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Website: [www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk](http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk)  
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# 2026 trip dossier | Scottish Winter Intro £1295

Website link <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/scottish%2Bwinter%2Bclimbing%2Bweek.html>

## Key features

- A full week in the Scottish mountains learning winter skills and climbing great ridges and gullies
- B&B accommodation in Fort William from Friday check in to Wednesday check out, is included
- Develop winter mountaineering skills including avalanche awareness, snow skills, and navigation
- Led by top qualified guides (IFMGA, MIC, WML), to really launch your winter climbing career
- All technical kit (e.g. B3 boots, crampons, ice axe etc.) can be hired from Icicle or locally
- Scheduled dates on the website, and extra dates available any winter week for a group booking



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UK registered company 413 6635. VAT 770 137 933

'inspirational mountain adventure holidays'

**26 years**  
established in 2000





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## Course overview

- Spend a full week in the mountains of Scotland, learning winter skills and tackling routes in full winter condition. These courses ascend grade I and II gullies and ridges during the week. Key objectives for the week include Carn Mor Dearg Arete or Ledge Route on Ben Nevis, and the Curved Ridge in Glencoe.
- 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.
- The course accommodation is in a Fort William B&B, from the Friday afternoon / evening when you arrive through to the check out on the Wednesday for you to travel home after the guiding is finished. Evening meals are available locally in a variety of pubs, and packed lunches can be purchased.
- When you book, you are sent a detailed course dossier, which provides full detailed equipment lists and details of the course meeting points, and how to get there. We also detail what hire equipment hire items we can provide, and what can be sourced locally, so you can pre-order any items you require.
- In terms of the previous experience required, we suggest a good level of fitness, allied with good capability in inclement and cold weather, as well as being good with exposure. Any previous roped climbing experience (even indoor climbing or roped crag scrambling) is a bonus, but is not essential.
- The majority of instructors leading these courses are either IFMGA guides, MIC mountain instructors, or WML mountain leaders. All of our Scottish guiding team are highly qualified, and amongst the most experienced in the UK. The guiding ratios are just 1:4 for the first 2 days, then 1:2 for the last 3 days.
- As you will doubtless be aware, any Scottish mountaineering is very weather dependant, so our itineraries are intentionally flexible, to allow the instructor(s) to adapt plans to ensure that you achieve the maximum in the week. Safety always is a priority in reaction to the conditions, group skills, and avalanche forecast.
- The past few winters have been comparatively mild, but our scheduled dates are in the key season, so we are confident of sufficient snow and conditions for the whole period. However, if the wind speeds are dangerous, or the avalanche risk is too high, we have the contingency of the Kinlochleven ice wall.
- This week has a real focus on developing your skills on progressively steeper ground, and by the end of the week the aim is for you to ascend classic Scottish winter routes using roped climbing techniques. The routes attempted in this course are typically grade I & II gullies and ridges. The technical content is; How to use ice axe and crampons, Avalanche awareness and avoidance, Winter ropework and snow belays, Snow & ice climbing techniques, Ice axe arrest emergency skills, Winter navigation skills.

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## Course accommodation

- Being well rested, dry and fed in the mornings is key to enjoying a Scottish Winter trip. You stay in a B&B / hotel in Fort William on a B&B basis. We use a selection of accommodation providers.
- You are booked into twin rooms as standard, and a cooked English breakfast is included each morning. The rooms all have ensuite bath / shower rooms. You can pay to have evening meals locally.
- If you would like to arrange your own accommodation for this course, let us know at the time of your booking, and subject to numbers, a discount is applied to your invoice of £40 per night. For those wanting an upgrade to single accommodation, this can be arranged at £50 per night extra, subject to availability.
- The accommodation we use all has free WiFi throughout. There is parking for those travelling by car, and it is close to the Train and Bus stations, for those arriving by public transport.
- Full details of the accommodation are provided in the course dossier, once you have booked, and if you'd like to upgrade to single rooms or book extra nights, this can be arranged too.

## Sample itinerary

**Friday** - The B&B check in is from 16:00 and onwards on the Friday. At 18:00, there is a scheduled course briefing (in person or via Zoom), so you have the opportunity to ask any questions, before the activities the next day. For those of you arriving late, don't worry, as this briefing can be repeated the next morning.

**Saturday** - Day 1 of 5 guiding (1:6 ratio). After breakfast, you will meet your instructor for the week, who will brief you on conditions and check your equipment. If you have hired any equipment locally, ensure you have collected it the evening before, to be ready. The instructor will design the itinerary to cater for your previous experience and aspirations, in conjunction with the weather and avalanche forecasts. Generally on the first day you focus on skills for moving safely on snowy terrain, kicking steps, ascent and descent techniques, and you practice ice axe arrest skills in event of a slip. Night in B&B.

**Sunday** - Day 2 of 5 guiding (1:6 ratio). The aim of today is to get onto steeper graded ground, to develop your skills further. During the day you are taught the use of the rope for Scottish winter routes for protection, and you will learn about the wide range of snow anchors that can be used for direct or indirect belays.

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These include bucket-seat belays, buried axe belays, stomper belays, and direct belays using Italian hitches. The skills you practice today will be re-visited throughout the week, but are the key staple skills for any winter climbs in Scotland or the UK mountains. Night in B&B.

