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Introduction

Mountaineering Ireland is the representative body for hillwalkers and climbers on the island of Ireland. Mountaineering Ireland is recognised as the national governing body for the sport of mountaineering by both Sport Ireland and Sport Northern Ireland. Mountaineering refers to a spectrum of activities that includes hillwalking, rock climbing, rambling, bouldering and alpinism.

Mountaineering Ireland's Mountain Training Board (MTBI) has delegated authority to represent all aspects of Mountain Training and to keep under review all training schemes and awards. Within the structure of mountain training in Ireland the Mountain Skills scheme has two important functions:

1. To provide the theoretical and practical knowledge in the fundamental skills of navigation and hillwalking that are required to become a self-sufficient hillwalker within the upland regions of Ireland & the UK. The scheme is divided up into Mountain Skills 1, Mountain Skills 2 and Mountain Skills Assessment.
2. To provide an assessment of the fundamental navigation and hillwalking skills for those who wish to progress to the Mountain Leader award. This is reflected in the third block of the scheme, a two day Mountain Skills Assessment (MSA), successful completion of which is required for registration on the Mountain Leader scheme.

It is recommended that Mountain Skills 1 and Mountain Skills 2 training courses are run over a minimum of four days (two days each) with at least two evening/night sessions to allow for talks and night navigation exercises. However, a longer period may be desirable and necessary depending on students' individual needs and previous experience. Each course is 20 hours long, with 18 hours contact time and 2 hours of facilitated learning. Facilitated learning can take the format of prior reading material, in course homework and post course tasks. Your provider will advise you of the facilitated learning. It is recommended that candidates read the syllabus prior to attending a course and visit the Mountaineering Ireland website to avail of instructional videos and presentations. Eight weeks (minimum) must elapse between commencement of training and the two-day Mountain Skills Assessment.

Who can run the Mountain Skills Scheme?

Mountaineering Ireland's Mountain Training Board approves individual 'Providers' to run the scheme, (see www.mountaineering.ie for an up-to-date list). The Provider is solely responsible for ensuring that the Mountain Skills courses are run in accordance with agreed criteria/standards and for meeting Mountaineering Ireland reporting

requirements, including sending course confirmation to the Mountaineering Ireland Training Officer, submission of course reports where relevant, and keeping records in case of any follow-up queries. The Providers are audited and moderated to ensure that standards are maintained.



Mountaineering Ireland's Mountain Training Board does not approve centres or organisations. Activity centres or independent companies who would like to run training or assessment courses, should arrange this directly with an approved Provider. The course must be clearly identified as a Mountaineering Ireland course and use its logo. The Provider must be clearly identified in the promotion and advertising of the course.

The Mountain Skills Syllabus may also be used as a framework for the development of other courses, such as in-club training programmes, however, any non-approved courses using the syllabus must not advertise, promote or present as an official Mountaineering Ireland Mountain Skills scheme.

Syllabus

On the following pages you will find details of the minimum syllabus and sample course programmes. The latter gives an outline of each talk/lecture and practical session on the course. It is up to each Course Provider to compile their own lecture notes and create practical exercises to reflect the syllabus and course content. It is important that Providers adhere to this framework to ensure students are not disadvantaged at assessment should they change trainers during the training module. This also helps students when they progress to Mountain Leader training and as future Mountain Skills Providers.

The development of the course programme is ongoing and revisions will be made as necessary, in line with trainers' and students' suggestions. Comments are welcomed by the Mountaineering Ireland Training Officer.

1. Mountain Skills Scheme & Mountaineering Ireland

- The roles of; Mountaineering Ireland, the Mountain Training Board (MTBI), the trainer
- Scope of the Mountain Skills scheme and how it relates to the Mountain Leader course and other awards

2. Mountain Hazards

Climatic hazards

- Temperature, precipitation, wind, lightning, humidity and snow
- Hypothermia

Topographic hazards

- Steepness, ruggedness, special emphasis on remoteness
- Reference to falling and drowning in hillwalking situations
- Ability with reference to terrain and conditions

Human hazards

- Health, nutrition and fitness
- Poor/lack of equipment
- Poor route choice

3. Mountain Environment

- Access and land ownership
- Introduction to the mountain environment
- Responsible recreation

