clients may be based in nearby Chamonix centre hotels. All accommodation is on a Bed & Continental Breakfast basis (all bedding and tourist taxes are included). Towels are provided as standard. You can check into your flat between 16:00 & 17:00 on the first day of the course (usually Sunday), and must check out by 10:00 on the departure day (usually Saturday). Sorry there are no early (pre 16:00) check-in options. See a later page for detail



This plan is not to scale and is a representation of the layout



This plan is not to scale and is a representation of the layout

of any extra nights (note that we can't accommodate any extra nights of accommodation, so any extra nights are with an alternative provider in Chamonix). The diagrams to the left show floor plans of two very typical Chamonix flats, and are representative of the others. Wherever possible clients are put in flats of two people sharing, but on very busy weeks flats of three people may be required. Please note that all our flats are single sex sharing, and the majority of beds are singles, so if you are a couple requiring a double, or a single male or female not wishing to share, you must consider an upgrade. As you can see from the plan to the left, the apartments are open plan, ski flats. They each have mountain views (usually with a balcony), a bathroom (with shower over a bath), storage facilities, and a self catering kitchenette with coffee and tea facilities, as well as a fridge to keep your food fresh.

On several itineraries a specified number of nights in mountain huts are detailed. On some courses these are included in the price, and on others they are excluded. Check the website course page for the inclusions and exclusions. The majority of huts used are on a half board basis (3 course evening meal, and continental breakfast) supplied by the hut guardian. Clients share rooms, which sleep up to twenty people on two tiered bunk platforms. Take some ear plugs! Each person is allocated a mattress with its own pillow and blankets. You must pay for any extras you order, such as bottled water, beer or wine, camera films, chocolate, or packed lunches. If you are on a course where a specified number of nights in a hut are involved, and you opt for / need, any extra nights in a hut, you are responsible for paying the extra half board basis night(s) for you and your guide.

## Accommodation upgrades

- 1) A 2 person flat for a couple booking together (double bed) is guaranteed provided for FREE. If you want to be assured of this free upgrade, please e-mail us details if not noted on booking form.
- 2) Guaranteed single person flat from £150 total per week.
- 3) Three / Four star hotel with swimming pool. Prices from £50 per person per night.

These prices are only available for people booking on week-long courses, and are on a B&B basis. All upgrades are subject to availability, and must be booked before arrival. The upgrade runs from Sunday at 17:00 to the following Saturday at 10:00. Please note that for all upgrades these are in addition to the full course price.

## WiFi internet access

Most accommodation has free WiFi broadband access, for those who bring their own laptops or internet phones. There are also several local bars that provide free WiFi too. Phones / Blackberries must always be switched off when using avalanche transceiver units on winter courses.

## Arriving late?

Pre-arranged late check-ins are generally possible, and you are normally sent key collection details on the day before you travel. Please note that unarranged late check-ins are not possible, and if you turn up late unannounced, you will be advised to stay a local hotel at your own cost.





# Equipment advice & tips

A key concern of our clients is what equipment they should bring on a course. As we run courses covering everything from ice climbing to Mont Blanc to ski mountaineering or trail running, and so the equipment used on the courses is different. **You are sent a course specific kit list with your invoice.** These next five pages are general advice for all our courses, to be used in conjunction with the specific list, to assist you to plan what you should need, and also how to save money.

For general advice and equipment lists for each of our Alpine course types, select an option below.



Mountaineering: <https://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/icicleshop%2BKIT%2BMTR.html>  
Technical climbs: <https://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/icicleshop%2BKIT%2BTEC.html>  
Rock climbing: <https://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/icicleshop%2BKIT%2BROC.html>  
Via Ferrata: <https://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/icicleshop%2BKIT%2BVIA.html>



Alpine trekking trips: <https://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/icicleshop%2BKIT%2BTRK.html>  
Snowshoeing holidays: <https://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/icicleshop%2BKIT%2BSNO.html>



Off Piste skiing: <https://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/icicleshop%2BKIT%2BOFP.html>  
Ski touring trips: <https://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/icicleshop%2BKIT%2BSKM.html>



Have a look at page 13 of this booklet, and for more detailed advice on this link to Trail running: <https://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/trail%2Brunning%2Bkit.html>

## Key variables...

**SEASONS:** The summer Alpine season includes all courses running from the end of May to the end of September. The winter Alpine season runs between December and March, and the coldest months are December and January when the days are shortest.

