

## Single Pitch Instructor Certification



The American Mountain Guides Association (AMGA) Single Pitch Instructor Course is the first in the AMGA sequence of climbing instructor and guide training programs.

The SPI course was designed to help recreational climbers transition into capable and effective climbing instructors. The course focuses on the technical skills required by an instructor as they are applied in all forms of single pitch climbing instruction. In addition to this, the course addresses the essential educational and environmental tenets required to teach climbing. Those seeking certification may go on to take a two day field examination following the course or at any time within three years after successfully completing the course. Certified Single Pitch Instructors are expected to demonstrate the technical and educational proficiencies necessary to instruct a variety of single pitch rock climbing skills in a safe and effective manner to both groups and individuals. While not all students are fully prepared for the certification exam by the end of the course, every participant will have the training to practice and prepare for an exam in the future and will leave the course with many new ideas and skills.

All course participants receive a written evaluation at the end of the course and are granted a one-year associate membership in the AMGA. Benefits of membership include a subscription to the quarterly Mountain Bulletin guide's newsletter, discounts on the AMGA Guide's Manual, and opportunities to attend membership instructional clinics and membership meetings.

The SPI course is intended for recreational climbers who are already proficient in both top-rope and lead climbing. It was designed to benefit those who wish to facilitate outdoor climbing programs for groups such as those offered by guide services, camps, schools, universities, therapeutic groups, churches and climbing gyms. Those who wish to teach climbing in the outdoors tend to have a much higher success rate in obtaining employment as climbing instructors with this training and certification. The AMGA strongly suggests this course as a precursor to those interested in pursuing Rock Instructor or Rock Guide training and certification.

KAF Adventures offers this program in several locations, including WA. NV. MT and by custom courses in your area.

### Pre-Requisites for a SPI Course

1. You are at least 18 years old.
2. You have a genuine interest in rock climbing and instructing novices on single pitch crags.
3. You have at least 12 months of prior climbing experience.
4. You are an active climber with traditional lead climbing experience.
5. You are able to comfortably set-up climbs, able to belay, rappel without guidance, have knowledge of anchoring principals, can demonstrate building solid anchors using natural and artificial protection (wires, hexes, passive and active cams). These skills may be assessed at the start of your course.
6. You are capable of comfortably climbing 5.8 while on top-rope.

***Need climbing instructor training but don't meet the AMGA SPI Course Pre-requisites or do not have enough time to take the 3 day course? KAF Adventures also offer one day and two day instructional courses and workshops.***

Email [www.kafadventures.com](http://www.kafadventures.com) or call for more details  
206.713.2149.

### Course Curriculum and Contents

The following is a brief overview of the main points that will be discussed and practiced throughout the course. A

three day model (27 hours) is a typical progression for the SPI Course. However, the course can be customized to run based on your needs.

#### Day One:

- Introduction to the AMGA and the Rock Certification Process.
- Carpool to the Instructional location
- Discussion of climbing equipment and its importance to the climbing instructor.
- Review of instructor knots and hitches
- Instructor and student belay techniques
- Management of the climbing site
- Instructional anchors and rock protection
- Teaching techniques and risk management for the climbing instructor

#### Day Two:

- Professionalism in climbing instruction
- Development of practical skills for top-managed sites
- Climbing site organization and group management
- Discussion and practice of lowering techniques
- Assistance skills for a top-managed site.

#### Day Three:

- Development of practical skills required for a bottom-managed site
- Review of assistance skills required for a bottom-managed site
- Techniques to teach climbing movement
- Review Sessions
- Individual and group debriefs

### Two-Day Exam and SPI Assessment Candidate Prerequisites

The **two day SPI Certification Exam** may be taken directly following the SPI course if the candidate successfully completes the course and meets the assessment pre-requisites. However, it is **HIGHLY** recommended that the SPI graduate takes time practicing and consolidating the skills learned on the course before assessment up to 6 to 12 months. It is a common practice for students to take their exam at a later date, following completion of their course. This allows additional time to



practice new skills, and to build confidence for the exam. Please feel free to register for any exam date of your choice.

### You meet the SPI Certification Exam pre-requisites if:

1. You have successfully completed the AMGA Single Pitch Instructor Course or the AMGA Top-Rope Site Manager Course.
2. You have traditionally lead climbed a minimum of 40 graded rock routes. A large number of these should have been 5.6 or harder.
3. You are capable of comfortably leading traditional routes at the 5.6 grade in a variety of settings (i.e. crack, face, slab, etc.). You will be asked to demonstrate your leading ability throughout the assessment.
4. You are capable of comfortably climbing 5.8 while on top-rope.

### To gain SPI Certification, candidates must:

1. Successfully pass the SPI Assessment
2. Hold current AMGA Membership at the Associate Level or higher
3. Hold appropriate current First Aid Certification for the area where you desire to work. (Please see the SPI Program Manual for more information on first aid requirements.)

***Need climbing instructor training but don't meet the AMGA SPI Assessment prerequisites? Do you not know if you are ready to take the assessment yet? KAF Adventures also offers one and two day assessment reviews and workshops.***

Email [www.kafadventures.com](mailto:www.kafadventures.com) or call for more details  
206.713.2149.

### Dates and prices for Courses and exams

All courses and exams can be found on the website @  
[www.kafadventures.com](http://www.kafadventures.com)

KAF Adventures is more than happy to create a custom course to fit your needs. Call KAF Adventures @ 206-713-2149 for details.

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## Private Courses and Exams

SPI courses and exams may be run with private entities at your leisure. Please contact KAF Adventures for more information at 206-713-2149 or [www.kafadventures.com](http://www.kafadventures.com)

## SPI Certification Upkeep and Recertification

SPI Certification is only valid with current AMGA Membership and valid current First Aid Certification. If you let either of these expire, your SPI Certification is invalid until you become current.

SPI Certification lasts for three years from the date of assessment. There are two options for renewal.

1. Certified Single Pitch Instructors can take the two-day SPI Assessment to renew their certification.
2. Certified Single Pitch Instructors who successfully complete one of the following AMGA Courses: Rock Instructor Course, Advanced Rock Guides Course, Alpine Guides Course, or an Advanced Alpine Guides Course is granted SPI certification for three years from the course end date. After completing a course, please contact the AMGA so they can update your records.