

FREE FIELD GUIDE

# THE V0-V5 BEGINNER ROADMAP

What to learn at each grade - without  
chasing numbers or getting injured.



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Gyms, crags and practical climbing guides worldwide.

# Grades are signposts, not promises

This roadmap gives you a useful skill focus for each broad grade band. Indoor grades vary between gyms, setters and wall angles. Outdoor grades add rock type, conditions, height, landing and local style. You do not need to climb every problem at one grade before trying the next.

## A rough V-grade / Font-grade guide

| V SCALE      | ROUGH FONT RANGE | LIKELY EMPHASIS                           |
|--------------|------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| <b>V0</b>    | Font 4 to 5      | Big holds, balance and basic movement     |
| <b>V1</b>    | Font 5 to 5+     | Foot choice and body position matter more |
| <b>V2-V3</b> | Font 6A to 6B    | Tension, direction and sequencing enter   |
| <b>V4-V5</b> | Font 6B+ to 6C+  | Precision, power and efficient projecting |

## Use the three-pass rule

- Pass 1: Explore. Try varied angles and movements.
- Pass 2: Learn. Repeat one problem with quieter feet.
- Pass 3: Record. Write down one move that changed.

## The real target

Finish sessions with better decisions, not just a higher tick. If your falling, warm-up or skin management is poor, the grade can wait. A repeatable V2 is more useful than a lucky V4.

# Fall well. Keep the landing clear.

Bouldering means repeated falls onto matting or crash pads. Matting reduces risk; it does not remove it. Follow the gym induction and local outdoor guidance every time.

## 1 Look first

Check the landing zone before leaving the ground. Bottles, brushes, people and phones do not belong under a climber.

## 2 Down-climb

Use down-climb holds when you can. Save uncontrolled drops for moments where coming down safely is the better option.

## 3 Land actively

Practise from low height: feet together or shoulder-width, knees soft, then roll onto your back if needed. Do not lock your knees.

## 4 Step away

Once down, clear the landing promptly and look up before crossing below another climber.

### Stop the session if...

- You feel sharp, sudden or worsening pain; dizziness; or unusual weakness.
- Your landings become uncontrolled, your feet stop listening or fatigue changes your judgement.
- Skin is split or a hold is wet, loose or otherwise unsafe. Tell staff or the local custodian.

# Four skills beat one hundred random pulls

Use one skill as the purpose of a session. The goal is not perfection - it is noticing when the movement makes the problem easier.

## QUIET FEET

### Place, then weight

Look at the foothold until your shoe arrives. Place the useful part of the toe once, then transfer weight without shuffling.

## HIPS

### Move mass, not just hands

Bring your hips toward the foothold carrying your weight. Turn a hip in when reaching sideways instead of staying square by default.

## STRAIGHT ARMS

### Hang before you pull

When the position allows, relax the grip and let your skeleton carry load. Bend the arm only when the move requires it.

## FLAGGING

### Create a third point

Place the free leg across or behind the body to stop rotation. The foot may not touch a hold, but it still controls balance.

## 10-minute drill

Choose three easy problems. Climb each twice: first normally, then with silent feet and one deliberate hip turn. Rest enough to make the second attempt better, not merely harder.

# Build a calm foundation

At this stage, improve the relationship between eyes, feet and hips. Bigger moves often become smaller when your weight is over the correct foot.

V0-V1

## Skills to collect

- Identify start and finish rules without copying the climber in front of you.
- Place feet once, look at them until contact, then transfer weight.
- Keep arms straighter on easy terrain and notice when grip relaxes.
- Climb down controlled routes and keep every landing zone clear.

## Try this session

Pick six easy problems across slab, vertical and gentle overhang. Climb each once to solve it, rest, then repeat with quieter feet. Finish before movement becomes noisy.

## Ready to progress when...

You can repeat several easy problems with deliberate feet, describe why a hip turn helped and land with control when you need to drop.

## Watch for

Pulling harder every time your feet feel uncertain. Pause, lower the foot, look at the hold and place it again. Better information beats more force.

# Connect direction and tension

Problems now ask you to control rotation, maintain body tension and choose a sequence rather than simply reach the next hold.

**V2-V3**

## Skills to collect

- Use inside edge, outside edge and flagging to control the direction of a reach.
- Keep hips close or deliberately move them away when the angle demands it.
- Separate attempts: one for information, one for a specific change, one for execution.
- Rest 2-4 minutes before quality attempts instead of rapid-fire pulling.

## Try this session

Choose one V2-V3 project with a move you cannot yet do. Work only the two moves around the crux, test three different feet or hip positions, then link from the start.