**INDIVIDUALS:** In identical conditions some people will be comfortable in a waterproof shell with a fleece layer underneath, whilst others may overheat. Only you know how you react to heat, cold, wind and wet, so adapt the kit list to how you normally dress.

**TEMPERATURE:** In summer it may be 35° in the valley and -25° on Mont Blanc, so you have to take into account a 60° change in temperature. In winter the valley is 0°, & you generally lose c.10° for every 1000m gain.

## Layering...

The key to selecting your clothing is a layering system to allow for the wide temperature range. The layering system should be applied to the hands, feet and legs as well as your torso. We warn against any cotton material.

## Save money...

Unless you plan to visit the Alps several times a year, it may not be cost effective to buy all

the equipment. Items such as harnesses, helmets, and ice axes can be hired from us from £10 per item per week. If you are planning to buy any kit, we offer highly generous client equipment discounts from our Windermere shop. If you are unsure, hire.

## Flight luggage allowance...

The luggage allowance on flights is usually 20kg per person (including equipment). **This is always sufficient for all our courses** (including ski mountaineering and expeditions), and if you need to pay excess you are definitely taking too much. Many airlines allow 10kg of sports equipment in addition (if packed in a separate bag). Check the exact details with the airline before booking your tickets. Keep all your important and valuable items (such as your passport), and documents in the hand luggage, and take photocopies of them.

## Course specific equipment list...

Note that these following pages are for your general information, and that it is your course specific equipment list which you should follow for your exact packing list and equipment requirements. This list is sent as a separate attachment, with this book when you booked.



# climb Climbing courses kit

The equipment list below contains all the obligatory kit required for all our mountaineering courses. If you have anything on this list then BRING IT due to changing conditions or for use in spare time or extensions (e.g. rock shoes for optional evening indoor climbing, even if on an ice climbing course). Asterisked items are available to hire from Icicle to use on your course (see page 6).



## General equipment

Mountaineering Boots\*: crampon compatible (B3) leather / plastic boots, e.g. Sportiva's Walking Boots: B2 leather or fabric boots for those on acclimatisation weekends & Intro course  
 Rock Climbing Shoes (all courses involving rock climbs): worn in, lace up or slipper style  
 Climbing Rucksack (40L max): compact rucksack for day climbs & high altitude ascents  
 Head Torch & Batteries: a halogen or LED bulb head torch with new spare batteries  
 Sunhat / Cap & Fleece / Wool Hat: When hot to hide from glare / when cold to keep warm  
 Goggles & UV Sunglasses: for all courses, and for altitude itineraries (e.g. Mont Blanc)  
 Trekking Poles (Pair): these are now obligatory kit and help to minimise knee damage  
 Water Bottle & Hot Drink Flask (1L+): drinking tubes freeze at altitude or in winter

## Technical kit

Mountaineering Crampons\*: of a 12 point design e.g. Grivel G12 or BD Sabretooth  
 Mountaineering Ice Axe\*: classical style axe (max 60cm) e.g. Camp Neve or BD Raven  
 Alpine / Rock Harness\*: comfortable & adjustable, e.g. Black Diamond Alpine Bod  
 Safety Helmet\*: essential for all our courses, e.g. BD Half Dome or Camp Rock Star  
 Slings\* x2 (long eg. 120cm length): essential personal kit for safety and rescues  
 Screw Gate Karabiners\* x3: large size to use when wearing gloves, & taking thick ropes  
 Belay Device\* or Figure of 8\*: heat-dissipating devices such as the ATC or Petzl Reverso  
 Prussic Loops\* x2: each loop should be made with 2 metres of 7mm climbing cord

## Thermal layers

Fleece Jacket: this is the most important part of your versatile layering system  
 Base layer thermals x2: the tops should be long sleeved to protect your arms in a fall  
 Duvet Jacket / Vest (optional): useful as light, especially bivouacs, Alpine starts, & winter  
 Windstopper Gloves: excellent for thermal capabilities even when windy, & for ropework

