

## PARTICIPANTS

### Participants: What to Expect

It's just a few more weeks until you are rappelling at your local Over the Edge event. Here are some things you might like to know:

#### What to Expect

You will be wearing a full-body industrial harness and using an industrial descender to go down. Squeezing a handle makes you go down, letting go (or pulling back) makes you stop. You can control your speed to a certain extent. 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. Don't forget to stop and take in the view!

It will take between 5 and 15 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 concrete / glass 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, your landing will be assisted by an Over the Edge staff member.

#### Training

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 and safety equipment. You can practice as often as you'd like before heading to the roof. 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. Well-fitting sneakers, light hiking boots, climbing shoes, or other soft soled shoes are recommended. No sandals, slip-on shoes, slippers, flip flops, high heels, or steel toed boots will be allowed.

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 be required to leave 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.

#### Cameras and Phones

We constantly worry about objects being dropped over the side. Sorry, no phones, cameras, etc. on the roof. Helmet cams are permitted if you have one and want to bring it.

#### 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 required 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 the rappel.

#### Spectators and Friends

Unfortunately friends of the participants will not be allowed up to the roof top. The roof is a restricted access area. Often the not-for-profit hosting the event will have an event photographer taking pictures from the roof, ensuring that each participant gets a picture of himself or herself going over the side.

#### Participant Weight/Size Restrictions

Participants over 136.1kg (300lbs) are not permitted to rappel as they exceed the safe working load of the equipment. The minimum weight of a participant is 45.36 kg (100 lbs.).

#### Special Needs Rappellers

Special Needs Rappellers will be accommodated as long as it can be done safely. In the past people with intellectual disabilities, physical disabilities, amputees, and wheelchairs have been able to participate fully and have enjoyed successful rappels. Advance notice is required, however, so that the Event Managers and Technicians can ensure that each participant gets the best experience possible.

#### Clothing and Costumes

Participants are asked to wear athletic clothing. Long track pants, t-shirts, and sneakers are acceptable. Long hair should be tied back. Extra baggy clothes should be avoided as it can become caught or jammed in the rappelling device. We do not allow sandals or slip-on shoes.

If a participant shows up wearing shorts, it is at the discretion of the Site Safety Supervisor to decide whether they will be allowed to rappel. For longer rappels, shorts are highly discouraged. If the Site Safety Supervisor decides that shorts are not permissible, politely ask the participant to go change and come back at a later time if a later time slot is available.

Costumes are allowed but are subject to the same limitations as baggy clothing. Every attempt will be made to safely fit costumes around harnesses and helmets. As with shorts, it is ultimately the decision of the Site Safety Supervisor. Stringy, loose, or excessive costumes must be avoided. Head pieces that will not accommodate a helmet, obscure the vision, or are notably large or heavy will rarely be allowed.

