

SILENT PARTNER USER'S MANUAL



Don't even think of using the Silent Partner without reading this manual first!

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Rock Exotica Equipment makes no express warranties concerning Silent Partner. This product is solely for use in recreational climbing and mountaineering, following the specific guidelines of the User's Manual.

The Silent Partner is protected by U.S. Patent



INTRODUCTION

READ THIS MANUAL

This manual contains important information about the Silent Partner. No matter what your level of solo experience, you need to understand the information in this manual to use the Silent Partner correctly.

The Silent Partner is not difficult to use, but proper use is not obvious just by looking at it. This manual will show you how to set it up correctly for leading and top roping. It will show you how to release the Silent Partner after a fall and use it to lower yourself. This manual also explains the Silent Partner's intended uses and limitations.

This manual will point out some of the dangers and pitfalls unique to solo climbing. Understanding these could help you avoid dangerous situations.

This manual will also provide information on how to care for your Silent Partner, and explain what to do if you have a problem with it.

SAVE THIS MANUAL

Put this manual in a safe place so that it will be available for future reference. If you loan your Silent Partner to your friends, loan them this manual too. That way they will have access to the information they need to use the Silent Partner properly. Additional manuals are available from Rock Exotica Equipment.

KNOW WHAT YOU ARE DOING

You cannot learn to solo climb by reading this manual. If you are not already an experienced climber, then you will need to get outside instruction before using the Silent Partner. Unfortunately, there are no good books on solo climbing techniques. Before solo climbing, seek out a qualified instructor and get hands-on instruction.

If you find something in this manual confusing or unclear, you can contact Rock Exotica and we will try to clarify it for you. We cannot, however, teach you to solo climb over the phone.

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WARNINGS



CLIMBING IS DANGEROUS

Rock climbing and mountaineering are potentially dangerous and hazardous. Any person using climbing equipment is personally responsible for learning the proper techniques involved, and assumes all risk and accepts full responsibility for any damages and injury, including death, resulting from its use.

Solo climbing is especially dangerous since it is more technical and requires a greater degree of self reliance than climbing with a partner. If you are not willing to accept the risks inherent to climbing alone, do not use the Silent Partner self belay device.

***THE SILENT PARTNER
DOES NOT MAKE SOLO CLIMBING SAFE!!!***

INSTRUCTION IS REQUIRED

If you are uncertain of a product's proper use and limitations, get personal instruction from a qualified person well versed in all appropriate safety techniques.

This manual will not teach you how to climb roped solo. It will show you how to integrate the Silent Partner self belay device into a solo climbing system, but will not provide all of the information needed for roped solo climbing. Solo climbing techniques should be learned through hands-on instruction from a qualified instructor well versed in solo climbing techniques.

CORRECT USE IS REQUIRED

Correct use is essential for proper function of the Silent Partner self belay device. Be sure you understand the intended applications and limitations of the Silent Partner outlined in this manual before attempting to use the Silent Partner.

Again, be sure you understand general roped solo climbing techniques not covered in this manual. A qualified instructor can help.

The Silent Partner is intended for recreational rock climbing and mountaineering uses only.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR SOLO CLIMBING

ADVANCED TECHNIQUES

Roped solo climbing requires different techniques than climbing with a partner. It is generally more technical, and a lot more work, to climb solo. Before attempting to solo climb, make sure you understand the techniques involved. Solo climbing requires a solid understanding of anchoring, placing protection, rappelling, and using ascenders. If you are not already an experienced and competent roped solo climber, then seek out expert instruction before attempting to use the Silent Partner self belay device.

GREATER RISKS

Roped solo climbing is more dangerous than climbing with a partner. It requires a much greater degree of self reliance. Even a minor injury while soloing can be very serious when there is no one around to help you. Consider the consequences before venturing into a hazardous situation. When solo climbing, be conservative; it is not a good time to push your limits.

GREATER REWARDS

Despite the greater complexity and increased risk associated with solo roped solo climbing, it does offer some advantages. Most significantly, it makes it possible to go climbing when a partner is not available. It can also offer the greater sense of accomplishment of completing a climb by yourself, or provide welcome relief from an annoying partner. In general, roped solo climbing is not for everyone, but for those who take the time to learn how, and accept its inherent risks, roped solo climbing can be very rewarding.

THE SILENT PARTNER SELF BELAY DEVICE

The Silent Partner was developed to fill the need for a solo device that would make roped solo free climbing easier.

The Silent Partner feeds automatically as you climb, and its speed sensitive locking mechanism will catch even head first falls. The Silent Partner is easily released under full body weight and it can be used to lower yourself as needed to recover from a fall.

HOW IT WORKS

The Silent Partner is a speed actuated braking device. It attaches to a climbing rope with a clove hitch, and to your harness by way of two locking carabiners.

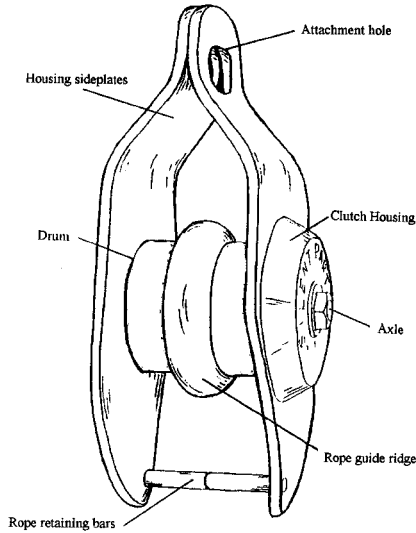
As you move away from the anchor, light tension on the rope causes the clove hitch to "slip". This action allows you to move without having to feed out rope manually.