## Waterproof layer

Goretex Jacket: a breathable windproof jacket e.g. The North Face Mountain Jacket  
 Waterproof Trousers / Salopettes: for climbing & when breaking trail in snow, or if it rains  
 Gaiters: well fitting, quality, breathable gaiters e.g. Mountain Hardwear Ventigaiters  
 Waterproof Gloves (not mitts): in addition to fleece gloves, and must be waterproof

## Survival and medical

Personal Medication & First Aid Kit: to keep you going, such as blister kits & plasters  
 UV Sunscreen & Sunblock: high factor sunscreen is needed as you burn easily in snow

**Sleeping bags...** Sleeping bags and mats are not required on any course. All nights in mountain huts provide bedding. Take a lightweight sleeping bag liner for hygiene and comfort.

**Ice climbing / extreme level courses...** On these courses you require technical Ice Axes\* & Crampons\*. Mountaineering crampons & ice axes can be hired only if needed.

**Winter climbing courses...** Everyone on any of our Alpine winter climbing courses requires an avalanche transceiver, shovel and probe. You need to hire these if you do not have your own.



## ski Off piste & ski tours

The equipment list below contains all the obligatory kit you require for our off piste and ski touring courses. If you have anything on this list then BRING IT due to changing conditions or for use in spare time or extensions. Asterisked items are available to hire from Icicle for courses (see p.6).



### Skiing equipment

Skis & bindings: off piste skis (at least 80mm at waist), or touring skis with tour bindings  
 Poles: rigid poles for all off piste courses, and either rigid or telescopic poles for touring  
 Ski boots: regular downhill Alpine boots for off piste, or touring boots for ski tour courses  
 Rucksack: small rucksack with side ski straps for off piste (20L max), or up to 35L for tours  
 Goggles & UV Sunglasses: if you have different lenses for lighting conditions, bring them  
 Water Bottle & Hot Drink Flask (1L+): drinking tubes freeze at altitude or in winter  
 Sunhat / Cap & Fleece / Wool Hat: When hot to hide from glare / when cold to keep warm  
 Helmet: Required for all our off piste courses, but generally they are too hot for ski touring  
 Ski skins, skin glue, ski crampons: required for all ski touring courses

### Glacier & avalanche safety kit

Lightweight Crampons\*: of a 12 point design e.g. Grivel G12 or Charlet Black Ice  
 Lightweight Ice Axe\*: classical style axe (max 60cm) e.g. Stubai Mountain Star  
 Alpine / Rock Harness\*: comfortable & adjustable, e.g. Black Diamond Alpine Bod  
 Slings\* x2 (long eg. 120cm length): essential personal kit for safety and rescues  
 Screw Gate Karabiners\* x3: large size to use when wearing gloves, & taking thick ropes  
 Prussic Loops\* x2: each loop should be made with 2 metres of 7mm climbing cord  
 Avalanche transceiver\*: ensure that your transceiver has new batteries, and has been tested  
 Snow shovel\*: you should have a metal snow shovel, as plastic avalanche shovels break  
 Avalanche probe\*: a minimum length of 2m, though 2.4 or 2.8m would be better

### Clothing and layers

Fleece Jacket: this is the most important part of your versatile layering system  
 Base layer thermals: the tops should be long sleeved to protect your arms in a fall  
 Duvet Jacket / Vest (optional): useful as light, especially synthetic, Alpine starts, & winter  
 Windstopper Gloves: excellent for thermal capabilities even when windy, & for ropework  
 Goretex Jacket: a breathable windproof jacket e.g. The North Face Mountain Jacket  
 Waterproof Trousers / Salopettes: for climbing & when breaking trail in snow, or if it rains  
 Waterproof Gloves or mitts: in addition to fleece gloves, and must be waterproof

### Survival and medical

Personal Medication & First Aid Kit: to keep you going, such as blister kits & plasters  
 UV Sunscreen & Sunblock: high factor sunscreen is needed as you burn easily in snow

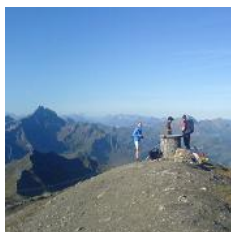
### Mountain hut nights – see the itinerary for if night(s) in huts are involved

On the majority of the ski touring courses night(s) in mountain huts are involved. All touring huts with a guardian (e.g. Haute Route and Silvretta) provide bedding. Take a light sleeping bag liner for hygiene and comfort, and a very small lightweight travel towel for showers. Also take a head torch and batteries both for finding your way around the hut in the night, and also for any pre-dawn starts. No nights in huts are involved for any of our off piste courses, so if you opt to stay in any, you must pay for both you and your guide. Take some local currency for purchases in mountain huts, but even in Switzerland you will find Euros are accepted on a non-preferential exchange rate, and also carry a credit / debit card for any ski lift purchases you may require on your itinerary.