**Monday** - Day 3 of 5 guiding (1:2 ratio). As the first two days covered the key basic skills, today is a chance to put them all together, and to learn how to move quickly and efficiently on a Scottish winter route. The skills of moving together and short roping are key to developing what is referred to as moving Alpine style, where the route choice, and efficiency of movement and ropework, will determine if you get off a mountain in the last of the daylight or in the darkness. You typically spend some time today learning avalanche awareness skills and techniques for assessing the stability of the snowpack. Night in B&B.

**Tuesday** - Day 4 of 5 guiding (1:2 ratio). The last two days of the course are guided on a 1:2 ratio to ensure that you are operating at the best client to instructor ratio for your progression and for safety. These days are a real opportunity for you to put all the skills that you have learned into action, during a full mountain day. There are many routes to choose from, but typically you climb one of the uber-classic Scottish winter routes such as the Broad Gully on Stob Coirenan Lochain, or No.4 Gully on Ben Nevis. These routes are famous for really developing you as a Scottish winter climber. Night in B&B.

**Wednesday** - Day 5 of 5 guiding (1:2 ratio). Run on a similar basis as yesterday, at a 1:2 ratio, today you climb a winter ridge route or a buttress. These routes are more exposed than the gullies of yesterday, and the instructor will lead you on a classic winter route such as the Carn Mor Dearg (CMD) Arete on Ben Nevis, or the Ledge Route. In Glencoe, another option might be the Curved Ridge. All the guiding is scheduled to finish by 17:00, so you can return any hire kit, and then travel home. Extra nights accommodation can be arranged, if you wish to stay in Fort William for extra time.

**ITINERARY NOTES:** Where possible we follow itineraries. Mountain adventures are weather and conditions dependant, so occasionally we are forced to alter the plans. If this is the case, suitable alternatives are offered. Please use this outline as a guide to the types of activity that you will attempt.

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## Course Inclusions

1) Hand picked qualified winter instructor for five days (1:6 & 1:2 ratios), 2) UK office and concierge service for logistics, advice and support, 3) Pre course information dossier, with training plans and kit lists, 4) Briefing the first evening, with latest updates and weather reports, 5) Equipment discount voucher for our Windermere shop / online, 6) Group technical kit e.g. rope and protection equipment, supplied by guide, 7) Five nights B&B accommodation in Fort William, Friday eve to Wednesday morning, 8) Preferential rates on technical equipment rental in Windermere & Fort William, 9) Road transport with guide to and from climbing venues from Fort William, 10) Free 36 page technical Course Instruction Booklet.

## Course Exclusions

1) Travel to and from Fort William, Scotland, 2) Cable Cars on Aonach Mor or White Corries (c.£30 total for week) or Ice Factor, 3) Rental equipment, 4) Personal laundry, telephone calls, lunches, evening meals, & any purchases on the mountain / hotels / restaurants, 5) Activities insurance, excess baggage, etc.

## Notes

1) Group sizes for this trip are 2 (min) - 6 (max) people. A booking of 2 people guarantees the date. 2) Rental kit this can either be hired from our shop in Windermere (click for details), or in Fort William. 3) The instructor may occasionally suggest that avalanche safety kit (transceiver, shovel, probe) is required, hired locally.

## Pre-requisite skills

These are outlined on this page: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/courses.html>, and this course is;

Course level: **Beginner.**

Mountaineering: **Hill walking experience.**

Ice & Rock: **No previous experience needed.**

Fitness: **Good general fitness and stamina.**

## Fitness & stamina

The ideal fitness levels are detailed at: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/trainingpreparation.html>, and there are links to general training advice and planners that you can adapt to suit and follow.

This trip is graded: **Level 2** - We suggest that people on courses of this grade can run 10km without a problem, but we stress that for courses of this level you do not need to be any fitter than this minimum level, though it is there to ensure a good basic level of aerobic fitness and training.

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## How to book

- All bookings are made securely online, and deposit of £250 is payable (with secure payments handled via our travel bonding by SinGS / Felloh). Ensure that when completing the form, you fill in all the required fields, in order for the 'SUBMIT' button to appear.
- All payments are protected by our Tour Operator travel bonding with ATOL and TTA, and your monies are held in trust until after you have travelled home. You are fully financially protected, in accordance with UK & EU laws. Website link: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/booking.html>

## Before your trip

- As soon as you book online, you are sent confirmation of this, and attachments including joining instructions, course specific kit lists. If you haven't received this e-mail within half an hour of booking online, please check your junk / spam folder.
- At the office, we manually check all bookings, and you'll also receive a personalised e-mail from us formally confirming your course space, and sending you a deposit payment link. Once you have this office confirmation and paid the deposit, it's fine to go ahead and book your travel arrangements, and to arrange your activities insurance.
- Activities insurance is a requirement for all trip participants. Organise it as soon as you are booked, and ensure that it covers you for cancellation or curtailment, in case you injure yourself or get ill before your trip. This ensures you'd be fully reimbursed for the trip, and all travel costs.
- Website link: <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/insurance.html>

## Any questions?

Even if you've read all the detail here and in your Course Information Booklet, and on the website, you may still have some queries about your trip, so don't hesitate to get in touch.

- Telephone +44 (0)1539 44 22 17 | E-mail [info@icicle.co.uk](mailto:info@icicle.co.uk)
- Facebook message <http://m.me/iciclemountaineering>
- Here's our office hours, and online chat <http://www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk/contact.html>
- When you're on a trip, you'll also be provided an in resort WhatsApp number for our team, so if you haven't already, please ensure that you download this free app to your phone.



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