During a fall, the rope feeds out quickly. This increase in rope speed actuates a centrifugal clutch that causes the clove hitch to tighten and stop the rope from feeding.

Because it is sensitive to the speed at which rope feeds through it, the Silent Partner will feed freely at speeds typical of climbing. During a fall, it will lock up regardless of your body position.

The Silent Partner is released by pulling on the excess end of the rope. It will function as a lowering device by simply passing the rope around your hip to provide friction.

SILENT PARTNER ANATOMY



APPLICATIONS



DO NOT USE THE SILENT PARTNER FOR APPLICATIONS OTHER THAN THOSE LISTED

If you ever have any doubts about the suitability of the Silent Partner for a particular application, don't use it.

- The Silent Partner is for recreational rock climbing and mountaineering uses only.
- The Silent Partner will provide (in conjunction with a back up belay system) a belay for leading and free or aid climbs.
- The Silent Partner will provide (in conjunction with a back up belay system) a belay for top roping.
- The Silent Partner will function as a self lowering device.



NO MATTER WHAT THE APPLICATION, THE SILENT PARTNER MUST BE SETUP CORRECTLY IN ORDER TO FUNCTION PROPERLY.

MAKE SURE YOU UNDERSTAND THE CORRECT SETUP FOR EACH APPLICATION BEFORE USING THE SILENT PARTNER.



LIMITATIONS



ALL CLIMBING GEAR HAS LIMITATIONS, AND THE SILENT PARTNER IS NO EXCEPTION.

Using the Silent Partner for purposes for which it was not intended is dangerous. The following are the Silent Partner's primary limitations.

— DO NOT USE THE SILENT PARTNER AS THE ONLY BELAY SYSTEM. It is necessary to provide a reliable back up belay system.

— DO NOT USE THE SILENT PARTNER IN SUB-FREEZING CONDITIONS. Frozen water in the clutch could prevent the Silent Partner from locking during a fall.

— DO NOT USE THE SILENT PARTNER ON MUDDY OR ICY ROPES. Mud or ice could interfere with the cinching of the clove hitch, and prevent the Silent Partner from catching a fall.

— DO NOT USE THE SILENT PARTNER ON A STATIC ROPE. The Silent Partner does not provide a dynamic belay. As a result, severe forces could be generated in a fall on a static rope.

— DO NOT USE THE SILENT PARTNER AS A "REMOTE" BELAY DEVICE. Always wear the Silent Partner on your harness when using it.

— DO NOT USE THE SILENT PARTNER FOR SEARCH AND RESCUE, INDUSTRIAL, OR COMMERCIAL APPLICATIONS. It is for recreational rock climbing and mountaineering uses only.

ATTACHING THE SILENT PARTNER TO THE ROPE



THE ONLY PROPER WAY TO ATTACH THE SILENT PARTNER TO THE ROPE IS WITH A CLOVE HITCH TIED AROUND THE DRUM (FIGURE 1).

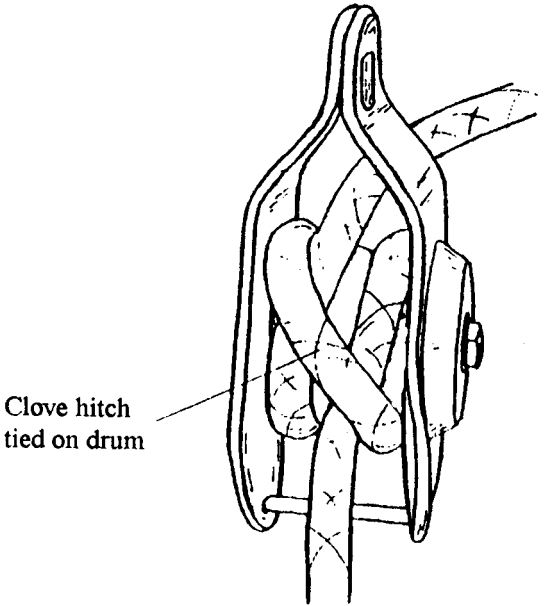


Figure 1: Rope Correctly attached to Silent Partner

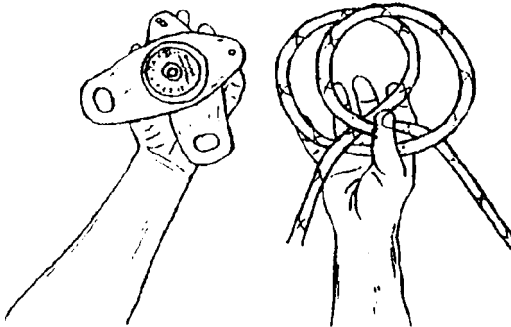


Figure 2: Attaching clove hitch to Silent Partner



IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT THE ROPE LEAVES THE HOUSING AS SHOWN IN FIGURE 3.