# trek Snowshoe & treks

The equipment list below contains all the obligatory kit you will require for our Alps trekking and snowshoeing courses. If you have anything on this list then BRING IT due to changing conditions or for use in spare time or extensions. Asterisked items are available to hire from Icicle (see page 6). Visit the kit section of the website to see a full list of rucksack contents for you and the guide.



## General equipment

- Walking Boots\*: B2 leather or waterproof fabric boots for snowshoeing or trekking courses
- Rucksack\* (40L max): compact rucksack for day walks and hut-to-hut treks
- Rucksack cover / liner: designed to keep all the items in your rucksack completely dry
- Head Torch & Batteries: a halogen or LED bulb head torch with new spare batteries
- Sunhat / Cap & Fleece / Wool Hat: When hot to hide from glare / when cold to keep warm
- UV Sunglasses: for all trekking and snowshoeing courses, to protect your eyes from glare
- Trekking Poles (Pair): these are now obligatory kit and help minimise knee damage
- Water Bottle & Hot Drink Flask (1L+): drinking tubes freeze at altitude or in winter

## Thermal layers

- Fleece Jacket: this is the most important part of your versatile layering system
- Base layer thermals x2: the tops should be long sleeved to protect your arms in a fall
- Duvet Jacket / Vest (optional): useful as light, especially synthetic, Alpine starts, & winter
- Windstopper Gloves: excellent for thermal capabilities even when windy, & for ropework

## Waterproof layers

- Goretex Jacket: a breathable windproof jacket e.g. The North Face Mountain Jacket
- Waterproof Trousers / Salopettes: for climbing & when breaking trail in snow, or if it rains
- Gaiters: well fitting, quality, breathable gaiters e.g. Mountain Hardwear Ventigaiters
- Waterproof Gloves (not mitts): in addition to fleece gloves, and must be waterproof

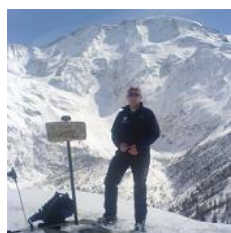
## Survival and medical

- Personal Medication & First Aid Kit: to keep you going, such as blister kits & plasters
- UV Sunscreen & Sunblock: high factor sunscreen is needed as you burn easily in snow

**Sleeping bags...** Sleeping bags and mats are not required on any course. All nights in mountain huts provide bedding. Take a lightweight sleeping bag liner for hygiene and comfort.

## Winter and snowshoeing

- Snowshoes\*: ideal Alpine snowshoes include the TSL 325's, GV Polar Trail or MSR Ascents
- Avalanche transceiver, shovel & probe\*: all provided ARVA's, other kit as required among group





## run Trail running kit lists

### Clothing

- Trail running shoes, and a spare pair if you have them
- Running shorts / tights
- Wicking running tops
- Running underwear and socks
- Waterproof jacket with a hood
- Long running trousers / leggings in case of cold weather
- Warm long sleeved top (not cotton) for if cold weather
- Cap / bandana / Buff as you usually use for running
- Warm hat and gloves
- Lightweight waterproof over trousers
- Sun glasses and sunscreen

### Equipment

- Hydration system or water bottle(s), of c.1 litre capacity
- Food for whilst running, such as cereal bars / gels etc
- Walking / running poles for security on wet or steep ground
- Running pack that can carry spare clothing and kit

### Safety

- Mobile phone that works in France / Italy / Switzerland
- Head torch for night running / safety, e.g. Petzl LED type
- Survival blanket in case of emergency or cold
- Whistle (many running bags have one attached)
- Strapping tape for injuries or blister prevention
- Passport / identity papers in case you cross borders

### Optional

- Knife / scissors to cut self-adhesive tape / strapping
- Compression socks
- Altimeter / heart rate monitor / GPS / watch
- Map / compass
- Vaseline or anti-chaffing cream

This list is non-exhaustive, so please use it as a guideline along with your personal preferences.

