



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.

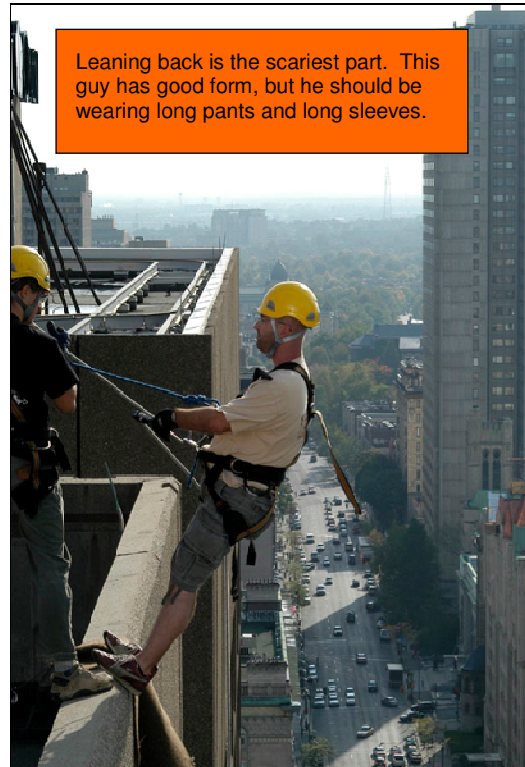
Getting your weight off the roof and into the harness is the difficult part for most people. Once you're over the edge, you are on your own. Don't forget to stop and take in the view!

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, in most cases, 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. 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.



Leaning back is the scariest part. This guy has good form, but he should be wearing long pants and long sleeves.



Good form. Knees bent, legs spread, bum down. Squeezing the handle makes you go, pulling back on it makes you stop.

What to wear

You're going to be walking down the side of a building so wear good shoes. Sneakers, light hikers, climbing shoes, something with a soft sole. No sandals, slip-on shoes, slippers, flip flops, high heels, or steel toed boots.

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 check in 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.

We look forward to meeting you!

OTE Team



Releasing the red handle is usually enough to stop. You may have to pull upwards on the handle to achieve full braking power depending on how far you've gone.