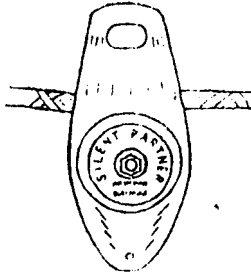


Figure 3: Correct Rope Orientation

USE ONLY UIAA APPROVED DYNAMIC CLIMBING ROPES FROM 9.8mm TO 11 mm WITH THE SILENT PARTNER.



USE ONLY KERNMANTLE TYPE ROPES. DO NOT USE ROPES OF TWISTED CONSTRUCTION.

Incorrect rope attachment is dangerous. It causes difficult rope feeding, and may damage the Silent Partner in the event of a fall.

It does not matter which end of the rope goes to the anchor. The Silent Partner will feed and lock to the rope in either direction.

The method of rope attachment is the same for both leading and top roping.

PROCEDURE:

- 1) Open the housing by turning the side plates in opposite directions.
- 2) Form a clove hitch in the rope and place it on the drum with one strand of rope on each side of the center guide ridge.

- 3) Position the rope so that it will leave the housing as shown in Figure 3.
- 4) Close the housing by re-aligning the attachment holes.

AFTER ATTACHING THÈ SILENT PARTNER TO THE ROPE, PULL THE ANCHORED END TO MAKE SURE IT FEEDS AND LOCKS PROPERLY.



ATTACHING THE SILENT PARTNER TO YOUR HARNESS

ATTACH THE SILENT PARTNER TO YOUR HARNESS WITH TWO LOCKING CARABINERS AS SHOWN IN FIGURE 4.

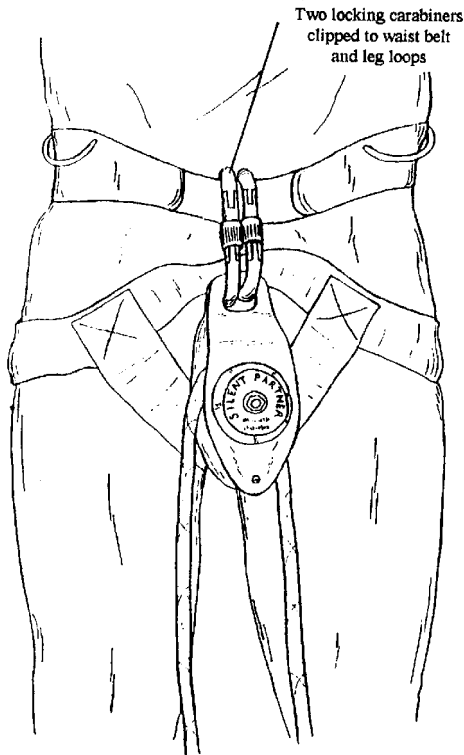


Figure 4: Silent Partner correctly attached to harness



NEVER USE JUST ONE CARABINER.

BE SURE TO ATTACH BOTH CARABINERS TO A SECURE PART OF YOUR HARNESS.



ALWAYS USE A FULL SEAT HARNESS, OR SWAMI BELT AND LEG LOOP COMBINATION.

Attach the Silent Partner to your harness after attaching the rope to the Silent Partner.

Use reliable locking carabiners, and be sure to lock the gates.

Clip the carabiners into both the waist belt and leg loop strap of your harness. If your harness uses a belay loop, clip to the same parts that the loop goes around. Don't clip to the belay loop.

Never attach the Silent Partner to a chest harness, or swami belt without leg loops. If you do, the Silent Partner will end up in your face when you fall.

The method of attachment is the same for leading and for top roping.

SILENT PARTNER GROUND SCHOOL

Before climbing with the Silent Partner, you should learn to use it while you are still on the ground. You can practice using the Silent Partner in your house or outside. All you need is a climbing rope, a Silent Partner, a carabiner, and a suitable anchor for the rope.

- 1) Attach one end of the rope to a suitable anchor as you would when climbing.
- 2) Attach the Silent Partner to the rope as shown on page 6.
- 3) Clip a carabiner into the attachment holes. This will serve as a handle.
- 4) Pull the Silent Partner slowly along the rope as shown in

Figure 5. This action will show you how it feeds.

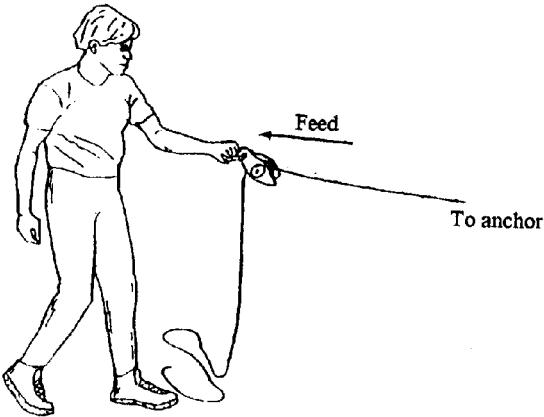


Figure 5: Feeding and locking the Silent Partner

5) Now, give it a sharp, quick tug. This action will show you how it locks.

6) To release the Silent Partner, first remove the tension in the rope, then pull the tail end as shown in Figure 6. The Silent Partner should now feed freely again.