4. Maps

- Map scales/symbols/conventional signs
- Ordnance Survey maps/history, reliability, suitability, comparison of different scales
- Terminology and vocabulary of features, e.g. spurs, cols/saddles, tops, valleys, re-entrants, ridges, arêtes, corries and obvious changes of slope
- Depiction of relief by contours, shading and other symbols and the relationship of these to the land
- Orienteering maps
- Grid references

5. Navigation

- Measuring distance and height gain from the map
- Measuring distances and height on the ground using timing and pacing
- Navigational strategies and techniques; aiming off, handrails, attack points
- Methods of location, cardinal points
- Feature recognition (distant and near), self-location
- Navigating using only the map
- Navigating using both map and compass
- Theory of navigational tools including Silva-type compass, altimeters and GPS.
- Map setting by features and compass, following bearings, back-bearing and simple resection.
- Aspect of slopes and features, (the direction the feature or slope is facing)
- Re-location techniques and procedures
- Navigating at night time and in poor visibility
- Macro-navigation

6. Route Planning

- Route planning; choice of route, route cards, bad weather alternatives and escape routes
- Guidebooks and other sources of information

7. Personal Equipment

- Equipment for hillwalking with reference to weight, bulk, and cost
- Comparison and contrast of: footwear, outer clothing, headgear, gloves, middle layer garments, base layers
- Bivouac bags, bivouac tents, blizzard bags and group shelters
- Rucksacks, torches, care of maps, whistle and other emergency signaling devices
- First aid kits
- Additional equipment for winter conditions

8. Emergency Procedures

- Procedure in event of an accident
- Prevention, diagnosis and treatment of mountain hypothermia, sprains, blisters, fatigue, and other typical ailments
- Mountain rescue organisation in Ireland, including location of teams
- Call-out procedures

9. Movement on Steeper Terrain and Broken Ground

- Movement skills and technique
- Safe movement in ascent, descent and traversing
- Exploration of steeper terrain to develop experience and awareness of; personal ability and limitations, hazards and objective dangers
- Route finding, route choice, hazard avoidance
- Environmental considerations; damage to vegetation, sensitive species
- The effect of steeper terrain on timing, pacing and route selection

Sample Programmes

The following pages contain a sample Mountain Skills 1 and 2 programme, but many things such as; the weather and the experience and background of the students, can affect the way a Provider delivers the course. In general, each course is 20 hours long and includes 18 hours contact time and 2 hours facilitated learning. Facilitated learning can take the forms of; pre, in and post course tasks. (See further guidance notes in the Introduction.)

Mountain Skills 1 (20 hours)

DAY 1 (10 hours)

Mountain Skills Scheme Introduction (Talk – 30 mins)

To introduce the Mountain Skills scheme and role of various organisations

- The roles of the Mountaineering Ireland trainer
- Scope of the Mountain Skills scheme and how it relates to the Mountain Leader course
- Introduce the programme, instructors

Maps: Suitability of Maps (Talk – 60 mins)

To explore some concepts of maps and the history and current suitability of maps for hillwalking.

- Properties of maps: aerial view, scale, etc
- Scales and their effect on map detail
- Conventional symbols on walking maps including contours - what they represent on the ground
- Suitability/reliability of OS and other production walking maps
- Refer to scale, age, and content: contour interval, crags, forests and tracks, buildings in isolated areas, rivers/streams
- A brief history of mapping in Ireland: early 1800s, six-inch survey for taxation purposes, mostly accurate on land below 1000ft
- Early 1:50000 – based on 1970s photography
- Rest of series – based on 1995 photography
- Other production maps now available
- Digital maps

A variety of maps should be used to illustrate general points (e.g. OS large scale maps, orienteering maps, walking maps, regional/atlas maps etc.) A selection of walking maps of different scales, style and production available in Ireland & the UK should also be shown.

Hillwalk (5 hours)

Navigation should be done using map-only techniques.

- Conventional symbols and what they represent
- Map-setting and self-location procedure
- Contour features: flat/steep ground, spur, valley, top, col/saddle, ridge, reentrant, obvious change of slope, arêtes, corries
- Distance estimation – on map and ground. (Do not introduce measuring scales or Naismith calculations at this stage, but encourage estimation by eye, feel, and experience).
- Simple navigation technique – following handrail features, easy line features to start then graduating to easy contour features – spurs/ridges etc.
- Direction estimation/map setting
- Terrain/maps – this exercise should be conducted on easy, moderate terrain. Use 1:50000 or 1:25000 maps most applicable to the area. Clearly identifiable points, both on the map and ground should be chosen for navigation legs.

