

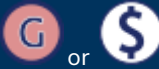




Vertical Stage 1-4 Rover Scout Preparation

Outdoor Adventure Skills Activity Resource



Suitable for	Organiser Skills	Specialist Skills	Duration	Location
 Rovers only	 Self-directed learning	 Vertical Guide or Commercial Operator	 Several weeknights	 Climbing gym Rover Den

An activity resource for Rover Scouts undertaking self-directed learning of basic vertical skills, in preparation for future vertical activities.

Who is this for?

This activity resource is designed for Rover Scouts interested in progressing through the Outdoor Adventure Skills for **Vertical Stages 1 through 4** in Abseiling, Climbing, Caving or Canyoning, with the support of the relevant Victorian adventurous activity team. It is not intended for Scouts or Venturers who have Adult Leaders supporting the program.

Vertical outdoor adventure skills

Weekend trips away with a Scout vertical activity team, being the Victorian Scout Caving Team, Victorian Scout Abseiling Team, or Victorian Scout Climbing Team, can be used towards parts of Vertical Stage 4 in the Outdoor Adventure Skills (OAS). This is optional for all youth members, including Rovers.

Adventurous activity teams primary aim is to give members a memorable adventure experience and to help those youth members who are interested in the award scheme to use the activity towards their progression. As Rovers, you have the independence and planning skills to be able to level yourself up through the Stages, with the help of your Rover Unit, in preparation for an upcoming vertical activity. The adventurous activity Teams (AA) can help you verify those skills.

This document aims to give you the information required to prepare yourself through Stage 3 Vertical to start Stage 4 on a trip away with an AA Team, and to review those skills post-activity in order to sign off the proficiency statements with the Unit Council. Even though the early Stages are not difficult there is still a bit of effort involved, so if you're keen to give this a go, start early and plan ahead.

Supporting with the Vertical proficiency statements

As rovers you may not have access to skilled members OAS 5+ within your group it may be difficult to find someone to verify your skills for Stages 1–3. These stages are challenging for Joeys, Cubs and Scouts, however, straight forward for an adult. Although simple, the foundational skills are important for remaining safe at higher levels. Verification by a skilled member is important. It is recommended you undertake the following steps to complete the requirements of Stage 3, which can then be verified by the AA Team as part of the upcoming vertical trip.

Rover self-directed support to Vertical Stage 3

If you have not completed Vertical Stages 1–3, here is a set of steps for how you may attain the skills prior to the vertical trip, so that the AA Team can help you verify your proficiency statements. If you already hold Vertical Stage 3, you can skip to 'Preparing for Stage 4'.

Rovers new to the program should first complete a self-assessment using the Baseline tool in Scouts | Terrain prior to beginning, accessed through 'Members' once logged into the application.

1. Complete the Abseiling Skills on demand learning module

The Scout Abseiling Skills on demand training module covers:

- Some of the **Plan** topics for Stage 1 Vertical (the rest are common sense for adults)
- All of the **Plan** topics for Stage 2 Vertical
- Most of the **Plan** topics for Stage 3 Vertical

If you don't know how to access the on demand training, refer to the end of this document.

2. Learn how to tie the knots from the Abseiling Skills on demand module + alpine butterfly knot

Stages 2–4 require you to be able to tie a list of vertical knots and know their uses in vertical activities. The following knots, with the exception of the alpine butterfly knot, are demonstrated in the Abseiling Skills module:

- Tape knot
- Figure-8 knot
- Figure-8 on a bight / re-threaded figure-8 (same knot, different tying methods; you need to know both)
- Double fisherman's knot
- Prusik knot
- Alpine butterfly knot

Using your Abseiling Skills knowledge, decide what knots you might use for the following purposes:

- Creating a personal safety anchor around a big tree
- Attaching an abseiler/climber to a belay line
- Attaching to a belay line without using carabiner
- Creating a prusik loop out of a length of accessory cord
- Attaching a self-belay to the abseil line before abseiling
- Attaching a belay device to an anchored belay line

Useful tips:

- Follow along with this video: <https://youtu.be/Fc0IQSUu8Q0>
- The alpine butterfly knot is not included in the Abseiling Skills module. It is illustrated in the Fieldbook for Australian Scouting. Warning: for any knot to be effective it needs to be tied correctly. There are a number of on-line videos that incorrectly tie this knot. We recommend using the link above. When inspecting your completed knot it should be symmetrical with the 'wings' interlocked, unable to be lifted over the bight.
- Tape knots are very easy to tie but tricky to practice only because most Scout Halls do not have one metre lengths of tape. You could try using the working ends of two ratchet straps.