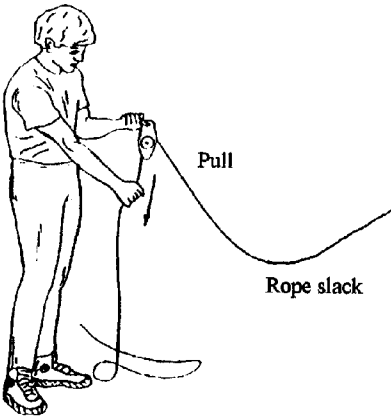


Figure 6: Releasing the Silent Partner

7) Notice that if you pull on both strands of rope leaving the Silent Partner, it tightens up the clove hitch and causes difficult rope feeding. When climbing with the Silent Partner, avoid pulling or weighting both strands of rope at the same time.

8) Feed the Silent Partner all the way to the un-anchored end of the rope. Notice that the Silent Partner can easily feed right off the end of the rope! When climbing with the Silent Partner, always tie into the end of the rope!

LEADING

The Silent Partner was designed primarily for leading free climbs. Its automatic feed keeps your hands free for climbing, and the centrifugal locking mechanism will catch you even if you flip upside down during a fall.

These features should make it possible for you to confidently free climb routes that are moderately difficult for you. However, because roped solo climbing is more complicated, climbing at your extreme limit may not be feasible. Even with the Silent Partner, climbs tend to feel about one number grade harder than climbing with a belayer.

Another factor to consider is that when you're out there alone, the consequences of even a minor injury can be very serious. In the interest of safety, it is best to choose your climbing conservatively when using the Silent Partner.

LEADING WITH THE SILENT PARTNER

Leading with the Silent Partner takes practice. Undoubtedly, you will experience some difficulties when you begin using it. Poor rope feed, rope tangles, and forgetting to unclip backup knots are common problems. As you gain experience, these problems will subside. Careful setup and rope management will eliminate feeding problems and rope tangles, and unclipping backup knots will become a matter of habit. (See "Helpful tips" on page 25, for more hints on keeping things running smoothly).

While you are learning to use the Silent Partner, choose very easy climbs. Any belay system problems you have will be much easier to solve on easy terrain. As you gain experience, you can progress to more difficult climbs.

Once you get the hang of it, you will find that the Silent Partner opens up new possibilities for roped solo free climbing.

LEAD CLIMBING SETUP



***THE SILENT PARTNER MUST BE SETUP
CORRECTLY TO FUNCTION PROPERLY.***



***INCORRECT SETUP IS DANGEROUS AND
CAN HINDER PERFORMANCE.***



Figure 7 shows the basic setup for leading.

THE FOLLOWING FOUR POINTS ARE ESSENTIAL:

- 1) A dynamic climbing rope is attached to an anchor that is secure when pulled in all directions.
- 2) The Silent Partner self belay device is correctly attached to the rope with a clove hitch, and to the climber's harness with two locking carabiners (see pages 5 and 6).
- 3) The end of the rope is tied into the harness.
- 4) A backup belay system is provided by at least one loop knot tied in the lead rope, and attached to the harness with a locking carabiner.

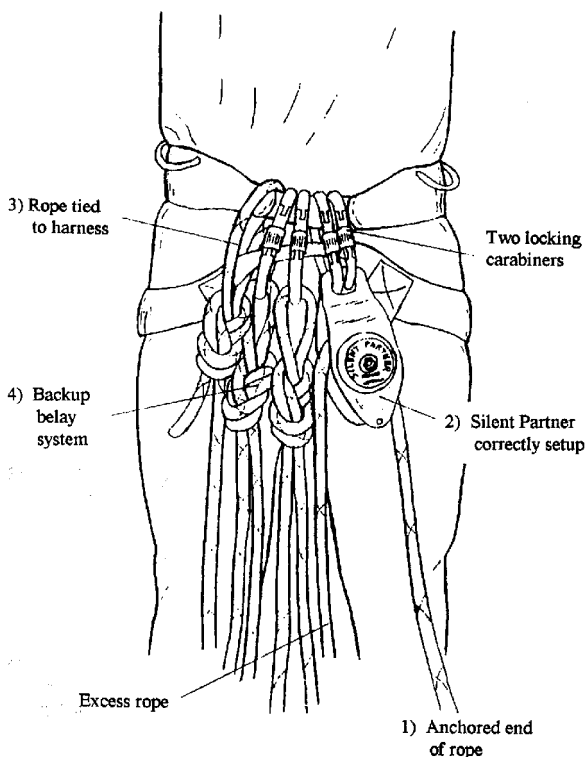


Figure 7: Lead climbing setup



ALWAYS USE A BACKUP BELAY SYSTEM.

With the Silent Partner, the use of a backup belay system is more than just a safety consideration. The weight of the excess rope hanging from the device can make rope feeding difficult. Clipping backup knots to your harness will remove this weight from the Silent Partner. There may be up to 50 feet of rope (25 foot loop hanging) between the Silent Partner and the first backup knot without hindering rope feed. However, having less rope between the Silent Partner and the knot will offer more security, and result in easier feeding (see backup belay system for leading in this manual).

As you climb, clip protection into the strand of rope between the anchor and the Silent Partner.