## Ready to progress when...

You can explain the likely crux, make a deliberate change after failure and repeat familiar V2s without every move feeling maximal.

## Watch for

Turning every session into limit projecting. Keep most climbing submaximal so new movement sticks. One hard project is enough for a productive session.

# Earn precision before intensity

V4-V5 often exposes a narrow movement solution. Progress comes from better positions, higher-quality attempts and managing fatigue - not a magic finger exercise.

V4-V5

## Skills to collect

- Read hand orientation, foot direction and the body position required before the crux.
- Use controlled momentum where static movement would waste strength.
- Film one attempt if the venue allows, then review position rather than appearance.
- Limit serious attempts and stop when quality, skin or judgement drops.

## Try this session

Warm up fully, select one project and set a 25-minute cap. Work the crux in sections with 3-5 minute rests. Finish with two easy technique repeats, not another exhausted hail-mary.

## Ready to progress when...

You can make repeatable links, identify why an attempt failed and recover enough between tries to reproduce the intended movement.

## Watch for

Adding fingerboard or campus-board intensity just because the grade feels hard. Beginners usually gain more from movement variety, consistency and time than from aggressive loading.

# Read the problem in 60 seconds

A plan will be imperfect. That is useful: each failed attempt then tells you which assumption to change.

## Find start and finish

1

Confirm every required start hold and the gym's finish rule.

## Trace hands

2

Name the likely hand sequence and spot any hold that works better from one side.

## Trace feet

3

Choose likely footholds before defaulting to whatever sits directly below your hands.

## Mark the crux

4

Identify the move most likely to fail and the body position needed before it.

## Choose the rest

5

Know where you can breathe, shake out or straighten an arm.

## Set a test

6

On the next go, change one thing: foot, hip, timing, grip or pace.

Project rule: after three identical failures, step off, rest and change the plan. Repeating the same move while more tired is usually rehearsal for the mistake.



# A four-week movement-first plan

Aim for two non-consecutive bouldering sessions each week. If you are new to climbing, more is not automatically better. Finish with energy and skin left.

## WEEK 1

### Land and place

Session A: falling practice plus quiet feet on six easy problems. Session B: repeat those problems and down-climb every safe finish.

## WEEK 2

### Hips and direction

Session A: hip turns on vertical problems. Session B: flagging on three problems, then compare with your first solution.

## WEEK 3

### Read and test

Session A: 60-second route reads before each first try. Session B: project one problem for 20 minutes with proper rests.

## WEEK 4

### Consolidate

Session A: repeat four benchmarks with cleaner movement. Session B: explore a new angle, then write your next four-week focus.

### Simple session shape

10-15 min warm-up / 35-55 min purposeful climbing / 5 min notes. Rest 2-4 minutes between serious attempts; longer if breathing, grip or judgement has not recovered.

# Warm up for the moves you will make

A warm-up should raise temperature, move the joints you will use and rehearse easy versions of the session. It is preparation, not a performance.

0-4 MIN

## Raise

Walk briskly, cycle lightly or move continuously. You should feel warmer without becoming tired.

4-8 MIN

## Mobilise

Use controlled shoulder, wrist, hip and ankle movement through comfortable ranges. Avoid forcing end positions.

8-15 MIN

## Climb easy

Traverse or climb very easy problems. Use large holds, straight arms and deliberate feet across varied angles.

15+ MIN

## Ramp

Increase difficulty in small steps. Rehearse the grip and wall angle you expect before the hardest attempts.

## Recovery basics

Leave 24-48 hours between hard beginner sessions, eat and drink normally, wash chalk off, care for skin and sleep. Soreness is not a scoreboard. Persistent or worsening pain needs appropriate professional advice.

# Your one-page session card

One honest note after a session is enough to make the next session smarter.

DATE / WALL

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TODAY'S SKILL FOCUS

---

WARM-UP I USED

---

THREE PROBLEMS I LEARNED FROM

---

---

---

ONE MOVE THAT CHANGED

---

---

HOW MY BODY / SKIN FELT

---

NEXT SESSION I WILL...

---

SUCCESS = A SAFER, CLEANER OR BETTER-UNDERSTOOD SESSION

# Your next useful click

The guide ends here. Your roadmap continues at a real wall, with real feedback and enough rest to learn from it.

## FIND A WALL

Search nearby gyms and crags on the worldwide map.

[Open the worldwide map](#)

## UNDERSTAND GRADES

See why gym colours, V-grades and Font grades never match perfectly.

[Read the grade guide](#)

## PLAN SESSION ONE

Registration, rentals, etiquette and a simple first-session plan.

[Read the first-session guide](#)

## BUILD YOUR PASSPORT

Save walls, mark visits and build your shareable climbing map.

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