Mountain Hazards (Talk – 1 hour)

To explore and illustrate some objective and subjective hazards of walking in the Irish mountains. It can be beneficial to allow candidates time to produce their own list of suggested hazards under the following headings:

- Climatic: rain, cloud, cold, etc.
- Topographic: cliffs, vegetation, loose rock, etc.
- Human: health, fitness, attitude, nutrition, etc.

A group discussion may then take place about formulating the chances and consequences of individual hazards or when combined with others. MRT & call out procedure, in brief.

Personal Equipment (Talk – 45 mins)

To discuss and show possibilities for hillwalking gear.

- Demonstrate examples of essential gear. Show possibilities for various options
- Discuss the extra equipment needed for hillwalking in winter

Depiction of Relief (Talk – 45 mins)

To illustrate different methods of showing relief in the mountains, with emphasis on contour features. Include how corries, spurs, ridges, valleys, reentrants, cols/saddles, slopes, arêtes, peaks etc. are depicted.

- Discuss and show examples (if possible) of hill shading and contours and their relative merits
- Concentrate on contour information – variation in basic patterns of shape, slope, and size of various features

- The role of spot heights and crag symbols. A 3-D model or 3-D digital mapping example could be useful

Mountain Environment (Talk – 1 hour)

To stimulate an appreciation of the mountain environment and impart a rounded understanding of how we can enjoy the hills responsibly. This topic will be addressed throughout the course as situations or 'teachable moments' arise on the hill, however there will normally be a dedicated discussion session, during which participants can contribute from their own knowledge and experience and deepen their understanding of this subject.

- **Access and land ownership**
 - All land is owned; no legal right of access
 - The relationship between hillwalkers and landowners
 - Mountaineering Ireland access policy
- **Introduction to the Mountain Environment**
 - Special and fragile habitats
 - Knowledge of flora, fauna, geology, history, place names etc. can add to our enjoyment
 - Different uses of upland areas
 - Changes in the mountain environment / pressures
- **Responsible Recreation**
 - The impact of our actions on other people and on the natural environment (e.g. path erosion, where we park, dogs on the hills)
 - Making good choices will help protect the environment and the quality of future recreational experiences
 - Resources include: Mountaineering Ireland's Good Practice Guide for Walkers and Climbers; 'Enjoying the mountains with care' video; 'RESPECT' messages in the Irish Mountain Log and other information such as from Leave No Trace Ireland.

DAY 2 (8 hours)

Pacing and Timing (Talk/Practical – 1 hour)

To elaborate on rough distance estimation of previous day and introduce more accurate methods.

- Pacing exercise – determine number of **double paces** per 100 metres
- Pacing – discuss variance with ground type and inclination
- Measuring distances on maps
- Naismith's Rule

- Timing calculations
- Limitations over short distance, broken and steep ground

Hillwalk (5.5 hours)

To develop map-reading and more accurate means of measuring distance from the map and on the ground.

- Pacing: more direct and easier to understand than timing. Include a practical session and discuss how students can further refine their own double pace
- Timing
- Feature recognition
- Terrain/maps – same as Day 1
- Introduce the compass; ruler, magnifying glass, arrow, needle
- Grid references
- Advice on individual student training needs

Grid references (30 minutes)

- National Grid
- Four-figure grid references
- Six-figure grid references

Route Planning (Talk – 30 mins)

To demonstrate the importance of planning and preparation

- Simple photocopy of map with marked route
- Route card showing the required elements
- Use of route card in emergencies for assistance information

Debrief (Talk – 30 mins)

To offer general advice, answer queries and get feedback.

- Course comments – student and instructor
- Need for practice in navigation
- Details of next course

Resources

Website skills videos - Timing & pacing, Relocation, Mountain features, Movement skills for walkers, Bearings and Mountain environment videos

Leaflets - Walking With Wildlife and Rocks to Ridges leaflets (PDFs on website, or contact Mountaineering Ireland office to request a hard copy)

Useful apps - Weather: www.Met.ie, www.yr.no, www.windguru.cz.
Location: View Ranger, OS to grid converter

Mountain Skills 2 (20 hours)

In general, each course is 20 hours long and includes 18 hours contact time and 2 hours facilitated learning. Facilitated learning can take the forms of; pre, in and post course tasks. (See further guidance notes in the Introduction)

DAY 1 (10 hours)

Briefing (Talk – 30 mins)

To outline course and assess student progress.