### Top tips and advice

On our Alpine trail running trips, you should take clothing and kit that you use regularly. One thing many people find useful, which you may not be used to using for running, is trekking or running poles. These are really useful on very rough ground, or for steep ascents. They are not obligatory, but most people find them very useful. In terms of selecting a good Alpine trail running shoe, look for a very durable sole and upper on your shoe, as the rock and terrain is unforgiving, and there is little natural cushioning on the ground, compared to in the mountains of the UK. Don't bring mud running shoes, as they will wear out on the rocks. You may find that compression wear is useful for use in the day, or purely for recovery after a run each day. Plan to carry at least a litre of water, as in the Alps you will find water sources more rare than in the UK. For more kit advice visit; <https://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/trail%2Brunning%2Bkit.html>





# Physical preparation

## General principles...

One of the most ignored aspects of climbing, trekking, skiing or running, is the training required for the sports. Many people try to judge the difficulty of an ascent by looking on a map to see the height gain on a summit day, and for Mont Blanc it is 1300m. People then equate this to walking up Ben Nevis (same height gain), and blame any problems on a lack of acclimatisation. All of our courses have been designed by professionals to maximise your acclimatisation, and if you struggle it is usually your lack of training that is at fault. A fitter person acclimatises easier, and their body is better prepared to work at maximum outputs for a long time, or where there is less oxygen. Added to this most clients are unused to daily height gains of c.1000m, let alone in snow carrying a rucksack. There are also the long descents to prepare for, as for example there is 2.5km vertical descent from Mont Blanc. This page outlines some ideas of how to prepare yourself, as the better prepared and fitter you are, the more you will get from the course.



All our training plans have been devised by a Personal Trainer, and there are plans to suit all starting levels at; <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/training.shtml>

## Muscle groups and aerobic efficiency...

The most efficient exercise for mountain sports, are the actual sports themselves, or at least types of exercise that develop the key muscle groups and aerobic fitness at a similar level. Except on very difficult routes, the main muscle group that will be used are in the thigh (quadriceps), and the oxygen demand by this muscle group is high, requiring a good level of aerobic efficiency. For this reason weight training in a gym is far less effective than running, as your muscle capacity can only grow if the aerobic output can meet the demand. Where there is a shortfall, lactic acid is produced and you will feel what athletes call the 'burn'.

## Recommendations...

The level of training that we recommend for our courses differs from course to course, so look at the course itinerary, and click on the skills and fitness links below the course title for further details. As a general idea, for most of the courses you should be running for 45 minutes at least three times a week for at least two months before the course. Many people try using the excuse that their joints get sore with running. Here are a couple of options for you to consider trying: 1) Run on soft surfaces such as grass, 2) Go cycling but ensure there are lots of hills, 3) Try using a knee support / brace while exercising, 4) Try to increase your 'strength to weight' ratio by dieting. When you are truthful to yourself you probably know that currently you are not training enough. Excuses such as 'not enough time for training', are due to bad time management and a lack of prioritisation.

## Diet and hydration...

Carbohydrates are foods that release energy easily, and should only be eaten before exercise (not after, or before bed). If you eat lots of carbohydrates without exercising you will put on weight. The food you eat must provide you with the energy levels you require, as well as sufficient levels of protein and fats. It is imperative that you keep hydrated during your training, or your performance level will drop significantly. This is especially important to monitor when on your course, as you will be exercising hard at altitude.

## Climbing training...

If you are a climber, a wall session should be seen as an addition to your aerobic training regime rather than a substitute for one of the training sessions. Warm up carefully, then to climb several routes medium difficulty for you, one after another, like circuit training in order to give you an aerobic workout. Then progress onto hard climbs to test and develop you, and at the end don't forget to warm down. Why not run to and from the wall to combine your training?



# Guided pre-trip training

If you can't wait until your course in the Alps, we offer a great range of UK based guided courses, to help you prepare and train, to ensure that you get the most out of your Alpine trip...