***BE CAREFUL NOT TO CLIP PROTECTION INTO THE
EXCESS ROPE.***

BACKUP BELAY SYSTEM FOR LEADING

***NEVER USE THE SILENT PARTNER WITHOUT A
RELIABLE BACKUP BELAY SYSTEM.***



One recommended backup system is to tie loop knots in the excess portion of the rope and attach them to your harness with separate locking carabiners. See figure 8

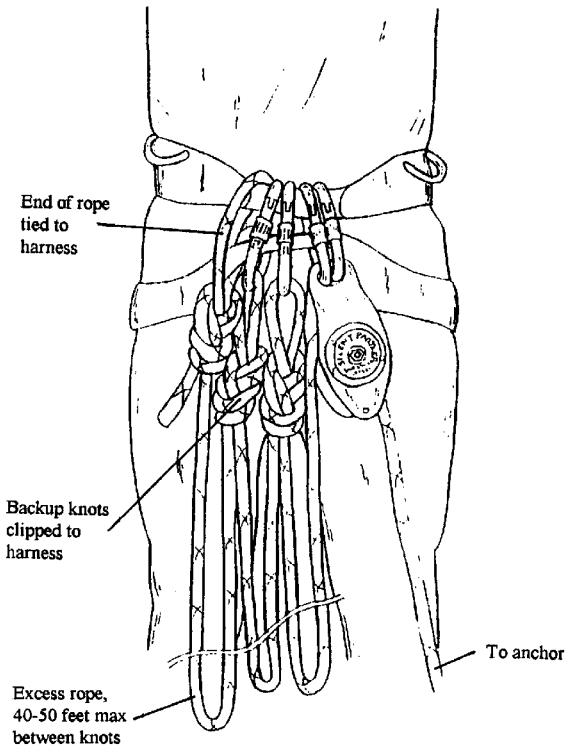


Figure 8: Backup belay system for leading

The features of the climb should dictate the positioning of the backup knots along the rope. Consider what would happen if the Silent Partner were to fail during a fall, and position the backup knots accordingly. Your backup system should be capable of preventing you from hitting things such as the ground, a ledge, a protruding flake, etc.

Clipping the excess rope into your harness at regular intervals is essential for both security and for making the Silent Partner feed easily. When not clipped into your harness, the excess rope hanging on the Silent Partner will tighten up the clove hitch and cause excessive drag. Forty to fifty feet of rope between the Silent Partner and a backup knot is about the limit.



ALWAYS USE LOCKING CARABINERS TO ATTACH BACKUP KNOTS TO YOUR HARNESS

ALWAYS TIE INTO THE END OF THE ROPE



If you don't tie into the end of the rope, the Silent Partner could feed off the end.

It is good practice to setup at least two backup knots at a time. That way, if you have to release a knot at a difficult part of the climb and are unable to tie another one, you will still have a backup knot clipped in. In fact, it is usually easier to setup all of your backup knots while still at the belay station. Then all you have to do is release them as you move up the pitch.

Being systematic about your setup will reduce some of the difficulties of having so much gear clipped to your harness. Arrange everything in order from right to left or left to right. This will make it easier to tell which rope to clip to protection and which backup knot to release next.

PREVENTING SELF FEED/SLACK ACCUMULATION

On long, steep pitches, the weight of the rope between the Silent Partner and the anchor can cause the rope to feed through the Silent Partner. This situation can result in a dangerous accumulation of slack in the belay system. To prevent this, it is necessary to support the weight of the rope at some point on the pitch. There are two common ways of doing this.

1) Prusik method.

Figure 9 shows the rope being supported by a prusik knot clipped into a protection point. This method is best since it does not cause an increase in fall factor. Use small diameter cord such as a bootlace so that the prusik will break if loaded during a fall.

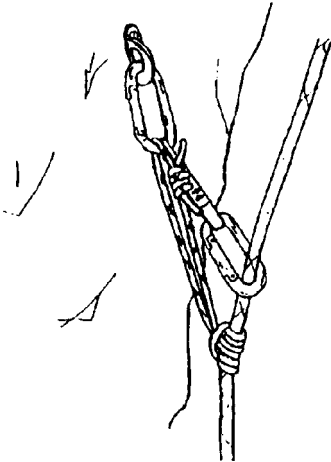


Figure 9: Prusik method of rope support

2) Figure eight method

Figure 10 shows a figure eight knot tied in the lead rope clipped into a protection point. This method has the advantage of not requiring any extra gear, but it does increase the fall factor if you should fall above this point.

With both methods, the point of protection supporting the rope must be capable of holding both an upward and downward pull.

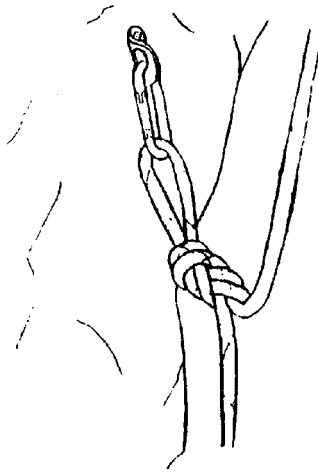


Figure 10: Figure eight method of rope support

It is good practice to occasionally pull up on the lead rope to see if slack is accumulating at the anchor. Slack accumulation can easily go unnoticed and increase the length of a fall. Checking for slack is easy to do when clipping protection.

TOP ROPING

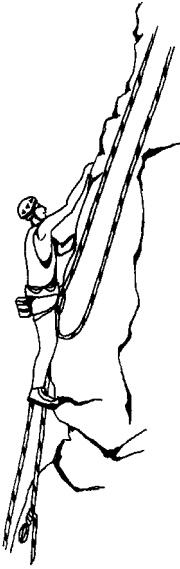
The Silent Partner was designed primarily for leading. However, it also works quite well for top roping.