- Analysis of students' hillwalking activity since Mountain Skills 1
- Introduce programme, instructors

Introduction to Compass, (Talk/Practical 1 hour)

To introduce the use of the compass in hillwalking navigation.

- Compass points – cardinal points, 360 degree system
- North – true, grid, magnetic
- The concept of a bearing
- Measuring bearings from a map by estimation, protractor
- Theory of a Silva-type compass; taking bearings from a map
- Taking grid and magnetic bearings
- Walking on a bearing – short exercises

Hill Walk (5 hours)

To develop map-reading skills, the concept of timing, and to practice the compass theory introduced earlier. Map and compass to be used in conjunction as much as possible.

- General map-reading, setting map by features
- Setting the map using a compass
- Timing calculations
- Taking bearings from map
- Walking on a bearing
- Back-bearings
- Feature recognition – close, distant
- Navigational techniques - attack points, aiming off, simple resection (e.g. party located somewhere on a definite linear feature. Bearing taken to a clearly identifiable point roughly at right angles. Intersection of plotted bearing and linear feature gives rough position).

Route Planning (Talk – 1 hour)

To explore and illustrate the principles of route planning from maps.

- The selection of walking routes from the map – in good/poor weather
- Difficulties associated with steep ground, forestry, rivers, etc.
- Bad weather alternatives, escape routes
- Use of route card
- Use of guidebooks and online information in route planning
- Route card exercise

Night Navigation/Poor Weather Exercise (2.5 hours)

To practice navigation technique (particularly compass skills) in conditions of poor visibility.

- Discuss the reasons for, and actions taken, when caught out after dark
- Short, simple navigation problems should be set, requiring a combination of tactics and compasswork to solve. Clearly identifiable points, both on the map and ground should be chosen for navigation legs.
- Safety must be paramount and a strict time limit adhered in order to avoid disenchantment.

DAY 2 (8 hours)

Emergency Procedures – Part 1. Mountain Hypothermia (Talk – 30 minutes)

To create an awareness of mountain hypothermia and give a brief outline of its prevention, diagnosis and treatment.

- Physiology
- Causes – environmental, individual
- Signs and symptoms
- Treatment – early, ongoing
- Prevention
- Also discuss other common ailments: sprains, blisters, fatigue, etc.

Emergency Procedures – Part 2. Mountain Rescue (Talk – 30 mins)

To outline procedures in the case of a mountain accident.

- Brief history of mountain rescue in Ireland, Mountain Rescue Ireland (formerly IMRA)
- Location of mountain rescue teams in Ireland
- Accident procedure
- Plan of action – risk to others, nature of injuries, weather, time available, party, equipment, terrain, location, and distance. Options – evacuation, sending for help
- Call-out procedure
- Role of the Rescue Helicopters, SARDA

Steep/Broken Ground and Macro Navigation: Practical (6 hours)

To explore more rugged terrain and develop awareness in the student of his/her own abilities and limitations so that they remain at all times within full control of the situation on steep or broken ground.

- Safe movement in ascent and descent
- Movement skills and technique
- Route finding, maps etc.
- Movement of a group
- Hazards, problems of loose rock and other objective dangers
- Environmental considerations, particularly damage to sensitive vegetation
- Route choice, timing and navigation for legs of 1 – 3km in more complex terrain where ridges or valleys must be crossed

Note on Mountain Skills Steeper/Broken Terrain

While it may be difficult to definitively classify suitable steeper terrain for the Mountain Skills course, it should only include ground where the use of the rope would not be contemplated. Many aspects of this part of the syllabus can be taught through outdoor discussions presented in a range of styles and degrees of steeper/broken terrain. Although it can be beneficially important to progress clients on to a range of more serious terrain to demonstrate judgement, this should be always kept within the ability of the group. As areas of steeper terrain provide a refuge for flora and fauna, special care is required regarding choice of venue and minimising environmental impact.

Debrief, Assessment Briefing (Talk - 60 mins)

To answer queries, get feedback and to give an outline of the format of the assessment

- Course comments – students, instructor
- Requirements for those intending to do the Mountain Skills Assessment
- Issue logbook
- Sample paper
- Advice on further training needs



Mountain Skills Assessment

Introduction

The purpose of the Mountain Skills Assessment is to ensure that the candidate has a good practical understanding of navigational techniques and other mountain skills (as outlined in the syllabus).