3. Program a vertical activity into your Rover program and Review the activity

Try to convince your Unit to go to the climbing gym prior to the vertical activity. If there isn't enough interest within the Unit, go privately with a friend. The reason for this is the requirement for Stages 2 & 3 to have undertaken two vertical activities, and to climb or abseil above 10 metres. If you are able to demonstrate other previous vertical activities, such as using photos, that would be suitable too. But you need to be able to review them with your Unit. Complete the Stages 1–3 Review statements by reporting back to your Unit. You might want to do this during the group discussion outlined below.

You need to add all these vertical activities to your logbook. You can do this on the Scouts | Terrain app, or start a logbook using a climbing or caving logbook template available from the Scout Victoria adventurous activities webpage. Take some photos too to show the AA Team when they verify your skills.

4. Go through the Stages 1–3 list of proficiency statements with other Rovers or your Unit Leader

If several of you from the same Unit are booked in for the vertical trip, make time to have a group discussion on the Vertical Stages 1–3 once you have all completed the Abseiling Skills on demand module. If you do it after your climbing gym night, you can probably review the activity at the same time (as described above).

If you are attending the vertical trip solo, try to find another experienced Rover willing to participate in your discussion.

Don't worry about the following proficiency statements for now, as the knowledge to complete them can be acquired during the vertical trip:

- Stage 3 - **Plan** - I can point out a good anchor for a rock activity.

Tip: It might be a good idea to do this at the same time as the Stage 4 preparation discussion, discussed below.

Preparing for Stage 4 prior to the vertical activity

Our normal caving/climbing/abseiling activities are not designed for everyone to complete Stage 4. That's because much of the **Plan** and **Do** statements revolve around a youth member's ability to discuss knowledge acquired prior to and during the activity. Because of this, activities are often not designed for anyone to complete Stage 4 in a single trip. However, a motivated Rover who has properly prepared could meet the requirements in a single weekend trip.

5. Carefully read the Participant Information Guide supplied by the AA Team

Most of the **Plan** topics for Stage 4 (and the remaining **Plan** topics for Stage 3) are described in the Participant Information Guide for Caving/Climbing/Abseiling already sent to you by the AA Team prior to the vertical trip. This is the information you need to come prepared and on time for a fun trip.

6. Go through the Stage 4 Vertical Patrol Leader Info with other Rovers or your Unit Leader

If several of you from the same Unit are booked in for the vertical trip, make time to have a group discussion on the Vertical Stage 4 preparation material. If you are attending the vertical trip solo, try to find another experienced Rover willing to participate in your discussion.

To aid in the 'youth run' aspect of the activity, a briefing has been prepared for the Activity Patrol Leader. This 'Patrol Leader Info' document is designed to be used on a tablet by the Patrol Leader to lead a group discussion with their peers. Alternatively a printable version is available at the end. This covers some of the Stage 4 content. It's written for Scouts, but works for Rovers too.

7. Let us know you want to complete Stage 4

You should give the AA Team Trip Leader some advanced notice of how many of you are interested in completing Stage 4 OAS, so they can make arrangements in the program. This is because a few extra things may need to be incorporated into the program for those interested Rovers, namely:

- different setup techniques for vertical activities
- preparing a belay device
- suitable anchors for vertical activities
- checking equipment for damage.

8. During and after the trip

Then on the vertical trip itself just before the opening parade you should mention again who is interested in the OAS, so those Rovers can be identified.

During the trip an AA Team member can help you to verify all the skills you have through to Stage 4. You need to take responsibility for demonstrating your own skills, so it's up to you to be proactive about it all. Don't leave it until you're ready to go home. But if you come prepared as above you should be fine.

Make sure you bring the Scouts | Terrain app or your OAS progression booklet, and any evidence of past vertical activities such as photos and your logbook.

Following the trip you will need to **Review** the activity back with your Unit. You might want to take some photos during the trip to show everyone back home. Just remember that electronics don't work well in caves or canyons unless they are well protected from dust and moisture. But photos taken above ground are useful too.

What if you don't complete Stage 4? Or you want to do Stage 5?

It is perfectly fine not to finish a Stage in a single trip. Those who are keen to do more can form an Activity Patrol and come back to continue their progression. Alternatively you can join one of the AA teams and come away regularly. We love having Rovers as active members.

Further information

If you still have questions please contact the relevant State Leader:

- State Leader – Abseiling: state.abseiling@scoutsvictoria.com.au
- State Leader – Caving: state.caving@scoutsvictoria.com.au
- State Leader – Rockclimbing: state.rockclimbing@scoutsvictoria.com.au

How to access the Scout training portal and on demand training

You can access the Scouts Australia online training system in the following manner:

1. Go to <https://training.scouts.com.au>
2. Nominate your Branch (VIC), use your membership number and your password. For first time users, the default password is your Date of Birth (in the format ddmmyyyy).
3. The Abseiling Skills module can be found under Curriculums > Adventurous Activities.