The Silent Partner will feed and lock in either direction along the rope, allowing you to climb up or down at will. This feature makes the Silent Partner well suited for doing "laps" when working out on short climbs or artificial climbing walls.

The Silent Partner can be used to lower yourself (rappel) without changing the setup. When you fall, or reach the end of the pitch, you can easily lower yourself back to the beginning.

However, not all climbs are well suited to solo top roping. Climbs with much traversing, large overhangs, or which weave back and forth, are not good choices for solo top roping. For best results, stick to climbs that go fairly straight up and follow a fairly straight line.

Also, because of the nature of the setup for top roping, and the speed required for the Silent Partner to lock up, expect to fall a little further than you would when being belayed.



TOP ROPING SETUP

THE SILENT PARTNER MUST BE SETUP CORRECTLY TO FUNCTION PROPERLY.



Incorrect setup can be dangerous and/or hinder performance. Make sure you understand the correct setup before using the Silent Partner. Figure 11 shows the correct setup for top roping.

THE FOLLOWING FOUR POINTS ARE ESSENTIAL:

- 1) A dynamic rope is anchored at the top of the climb.
- 2) The Silent Partner is attached to the rope with a clove hitch and to the climber's harness with two locking carabiners (see pages 6 and 8).
- 3) The rope is anchored (or weighted) at the bottom of the climb with a small amount of slack.
- 4) A backup belay system is provided. In this case the backup system is a separate dynamic rope anchored at the top with loop knots tied at intervals (see page 20).

NEVER USE THE SILENT PARTNER WITHOUT A RELIABLE BACKUP BELAY SYSTEM.



As you climb, the Silent Partner will pull against the bottom anchor and feed upward. If you fall, the Silent Partner will lock to the rope and the upper anchor will support you.

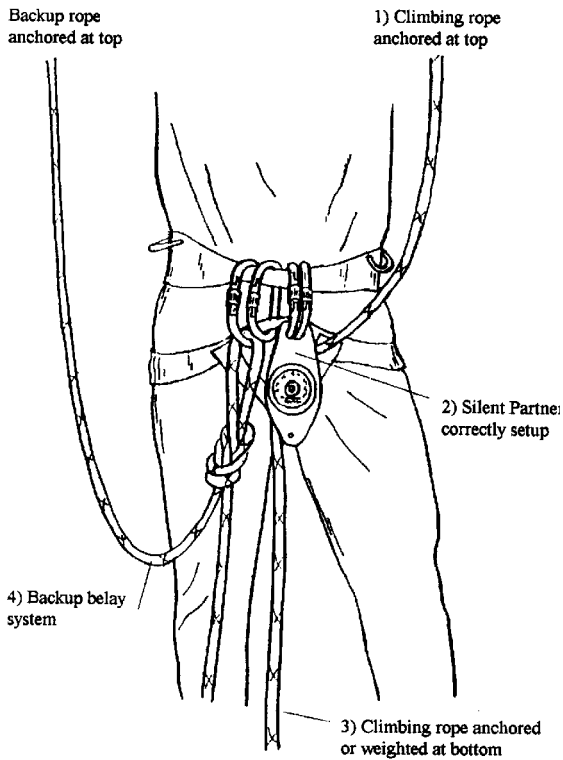


Figure 11: Setup for top roping

On steep routes, the Silent Partner will lock quickly when you fall since you will pick up speed quickly. On low angle routes it will take longer for you to pick up enough speed to activate the locking mechanism.

DO NOT GRAB THE ROPE WHEN FALLING.



Grabbing the rope can lengthen your fall and burn your hands.

When you reach the end of the climb, or fall, you can lower yourself without changing the setup (see "Releasing the Silent Partner", page 22, and "Self Lowering", page 24).

BACKUP BELAY SYSTEM FOR TOP ROPING

NEVER USE THE SILENT PARTNER WITHOUT A RELIABLE BACKUP BELAY SYSTEM.



The recommended backup system is a second rope anchored at the top of the climb with loop knots tied in it such that they will hang at intervals along the climb. These knots are successively clipped and unclipped from locking carabiners on your harness as you move up the climb (figure 12).

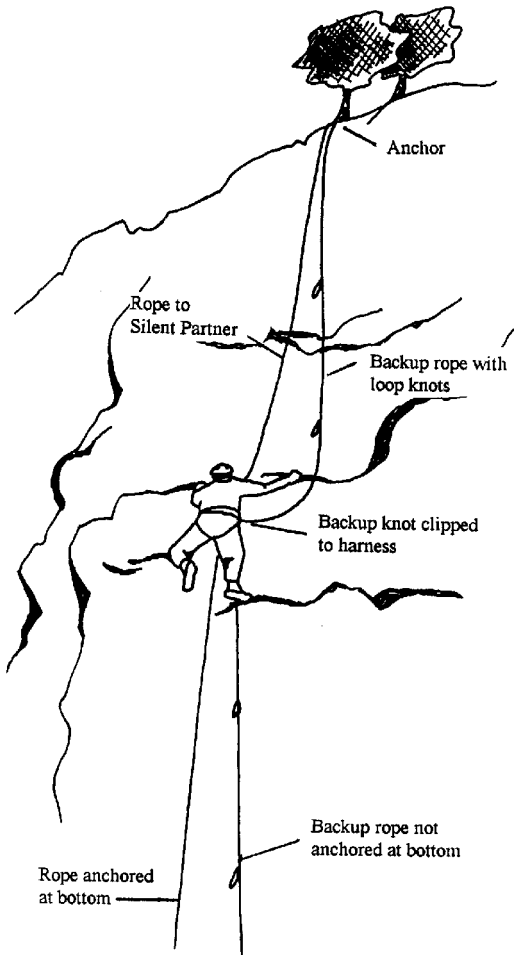


Figure 12: Backup system for top roping

How many knots to tie and exactly where to locate them along the rope will depend on the features of the climb. In general, many knots closely spaced is safer than a few widely spaced.

