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ROPE AND CARGO NET CLIMBING SAFETY

Clover Safe notes are intended primarily for 4-H volunteers and members nine years and older.



*Photograph Courtesy of
University of California 4-H Archives*

Climbing on ropes or cargo nets can be a challenging and rewarding experience. However, climbers must take several precautions to reduce the possibilities for being injured while climbing.

Information available from the U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission indicates fractures of the wrist, lower arm, and elbow are common injuries associated with climbing.

This Clover Safe provides information about how to reduce the risks for rope and cargo net climbing injuries.

Rope and Cargo Net Climbing Safety Precautions

- Always dress appropriately for climbing. Wear closed-toed shoes with slip resistant soles such as tennis shoes and if appropriate, gloves. Use an ANSI-approved climbing helmet if you intend to climb above your height.
- Prior to climbing, remove necklaces or other loose articles of clothing that could become entangled in ropes.
- Before using, inspect all ropes, harnesses, equipment attachment points, and hardware for damage, wear, and proper function. Remove any damaged, worn, or broken rope, hardware, or equipment from use.
- If the climbing activity exceeds the climber's height, then the fall area shall be protected by a fall cushioning surface such as provided by mats (12-inches thick) or wood chips (6- to 12-inch depth).
- All climbing activities shall be supervised by a qualified climbing instructor or adult that has received California 4-H approved training.
- Ground spotters shall be used to break falls and help keep climbers that fall on cushioned surfaces.
- Rope climbers shall be supported by an overhead rope that is attached to a climbing harness. The overhead rope shall have a controlled-descent device and be attended at all times by a belayer.
- When climbing, always follow the supervisor's instructions.
- Do not horseplay while climbing on ropes or cargo nets.
- If you begin to tire when climbing, then it is time for you to cease climbing and return to the ground.
- Never attempt to climb a rope or cargo net that is beyond your capabilities.
- If you are injured while climbing, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.



*Photograph Courtesy of San Mateo
County 4-H Program*