

AMGA Single Pitch Instructor Course

The **American Mountain Guides Association (AMGA) Single Pitch Instructor Program** is the ***only*** nationally and also internationally recognized and endorsed climbing instructor certification for single pitch instructors in the USA. The AMGA SPI Program is the sole US endorsed UIAA climbing instructor certification and was created by the AMGA over a decade ago (1998). The certification is now required for permits to work in many areas and is the only certification required by legitimate programs seeking climbing instructors in the USA today.

The AMGA Single Pitch Instructor Program is designed to enable climbing instructors to *'proficiently facilitate and instruct the sport of rock climbing in a single pitch setting'*. The program is for current, active rock climbers that have a real desire to teach the rock climbing to novices in a single pitch setting. Candidates should be passionate rock climbers that have their own equipment, regularly climb and have been rock climbing outdoors for at least 12 months. Candidates could be current University Professors that teach climbing, Climbing Instructors, Scout Leaders, Summer Camp Professionals or climbers that wish to achieve additional training, experience and certification to gain employment as a Climbing Instructor in the Outdoor Industry.

The SPI Course is not a 'climbing' course it is an instructor training course for current, proficient and active rock climbers and for climbing instructors who currently teach rock climbing that wish to gain the SPI Certification. The course teaches many instructor specific topics such as professionalism, teaching techniques, risk management, group site organization, climbing site conservation/LNT and assistance/rescue skills. The SPI Program is a three day (27 hour) training course and separate two day (16 hour) [SPI Assessment](#). Certification lasts for three years as long as the candidate keeps current AMGA Membership and First Aid Certification. After three years current SPI's can re-take the SPI Assessment or take any higher level AMGA Program to re-gain the SPI certification. Appalachian State will only be hosting the SPI Program and will not be hosting the SPI Assessment.

SPI Terrain Guidelines

The SPI will be able to proficiently facilitate and instruct the sport of rock climbing in a single pitch setting. Single Pitch Instructors supervise and teach climbing at any single pitch cliff, working at the base or from the top. They can work at sites where the anchors are accessed by non-technical terrain and also by leading. For the purpose of the SPI Program a single pitch climb is one which:

- **Is climbed without intermediate belays**
- **presents no difficulties on approach or retreat, such as route finding, scrambling or navigating**

The SPI Program does not cover multipitch guiding. These skills are taught in the AMGA Rock Instructor Course. SPI's that guide clients in multipitch terrain would be guiding outside of their terrain guidelines.

You meet the pre-requisites for the SPI course if you:

- **Have a genuine interest in rock climbing and instructing novices on single pitch crags.**

- **Are at least 18 years old at the time of the course. Have at least 12 months prior climbing experience.**
- **Are an active climber with traditional lead climbing experience (leader placing pro).**
- **Have trad lead climbed a minimum of 15 graded rock climbing routes (any grade).**
- **Are capable of comfortably climbing 5.8 while on a top rope.**

The above pre-requisites are absolute minimums and most candidates have way in excess of the above. Without having at least this amount experience you are unlikely to play a constructive part on the course or be able to make best use of the training. If you are unsure of your skill levels we suggest hiring an AMGA/IFMGA certified guide to evaluate and enhance your skills and experience prior to SPI Program enrollment.

To gain the AMGA Single Pitch Instructor Certification you must complete the three day AMGA Single Pitch Instructor Course and separate two day [Single Pitch Instructor Assessment](#).

SPI Course Overview

Day 1

- Session 1: SPI and AMGA Program Overview
- Session 2: Professionalism
- Session 3: Equipment
- Session 4: Knots and Hitches
- Session 5: Belaying
- Session 6: Protection and Anchoring
- Session 7: Teaching

End-of-Day Debriefs

Day 2

- Session 8: The Climbing Site
- Session 9: Site Organization and Group Management
- Session 10: Base-Managed Sites
- Session 11: Assistance Skills: Base-Managed Sites
- Session 12: Programming and Risk Management

End-of-Day Debriefs

Day 3

- Session 13: Instructor Demo Lead Climb
- Session 14: Top-Managed Sites
- Session 15: Lowering
- Session 16: Assistance Skills: Top-Managed Sites
- Session 17: Rappelling
- Session 18: Climbing Movement
- Session 19: Review Sessions

Final Individual and Group Debriefs