Mountaineering Ireland approves suitably qualified and experienced Providers to deliver and run the Mountain Skills Assessment. Applications for Assessment should be made directly to an approved Course Provider. A list of current approved Providers and courses are available on the Mountaineering Ireland website or from the Training Officer. The assessment has both practical and written elements.

First aid requirements

First aid and incident management are recommended skills for any individual who journeys through the uplands of Ireland. A number of recognised first aid schemes are available that offer suitable training and assessment for the outdoor and upland environment. These schemes cover traditional first aid skills in a wilderness environment as well as dealing with specialist topics such as hypothermia and evacuation.

Prior to attendance on Mountain Skills Assessment candidates must hold a valid first aid qualification that must involve at least 16 hours of instruction and include an element of assessment. Examples of suitable First Aid qualification for the Mountain Skills Assessment are the Level 2 Rescue Emergency Care or Remote Emergency Care (see www.mountaineering.ie for further information).

Mountain Skills Log book

Candidates are required to maintain a log book of their mountaineering activities. (See the log book section for more information.)

After completing Mountain Skills Training 1 & 2 and before attending a Mountain Skills Assessment, you should complete and log at least 14 hill/mountain walks in a variety of upland areas of Ireland. At least four of these walks should be within two months of the Mountain Skills Assessment.

Please ensure you have practiced navigation in poor visibility and at nighttime. Record this type of session in your logbook regardless of the duration, but don't count these as part of your minimum 14 mountain walks, if they don't meet the criteria for a logged walk, page 21.

Exemptions from Mountain Skills 1 & Mountain Skills 2

Candidates who feel they have achieved the necessary experience may exempt themselves from Mountain Skills 1 and or 2 and go straight to Mountain Skills Assessment. Candidates who take this route typically have spent a considerable amount of time learning the necessary skills through a club, scouts or other organisation. Candidates who exempt themselves must present with an official Mountain Skills logbook at assessment, (available from Mountaineering Ireland). The logbook must show evidence of at least 28 hill or mountain walks, twice the normal required experience. Candidates are advised to read the Mountain Skills syllabus thoroughly before exempting themselves and again prior to the Mountain Skills Assessment. Although training at Mountain Skills level is designed to be very flexible, candidates must still gain the necessary skills and comply with logbook requirements. The Course Provider will be happy to discuss your individual case, give advice and accommodate your individual circumstances.

The Successful Candidate

The successful candidate is someone who is confident and able to navigate from one major feature to another, e.g. col / summit / large re-entrant / large spur / major slope changes. They should be able to do this competently in clear weather and in mist or at night. They should be able to plan their day, look after themselves, adhere to good practice with regard to access and environmental matters, deal with minor emergencies, know what to do and who to contact in case of emergencies of a more serious nature, and know their limits in terms of type of ground encountered. As a candidate you will only be looking after yourself.

Mountain Skills Practical Assessment

The format of the Mountain Skills Assessment will be decided by the individual Provider and will take into account weather, location, and time of year. Candidates can expect to be assessed on all parts of the Mountain Skills syllabus through a number of different formats over the two days. Below are examples of tasks that an assessor may require candidates to demonstrate:

1. That you possess the necessary equipment for a safe day in the hills?
2. You can select and follow a route of not less than 1.5km in length to a given destination using the map only?
3. You can complete a navigation leg of 1 to 1.5km, using compass and distance calculations? This is to be executed with a lateral margin of error not exceeding 100m in 1km.
4. You can correctly self-locate on six occasions, only three of these to be on large obvious features?

5. You can correctly identify six features, three of these to be further than 3km.
6. The ability to navigate adequately in conditions of reduced visibility, for example at night-time?
7. Respect for the mountain environment?
8. You have the necessary experience to deal with simple ailments and a hypothetical first aid accident?
9. The ability to move on and choose a safe route over rough or steep ground?



Mountain Skills Assessment Written Test

The Mountain Skills Assessment is essentially a practical exercise but a written test is used as a tool to aid the candidate and enable the assessor to understand the level of knowledge that the student has of the Mountain Skills syllabus. The written element is set, administered, and corrected by the provider responsible for the overall test. Candidates are allowed to use a compass and writing materials. The time allowed is generally 90 minutes. The test takes place at the start of, or shortly before, the practical assessment so that any weaknesses shown may be noted and assessed while out on the hill.