## Alpine Preparation Weekend £99

The aim of these lake District based weekends is to help you prepare people better for your trip to the Alps. They involve two full hill days, so good hill fitness is important, and you are led over high mountainous terrain, with the aim of coaching you on steep ground, developing hill fitness, and advising on training and kit. After the first day, there is a Alpine Q&A session in a local pub, to allow you to ask any queries you have about your forthcoming Alpine trip. The instructor will bring along a decent range of kit, as we find that many of the queries are about equipment.



## Scottish Winter Skills – Weekend £325 or Full Week £675

Learn or refresh your ice axe and crampon skills, over a weekend or week. Practice ice axe arrest and learn how to move efficiently on snow. Our Scottish winter courses are all based in the mountains of Ben Nevis and Glencoe, as these provide some of the most reliable snow and winter climbing conditions of anywhere in the UK. The mountains here also offer a wide range of route options at all grades, so are a perfect training ground for these courses. These trips offer excellent preparation for those on Alpine climbing courses.



## Wild Camping £140

Two great hill days on a weekend, with a wild camp on the night in a remote region on the highest fells of the Lake District. Learn skills and sleep under the stars!



## Rock Climbing £200

Spend a day in the Lake District rock climbing or scrambling, to develop or fine tune your skills for an Alpine trip. You can also use the day for a roped scrambling route.



## Personal Trainer £25/h

Book one of our qualified personal trainers for a mountain fitness test, over two or three hours. This is Lakes based, and we also offer a Virtual Personal Trainer service.



## Avalanche Safety £75

Essential safety course pre winter to refresh your avalanche awareness and for you to practice using transceivers in various avalanche safety and recovery scenarios.



## Navigation Skills £75

Never get lost in the hills and mountains again. In the day, you will learn to use the compass and various scales of maps & interpreting the contours, and making route plans.



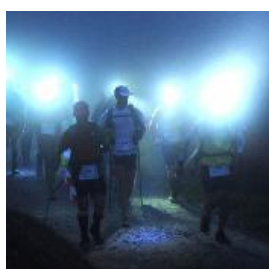
## Intro Fell Running £99

If you've never run off road before, and want to try this amazing sport, it's a weekend course with two days coaching. You'll develop descent skills and pacing techniques.



## Lakes Trail Week £499

Spend a full week trail running in the Lakes, and explore different regions each day. Select from a wide mixture of fell top routes, single tracks, & woodland trails.



## 1<sup>st</sup> time Ultra-Trail £149

If planning to run in your first ultra, learn runners navigation, night running, pacing and techniques, and run a mock event. A two day weekend course in the Lake District.



# Personal training plans

The best way to view training is to take a holistic approach to your preparation, and it is with this attention to detail that you should continue to care for yourself during the course, with sufficient food and hydration to keep you going. However we have heard of laughable ideas, believed to be worthwhile training, such as taking the batteries out of a TV remote control to make you get up more often, or ten minutes on an exercise bike. A holistic approach is many complimentary actions.

## Types of exercise to consider...

- RUNNING – good for aerobic & anaerobic fitness though take care with your joints.
- SWIMMING – excellent aerobic workout that does not put major stress on joints.
- CYCLING – good for strength & endurance, and useful throughout training schedules.
- ROWING – very good for aerobic endurance, stamina, and for muscle capacity building.
- AEROBICS – dependant on type of exercises, this is useful for flexibility & stamina.
- WALKING – only useful as a warm down exercise, as it gives a low level of fitness.

## General principles of training...

- 1) Flexibility exercises are important so no muscle damage occurs during exercise.
- 2) The effect of aerobic exercise is optimised in training periods of over 30 minutes.
- 3) Psychology is important in training, and you must enjoy the exercise you are doing.
- 4) Varying the exercise can be beneficial as different muscle groups are exercised.
- 5) Monitor your heart rate and try to keep it within the suggested boundaries.
- 6) Warm down periods prevent cramps and enable the exercised muscles to cool.
- 7) Diet is a factor that can assist the training and provide the energy when needed.
- 8) Doing the sport you are training for, can be part of your training programme.

