



The School For
Mountain Leadership

ABSEILING TRAINING HANDOUT No 1 : THREADING A FIGURE-8

*This training handout may be freely reproduced
and distributed in an unaltered form.*

NEED MORE INFO?

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This training handout is an aide-memoire for students who have completed the appropriate training. Do NOT attempt these techniques without proper training – getting it wrong can be lethal!

There's really only one orthodox way of threading a figure-8 to abseil. At SML we've developed a small tweak to this method that effectively removes one of the biggest risks encountered during the simple activity of threading the figure-8 – the risk of dropping it. The method illustrated below ensures that the figure-8 is never handled unless connected to something else – either the harness or the abseil rope.

Step 1: Connect the Figure-8 back-to-front on the carabiner on the belay loop of the harness. Ensure that the gate of the carabiner is on top with the opening closest to the Figure-8.



Step 2: Pull a bight of rope up through the large hole of the Figure-8, making sure that the end that hangs down is on the side of the abseiler's strong hand.



Step 3: Pull the rope over the stem of the Figure-8, as per the usual way of threading the device.



Step 4: Grab hold of the Figure-8 and open the carabiner. Unclip the Figure-8 from the carabiner.



Step 5: Flip the Figure-8 end-over-end and clip the small eye of the Figure-8 to the carabiner. Screw the gate closed and you're ready to go.



In addition to reducing the risk of dropping the Figure-8, this method also places the loop of rope that goes around the stem of the Figure-8 on the top, reducing the risk of forming an inadvertent Lark's Foot hitch when going over an edge or an overhang.

Please contact us at the above addresses for further information.
