



The School For
Mountain Leadership

HIGH ANGLE RESCUE TRAINING HANDOUT No 2 : FIGURE-8 LOCK-OFF TECHNIQUE

*This training handout may be freely reproduced
and distributed in an unaltered form.*

NEED MORE INFO?

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This training handout is an aide-memoire for students who have completed the appropriate training. Do NOT attempt these techniques without proper training – getting it wrong can be lethal!

Sometimes it is necessary to stop half way down an abseil in order to work. If you're using a non self-locking device you have two options:

1. Keep one hand on the rope
2. Use a technique to lock the device off manually, freeing up your hands to do the work.

The technique illustrated here is useful for locking off a figure-8 in order to free up both hands for work.

Step 1: Stop your descent.
This is simply a case of stopping the rope from sliding through your hands.

Step 2: Trap the rope against the Figure-8
Use the palm of your hand to trap the rope against the stem of the Figure-8 by grasping the rope and the shaft.



Step 3: Pull the rope over the top
Pull the rope over the top of the Figure-8, making sure it doesn't slip past the sides.

Step 4: Pull the rope into the large eye
Get both hands onto the rope and then pull hard, forcing the rope into the large eye of the Figure-8. This is known as a *half-lock*



Step 5: Pull a bight through the carabiner
Without allowing any slack to develop, pull a bight of rope through the carabiner.



Step 6: Loop the bight over the Figure-8
Loop one side of the bight over the Figure-8, then pull it into the eye as you did in step 4.



Step 6: Remove the slack
Once the bight has been pulled into the eye you can pull any excess slack back out of the carabiner.



IMPORTANT: You will notice that at no stage during this process did the person locking off their figure-8 ever let go of the rope. You can only let go of the rope once you have fully locked off and have verified that your lock-off is holding firm. Do this by holding onto the rope but allowing slack to develop between your hand and the Figure-8, then gently bounce up and down once or twice while looking for slippage in the Figure-8.

Please contact us at the above addresses for further information.