There are a fair few people each season who contact us saying "It's ten weeks to my course, and I haven't done any training yet. What do you recommend I do?". Ignoring the urge to say, "Put the phone down, don't go to McDonalds, get your running kit on, and get outside", below is one sample of the three ten weeks training planners for you to see the level of detail we provide. The training section of the website offers several alternative programs for different fitness levels and courses. If you have really done no training before this, then we do advise you to get medical advice before.

W	Phase	Days of the week						
		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
1	Build Up Phase	20 mins running	20 mins running	REST	30 mins running	REST	30 mins running	Climbing wall 2 hr
2	Strength / Power	30 mins running	REST	30 mins running	Cross Country	REST	30 mins running	Climbing wall 2 hr
3	Strength / Power	Cross Country	30 mins running	REST	Cross Country	REST	30 mins running	Climbing wall 2 hr
4	Transition Phase	30 mins running	REST	45 mins running	Cross Country	REST	45 mins running	Climbing wall 2 hr
5	Stamina Phase	REST	Cross Country	Cross Country	45 mins running	REST	Cross Country	Climbing wall 2 hr
6	Stamina Phase	Cross Country	REST DAY	60 mins running	45 mins running	REST	Cross Country	Climbing wall 2 hr
7	Transition Phase	45min run / 2hr cycle	REST DAY	Cross Country	45min run / 2hr cycle	REST	Cross Country	Climbing wall 2 hr
8	Power / Endurance	REST	45min run / 2hr cycle	Cross Country	45min run / 2hr cycle	REST	45min run / 2hr cycle	Climbing wall 2 hr
9	Power / Endurance	45min run / 2hr cycle	REST	Cross Country	45min run / 2hr cycle	REST	45min run / 2hr cycle	Climbing wall 2 hr
10	Warm Down	REST	45min run / 2hr cycle	REST DAY	Cross Country	REST	45min run / 2hr cycle	REST
11	COURSE	COURSE	COURSE	COURSE	COURSE	COURSE	REST	REST





# Last minute questions

## What activities insurance do I need?

See page 3 for full details. Proof will be required in Chamonix before activities can commence. For UK residents, you could consider Snowcard or the BMC policies. For those travelling from outside the UK, try the Austrian Alpine Club. Do not arrive in Chamonix without insurance, as you will not be able to participate in any guiding at all. Full details of what insurance is required for any of our courses, for climbing, trekking, skiing or running are online; <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/insurance.html>

## I'm arriving before 4pm. Can I store bags?

There are no baggage storage facilities at all in Chamonix, though there are in Geneva airport, so travel as light as possible, and aim to get flights that arrive close to the check in time. If you arrive early, bars often store bags if you ask them nicely and buy a drink or lunch there.

## Where can I leave stuff while on my course?

On most courses your accommodation is yours all week, even on the nights you are in a hut, so you can leave all your luggage there all week.

## What is the address of my accommodation?

Most of the course accommodation is in shared flats in the Chamonix Sud area of town close to the Aiguille du Midi cable car. Accommodation is allocated upon arrival, so head to the course meeting point (see page 5) for key collection.

## Who will my guide be?

Guides too are allocated on a weekly basis, to allow for changes in weather, or their physical preferences. You are told who will be guiding you at the course briefing at 17:00 on Sunday.

## How many others are on my course?

This figure changes all the time, as we accept bookings 24/7. Look at the course itinerary page of your trip, to see how many spaces are remaining. The maximum guide ratio (e.g. 1:6), minus the remaining spaces (e.g. 2), will let you know how many are on your trip (e.g. 4 people).

## How will altitude affect me?

Altitude sickness affects people in different ways. You will notice the air is thinner, though most of the feelings of nausea are due to the effort of the ascents. Most people sleep very

lightly at altitude, so we try to arrange for only essential nights to be spent in huts when Alpine starts are needed the next morning. At all other times, we abide by the principle of 'climb high, sleep low'. You can minimise the impact by keeping hydrated, and being very fit. If you are worried about acclimatisation, you should seriously consider our Acclimatisation Weekend before the course, as it includes an extra full day of guiding at altitude.

