



9: Simul-climbing

This site presents the images from the ebook *High: Advanced Multipitch Climbing*, by David Coley and Andy Kirkpatrick. In order to keep the cost of the book to a minimum most of these were not included in the book. Although they work best when used in conjunction with the book, most are self-explanatory.

Please use the following links to buy the book: [Amazon USA \(kindle\)](#) / [Amazon UK \(kindle\)](#) / [itunes](#) / [kobo](#)

Climbing is dangerous and simul-climbing makes it more so. Hence it isn't for everyone. However on long routes it is well worth knowing how to do it so you can get over easy terrain as quickly as possible and to remove the odd belay. In the book we suggest gadgets like the micro-traxion are key simul-climbing tools. Using one won't remove the danger, but if used sensibly it makes it a little safer.

[Back to Other Chapters](#)

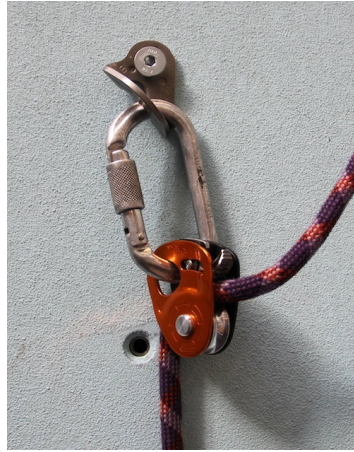
Contents

1 [Basics](#) / 2 [Other Considerations](#) / 3 [An Alternative to Tying in](#)

1. Basics



Mini-traxion with oval locking carabiner—don't be tempted to use a standard D-shaped carabiner. Such devices are key to making simul-climbing a little less dangerous.



Clip a micro or mini-traxion to a bolt before you run out of rope, and just keep climbing.



If the second keeps the Grigri on he can make minor adjustments to the length of rope between the two climbers. This is useful if the leader stops to place protection and the second needs to finish a steep section. This works best when there isn't anything for the rope to snag on. Personally I (DC) have rarely found it worth doing.



Although using a microtraxion will allow you to put long pitches together, it isn't always the quickest way to cover a lot of ground. Sometimes short pitching makes more sense. This means moving together possibly carrying coils on the very easy bits (i.e. walking bits), then stopping to pitch short hard sections. This makes most sense when the walking sections outnumber the climbing ones.

2. Other Considerations



When attaching the mini-traxion to more than one bolt, do so in series (left) not in parallel (right); if the route is well bolted, it might be ok just to clip one bolt as you pass the belay. If you are using a trad anchor it needs to be multidirectional, but set so the mini-traxion can't flap around. On bolted routes clipping the mini-traxion to the belay bolts might not be the best place to do it - as the next pitch could be longer than the one below. This would mean once the second reaches the belay and removes the mini-traxion there won't be a mini-traxion between the two climbers. **Hence you need to place the mini-traxions so that there is one between you at all times.** Carrying two can help.

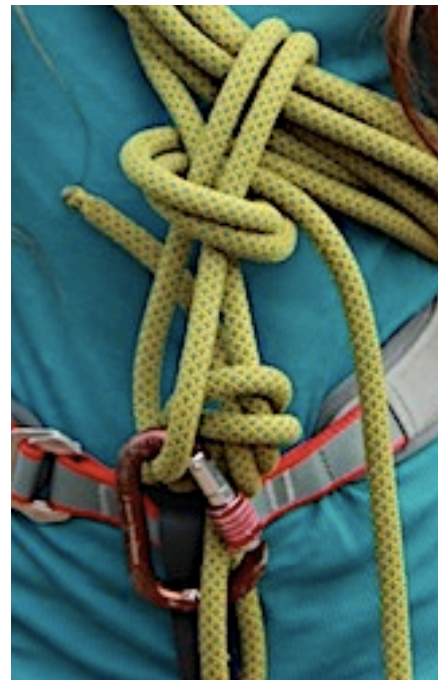


If you think you will use a mini-traxion on a pitch and won't be able to get hands free to place, some climbers put it on the rope without the cam deployed before you start the pitch. Clip it to the belay loop or the rope's knot loop to stop it sliding down the rope. Warning – if you do this, it is important that the cam cannot deploy. If it does and you fall, you might be falling onto the teeth in the device, not your tie-in knot. This could potentially cut the rope.



When the second removes the mini-traxion from an anchor he leaves it on the rope until he gets to the next belay—otherwise he risks dropping it.

Shortening the Rope



When moving together a 70 or 80m sport rope will cause too much drag: shorten it at the second.



Two other ways of shortening the rope that allow for a much more rapid adjustment of rope length. As the coils are not so well tied down, tighter coils are needed. A single directional (captive) locker such as a BD Gridlock could probably be used as an alternative to a back-to-back pair. Use of a Grigri also allows you to put the leader on or off belay very rapidly (note the backup knot).

3. An Alternative to Tying in?



An alternative way to tie in when climbing in blocks that is possibly quicker than pulling the rope

through: you simply swap ends. A pair of twist locks might be better as you can't forget to screw them up. This is a very advanced technique which leaves the climbers regularly not tied into the rope (cow's tails are used at stances). There is therefore a chance of dropping the rope down the cliff, or falling off the mountain. You need to ask yourself if the minor increase in speed is worth the risks.

Please use the following links to buy the book: [Amazon USA \(kindle\)](#) / [Amazon UK \(kindle\)](#) / [itunes](#) / [kobo](#)

[Back to Other Chapters](#)

v 24 November 2014

----- multipitchclimbing.com -----