This system is easy to use and provides the security of two completely independent belay systems.

FALLING

Falling while roped solo climbing can be very serious.

When climbing solo, you alone are responsible for recovering from the fall. In most cases, there will be no one nearby to help you. Unless you are rescued, getting back onto or off the route will be totally up to you.

If you are injured during a fall, you could find yourself in a desperate situation. You may be physically unable to get yourself off the climb. Without a partner there to assist you or go for help, a minor injury could become life threatening.

Even if you aren't hurt, falling while solo climbing can get you into real trouble. Consider the consequences of falling on an overhang or traverse high above the ground. It may be impossible to climb back to the route and too far to lower yourself to safety. Ascenders might help in this situation, but if you left them at the anchor (or at home) you will be out of luck.

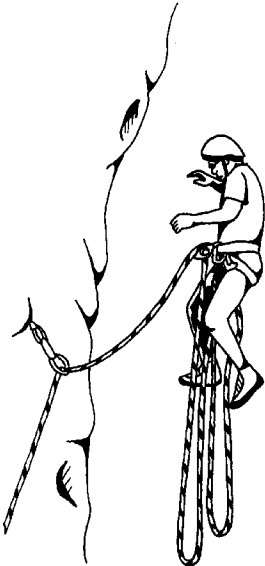
In general, it is best to avoid falling. Choose routes well within your ability that lend themselves to soloing. Avoid routes with poor protection and natural hazards such as loose rock.

FALLING WITH THE SILENT PARTNER

The Silent Partner's locking mechanism is sensitive to the rate at which the rope feeds. The Silent Partner will lock anytime the rope feeds too fast. This makes it capable of catching you whether you are upright, upside down, or head over heels.

During a lead fall, the Silent Partner will lock as soon as the rope becomes tight. When top roping, the Silent Partner may feed some as you start to fall, since it will take some time for you to pick up speed. When you fall top roping, do not grab the rope with your hands. Doing so could cause rope burns.

The Silent Partner does not provide a dynamic belay. The forces generated during a solo fall will be higher than if you were being belayed by a human. Make sure your rope is in excellent condition and that your anchors and protection are bombproof.



RELEASING THE SILENT PARTNER AFTER A FALL

There are two methods for releasing the Silent Partner after a fall. The first method is with your weight off the rope, and the second is with your weight on the rope.

WEIGHT OFF THE ROPE

- Start climbing again to remove your weight from the rope.
- Once your weight is off the rope, pull on the free end of the rope enough to rotate the drum a slight amount. This will release the locking mechanism (figure 13).
- In some cases, it may be necessary to loosen the clove hitch on the drum by hand to restore easy feeding.
- As you climb back up to your last protection, you can take in slack by manually pulling it through the Silent Partner.

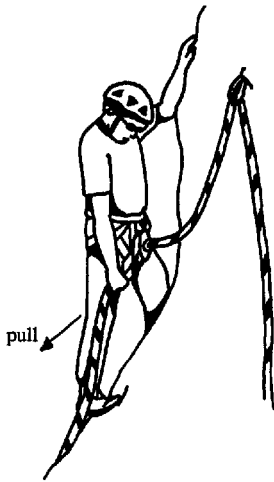


Figure 13: Releasing with weight off rope



Figure 14: Releasing with weight on rope

Note: Drawings shown without backup belay system for clarity

WEIGHT ON THE ROPE

— The Silent Partner can be released with your weight on the rope by pulling up on the free end of the rope (figure 14).

— Once it is released, the Silent Partner will feed again. Keep your hand as far from the device as possible to avoid pinching your skin in the device. Also, be ready to pass the rope around your hip to provide friction. (This technique will require some practice).

— Once the Silent Partner is released, you can lower yourself as needed (See "Self Lowering", page 24).

If you take a really severe fall, the clove hitch on the Silent Partner may become very tight. The easiest way to release it is with your weight on the rope. After you release the locking mechanism, bounce on the rope a little to get the clove hitch to slip. As the clove hitch slips, it will loosen.

SELF LOWERING

The Silent Partner self belay device is not recommended for routine rappelling. It does not provide much friction, and it will force you to rappel very slowly. Whenever possible, use a conventional rappel device for descending.

The Silent Partner does work for self lowering however, and if you are using it for a belay, it will be the most appropriate device to use for the following functions:

- Lowering yourself after a fall.
- Lowering yourself while top roping
- Executing a pendulum
- Lowering off and cleaning half pitch climbs

To lower yourself with the Silent Partner, first release the locking mechanism (see page 22), then pass the free end of rope around your hip to provide extra friction. See figure 15. Now "rappel" as usual, but don't go too fast, or the device will lock.