## How fit do I really need to be for my course?

It is a sad truth that the majority of clients are not as fit as they (or we) would wish to be for their course, and this impacts on their course. Our booking form asks you to self declare your skills and fitness, and if either of these are below the stated level, we reserve the right to ask you to leave the course. For example on a Mont Blanc (or similar physically demanding) week we suggest that you half marathon fitness, and run this distance is a reasonable time, such as below 1 hour 45 minutes.

## How much will my rucksack weigh?

This is a trick question. When you are on a summit, you are wearing all your clothes, so technically not carrying them. You weighed the same at the bottom of the mountain when all the kit was in your pack. The main principle is to keep your pack as small as possible. We recommend a 40 L bag as a maximum, but if you are efficient you can cope with a 30 to 35 litre bag. The course hosts and Guides will advise on the kit and clothing to carry each day.

## Can I drink the water?

The water from the taps in Chamonix is safe and is fresher and less chemical laden than the supply in the UK. In mountain huts there is rarely running water, but bottled water can be bought for from c. £5 a 1.5 litre bottle. In terms of glacial meltwater, the main minerals in the granite rocks of the massif are iron and magnesium which have diarrhetic effects, which are picked up and dissolved into the meltwater as it filters through the glacial moraines.

## All other queries?

Get in touch with us! Telephone us: 01539 44 22 17. E-mail: [info@icicle.co.uk](mailto:info@icicle.co.uk)


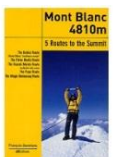





















# Client equipment offers

## Icicle Windermere store

Course clients are eligible for a 20% off all clothing and equipment from our Lake District shop. Your course specific equipment list will detail some offers specific to your course, and here we list the Alpine top sellers. To order, e-mail the shop direct: [windermere@icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk](mailto:windermere@icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk)



- |   |   |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|--|
|    | Black Diamond Sabretooth crampons<br><b>NOW £108.00</b><br>(RRP £135.00)          |    | Mont Blanc 5 route to the summit guidebook<br><b>NOW £21.95</b><br>(RRP £21.95) |    | Ortovoz Piz Bianco synthetic jacket<br><b>NOW £159.20</b><br>(RRP £199.00)   |
|  | Karrimor Hot Rock rucksack 40 litres<br><b>NOW £56.00</b><br>(RRP £70.00)         |  | Camp Neve Ice Axe<br>Sizes: 50, 57, 65cm<br><b>NOW £44.00</b><br>(RRP £55.00)   |  | Extremities Sticky Thick fleece glove<br><b>NOW £19.20</b><br>(RRP £24.00)   |
|  | Leki Voyager poles Superlock (pair)<br><b>NOW £40.00</b><br>(RRP £50.00)          |  | Camp Quartz CR safety harness<br><b>NOW £55.99</b><br>(RRP £69.99)              |  | Black Diamond Cosmo 70 lumens headtorch<br><b>NOW £23.99</b><br>(RRP £29.99) |
|  | Ortovox Patroller 3 antenna digital ARVA<br><b>NOW £151.20</b><br>(RRP £189.00)   |  | Black Diamond Express icescrew 16cm<br><b>NOW £39.99</b><br>(RRP £49.99)        |  | Silva Expedition 4 compass<br><b>NOW £22.39</b><br>(RRP £27.99)              |
|  | Black Diamond Outdoor harness Sizes M, L, XL<br><b>NOW £35.99</b><br>(RRP £44.99) |  | TSL 325 Escape snowshoes (pair)<br><b>NOW £107.99</b><br>(RRP £134.99)          |  | Black Diamond Viper Ice axe (hammer)<br><b>NOW £140.00</b><br>(RRP £175.00)  |
|  | Black Diamond Half Dome helmet<br><b>NOW £39.99</b><br>(RRP £49.99)               |  | Chamonix 1:50000 IGN map, with GPS grid<br><b>NOW £12.99</b><br>(RRP £12.99)    |  | Black Diamond Neve strap crampons 576g<br><b>NOW £87.20</b><br>(RRP £109.00) |
|  | Ortovox Beast safety snow shovel<br><b>NOW £36.00</b><br>(RRP £45.00)             |  | Extremities Novagaiter in Goretex (pair)<br><b>NOW £28.00</b><br>(RRP £35.00)   |  | Chamonix 1:25000 IGN map, with GPS grid<br><b>NOW £11.50</b><br>(RRP £11.50) |