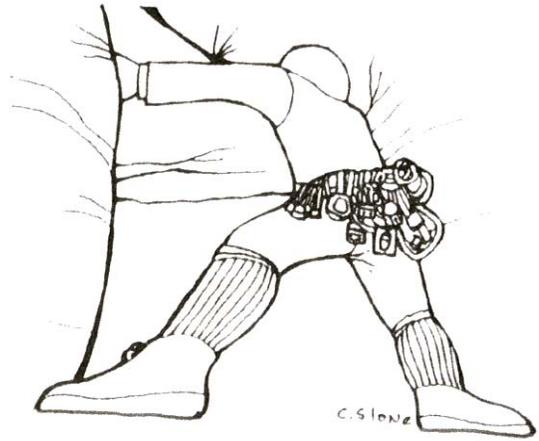




Information for Climbers



Rock climbing at Devils Tower is a popular recreational activity. The Tower is acclaimed as one of the finest traditional crack climbing areas in North America and boasts a 100-year climbing history. With such popularity, regulations are essential in order to protect climbers, the general public, and the resource. Act responsibly and observe all park regulations. Remember, your actions reflect on the climbing community as a whole.

The Climbing Management Plan, implemented in 1995, and updated in 2006, provides for the management of Devils Tower National Monument as a cultural resource as well as a natural and recreational resource. The plan prevents new physical impacts to the rock - additional bolts or fixed pitons are prohibited. Northern Plains Indians regard Devils Tower as a significant sacred site. Out of respect to these beliefs, the plan provides for a **voluntary closure** to climbing during the month of June.

REGULATIONS

- ◆ *Register* before your climb and check in immediately after.
- ◆ Observe any *route closures* posted on bulletin boards and on the Tower Trail. Contact the monument for specific closure areas. Some routes are closed from mid-March to late-summer to protect nesting Prairie Falcons.
- ◆ *Camping* or bivouacking is not permitted on the Tower.
- ◆ *Pets* may not be left unattended. Pets are not allowed on trails or away from parking lots. All pets must be leashed.
- ◆ Pull your *ropes* when you are finished climbing for the day. Leaving unattended ropes on the Tower is not permitted. Please do not leave brightly colored webbing on the Tower.
- ◆ *Leave no trace*. The rock should remain as you found it. Chipping and gluing holds is prohibited. Route cleaning such as gardening, trundling and scrubbing, is not allowed.
- ◆ *A permit is required* to replace existing bolts or fixed pitons. Do not install new bolts or fixed pitons.
- ◆ *Power drills* are prohibited at Devils Tower National Monument. A permit is required to use hand drills in replacing bolts.

REGISTRATION

All persons planning to climb or scramble above the boulder field are required to register at the climber registration office or at the information kiosk when the office is not staffed. Climbers are required to check in at the end of their climb. During peak visitation (May through September) climbers are asked to leave their vehicles in the lower parking lot, located immediately to the right as you enter the main visitor center parking area.

CLIMBING GUIDES

Several climbing guide companies hold commercial use permits for Devils Tower. A current list of guide companies is available upon request.

ESTABLISHING NEW ROUTES

Climbers completing new routes are asked to describe them on forms available at the Visitor Center. New route descriptions are made available to all interested climbers. Please remember that the installation of new bolts and fixed pitons is not permitted.

CAUTIONS AND HAZARDS

ROUTES: Routes at the Tower are generally long. **Take two ropes and plenty of gear (a double rack is standard).**

RESCUE: The National Park Service does not maintain a professional rescue team at Devils Tower. Make plans for self-rescue or assistance from other climbers should an unexpected incident arise. Available park staff will provide assistance to the limit of their abilities. Response to an incident may take several hours.

INJURY: The closest medical facility that can treat significant trauma is 60 miles from Devils Tower. Caution should dictate your actions while climbing! Use extreme caution in crowded areas – climbing fatalities have occurred in the Durrance – Bowling Alley – Meadows Rappel area.

WEATHER: Storms can develop quickly, creating danger from lightning, slippery rock surfaces, and hypothermia. Obtain forecast information before beginning your climb and observe changing weather conditions. Climbers have received burns from splash lightning. Dehydration is common during hot, dry weather. Always carry plenty of water.

RAPPELLING: Accidents often occur when rappelling if proper care is not taken. The National Park Service does not maintain bolts or anchors. Inspect all anchors and **back them up** if you feel they are inadequate. Make sure that you know where your rappel route is before you begin. Always rappel over the nose of a column and take extreme care to prevent ropes from jamming in cracks when pulled. Avoid knocking off loose rock.

OTHER HAZARDS: Climbing helmets are strongly recommended due to frequent rock fall. There are many good reasons to wear a helmet, and no good reasons not to. Significant hazards should be reported to a ranger so that future climbers can be warned of the situation. Watch for snakes, spiny plants, poison ivy, falcon attacks, wasps, and falling rocks while climbing on the Tower.

PROTECT THE TOWER

The top of the Tower is a fragile environment and is easily damaged. Minimize your impact by stepping on rocks rather than on plants or soil. Approaches to climbing routes have been consolidated to minimize impacts to plants and soil. Check at the climber registration office or visitor center for approach and route information. Stay on trails. Please pack out all litter. Dispose of human waste appropriately by packing it out.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Guilmette, Carrier, Gardiner and Lindsay; [Devils Tower National Monument Climbing Handbook](#); Devils Tower Natural History Association, 1995.

This publication is available at the visitor center or by contacting the Devils Tower Natural History Association
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The Devils Tower Website (www.nps.gov/deto) includes the 1995 Devils Tower NM Climbing Management Plan and the 2006 Climbing Management Plan update.