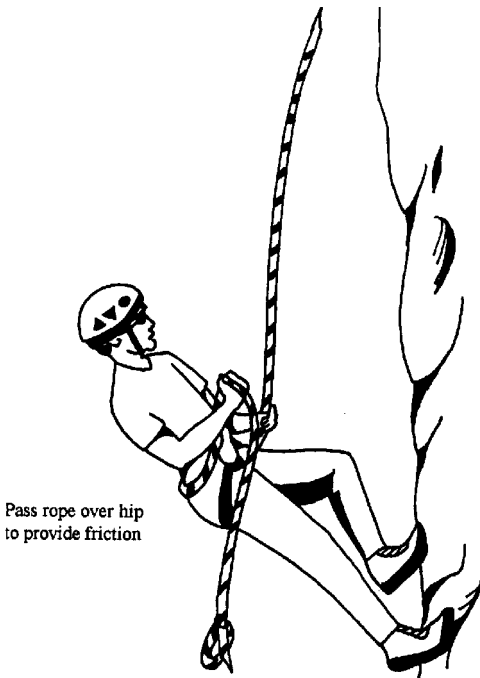


Figure 15: Self lowering

Note: Shown without backup belay system for clarity

If you want the Silent Partner to lock up and hold you, drop fast enough to cause it to lock. If you allow the free end of the rope to pass rapidly through your hand, the Silent Partner will lock up within a few feet. The more suddenly you release the rope, the quicker it will lock. This process is a little un-nerving at first! You may want to experiment with this system while top roping with a separate backup belay.

HELPFUL TIPS

It takes practice to become proficient at roped solo climbing. The whole process is likely to seem very cumbersome at first. As you gain experience, roped solo climbing with the Silent Partner will become much easier. Below are a few tips to help keep things running smoothly.

ROPE FEED

— The type of rope used will affect the rope feed assistance. The easiest feed is with a 10mm, supple, dry treated rope in fairly new condition. The average 10.5 mm dry free climbing rope feeds quite well. A stiff, worn, 11 mm rope does not feed very well.

— The weight of a lot of excess rope hanging from the Silent Partner will hinder feed considerably. Keep the length of rope between the Silent Partner and the backup knot attached to your harness as short as possible. About 40 to 50 feet is the limit.

— When leading, keep the rope and the Silent Partner between your legs to reduce rope friction.

— Avoid pulling on both strands of rope leaving the Silent Partner. This action will tighten up the clove hitch and cause it to feed hard.

BACKUP KNOTS

- Using extra large locking carabiners for your backup knots will make removing them easier than with standard size carabiners.
- The clove hitch is a convenient choice for backup knots because it will become untied by itself when removed from a carabiner. This makes it easy to release a backup knot with one hand while climbing.
- Tying all of your backup knots and clipping them into separate carabiners on your harness before starting to climb is easier than trying to tie them in the middle of the pitch.

CLIPPING PROTECTION

- Pulling the rope up to clip protection is more difficult when soloing. Save yourself some trouble by clipping at waist level.
- When clipping protection overhead, first pull some rope through the Silent Partner by pulling downward. Then pull and clip the rope as you normally would when climbing with a belayer.
- Figuring out which strand of rope to clip into your protection can be confusing. Being systematic about how you setup the Silent Partner and backup system will help reduce the confusion.

CHOOSE CLIMBS CAREFULLY

Not all climbs lend themselves to roped solo climbing. Climbs with long traverses, large overhangs, or features that tend to snag the rope will compound the difficulties of solo climbing.

THINK AHEAD

Anticipating difficulties and dangers is the best way to avoid them. Keep track of what is happening around you and with your belay system. It takes all the fun out of climbing, and may be dangerous to have a belay system foul-up during a crux move or long runoff.

MAINTENANCE AND SERVICE

The silent Partner self belay device was designed and built to last a long time and hold many falls. It should require no routine maintenance other than generally wiping it clean.

DO NOT TRY TO LUBRICATE ANY PART OF THE SILENT PARTNER.



It is a good idea, however, to routinely inspect the Silent Partner. Check for bent, cracked, loose, or missing parts (See Silent Partner Anatomy, page 6) Rotate the side plates and check for excessive looseness on the axle. Spin the drum slowly to see if it turns smoothly and quietly. Spin the drum quickly to see if the locking mechanism is working. Look and listen for signs of the axle or clutch housing being contaminated by foreign matter. Look at the black rubber seal between the drum and the clutch housing to see if it is still intact. If the Silent Partner doesn't pass any of these tests, don't use it. If your Silent Partner locks u a lot when it is not supposed to, it probably has an internal problem and will need to be repaired.



DO NOT USE A SILENT PARTNER THAT IS NOT IN GOOD WORKING ORDER

If you do find a problem with your Silent Partner, or just want us to check it out, you may return it to Rock Exotica for service. If we find a problem related to materials or workmanship, it will be mended at our expense. If we fix a problem that is the result of abuse, misuse, or general wear and tear, service and shipping charges will apply.

NEVER TAKE THE SILENT PARTNER APART



NEVER USE A SILENT PARTNER THAT HAS BEEN DISMANTLED OR MODIFIED

TECHNICAL INFO

Structural parts for the Silent Partner are machined from wrought aluminum and stainless steel stock, with no cast or stamped parts. After assembly, each clutch is tested for proper activation speed.

We will be happy to answer any other technical questions you may have. Just give us a call.