



SUNSHINE SCHOOL & DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Enriching Lives Since 1958

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What to Expect on Rappel Day

You will be wearing a full-body industrial harness and using an industrial descender to rappel down the building. Squeezing a handle will make you go down, letting go (or pulling back) makes you stop. You can control your speed. Should you go too fast, or should the equipment fail, the back-up device will engage.

Getting your weight off the roof and into the harness is the difficult part for most people. Once you're over the edge you are on your own for the six story 8W Center. Don't forget to stop and take in the view!

It will take between 5 and 10 minutes to get to the bottom. The squeezing motion to activate the descender requires quite a bit of force and using the same hand the entire way down can be tiring. You can stop to rest, or switch hands when you need a break. In general, inexperienced rappellers tend to find themselves with tired hands at the bottom.

If you keep your feet on the wall, it is easy to maintain the correct position. You won't spin around or drift into the building. If you push off with your feet you can bounce outwards. The further out you bounce, the more difficult it is to keep from getting twisted. Once you're within 20' of the ground, an Over the Edge staff member will assist your landing.

Training



Good form. Knees bent, legs spread, bum down. Squeezing the handle makes you go; pulling back on it makes you stop.

When you arrive on site you will have the opportunity to practice rappelling from a lesser height. This will give you a chance to hang in the harness, find a comfortable position, and practice using the descender. You can practice as often as you'd like before going Over the Edge. The same safety procedures are used in the training as in the long rappel so you will be familiar with them when you get there.

What to wear

You're going to be walking down the side of a building so wear good shoes – sneakers, light hikers, climbing shoes, something with a soft sole. No sandals, slip-on shoes, slippers, flip flops, high heels, or steel-toed boots.

Wear long pants and a long sleeved shirt. Athletic pants, tights and jeans, are suitable. The harness goes around your legs, waist, and shoulders, so it is best to avoid anything too bulky. Shirts should be comfortable and without draw cords. Long hair should be tied back. You will check in droppable items like keys and cell phones, or jewelry that can get caught on things with a staff member on-site. You will be given a pair of leather gloves and a helmet when you arrive.

Costumes are welcome! Get creative and you may just win a special prize!

Cameras and phones

No personal phones or cameras are allowed on the roof. Only preapproved Over The Edge Go Pro cameras will be allowed for rappeller use on the rooftop.

What can I do to practice?

The most common complaint from participants after rappelling is that their forearm got sore during the descent. The squeezing motion isn't hard, but over a long time it can get tiring. Proper technique and switching arms makes a lot of difference, but using a squeeze ball once in a while doesn't hurt either.

Go rock climbing. Not only does rock climbing strengthen your forearms, but also it allows you to hang in a harness. Although the harnesses we use are different you will still get the idea of what muscles it takes to stay up-right.

Get psyched. Tell your friends. You're one of a few special people who will be doing a really long rappel.

Spectators and Friends

Unfortunately friends of the participants will not be allowed up to the rooftop, however they are welcome to see you down below at the Drop Zone! There will be a photographer ensuring that each participant gets the opportunity for pictures. We look forward to meeting you!