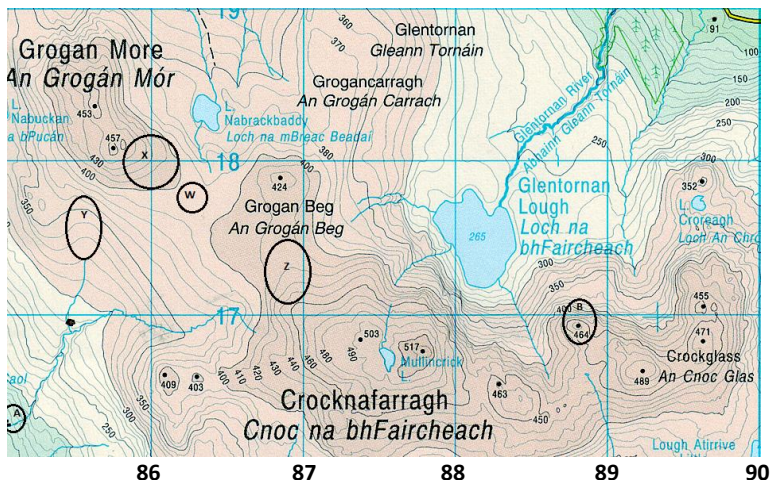
Assessors may choose different formats and layouts for the written test, including asking candidates to produce route plans, answer multiple choice type questions, or produce answers in a more detailed format. The written test can also be tested orally.

The following examples demonstrate three formats that may be presented to candidates on assessment. Assessors may decide to use one particular format or a combination of all three.

1. Map and navigation calculations.
2. True or False general mountaineering questions.
3. Day walk plan and route card.

Sample Questions From Sample Written Test

Map and navigation calculations.



1:50,000, Discovery Series, Sheet 1

The 100,000 metre Grid Square Identification is B Mag Var 5° West

State the time taken to travel in a straight line between these points at 5kph and 1 minute per 10m contour ascent:

1. .453 on Grogan More to .517 on Crocknafarragh

45 mins

2. House (A) to Lough Nabrackbaddy

54 mins

Give the following bearings:

1. Grid bearing from .453 on Grogan More to .517 on Crocknafarragh

128°

2. Grid bearing from A to .424 Grogan Beg

49°

3. Magnetic bearing from .517 on Crocknafarragh to middle of Lough Nabrackbaddy

323°

What feature may best be described at the following letters:

W

Col/Saddle

X

Spur

Y

Re-entrant

Z

Change of slope

4. In good visibility, state whether each of the following can be seen from each other:

1. Lough Nabuckan and Glentornan Lough

NO

2. A and Lough Nabrackbaddy

NO

3. .424 Grogan Beg to .464 (B)

YES

Give a six-figure grid reference for:

.464 (B)

B888169

.453 on Grogan More

B856183

True or False Questions

1. Hypothermia is the drop of the body's core temperature due to cold and exhaustion. **TRUE**
2. Hypothermia victims should be re-warmed rapidly in a hot bath. **FALSE**
3. Providing rest, extra clothes, shelter, and food are good ways to treat hypothermic victims. **TRUE**
4. Rainfall levels can be three times higher in the mountains than in the lowlands. **TRUE**
5. Wind speed increases very little as you go up, once you are above 300m. **FALSE**
6. Flooded rivers can be a major problem while hillwalking in Ireland. **TRUE**
7. If an accident happens to a person in a walking group one should ensure the casualty is warm and sheltered. **TRUE**
8. If an accident happens to a person in a walking group, the casualty can be easily carried off the hills with an improvised stretcher. **FALSE**
9. Only in hot countries do we need to worry about drinking liquid while we are hillwalking. **FALSE**

10. The International Mountain Distress Signal is six distinct blasts of a whistle or flashes of a torch followed by one minute's silence. **TRUE**
11. Mobile phones are always a very reliable source of communication in the mountains. **FALSE**
12. When descending a convex slope, one often cannot see how steep the lower part of the slope is until one gets there. **TRUE**
13. The upper part of a concave slope is steeper than the lower part. **TRUE**
14. There are no 1:25,000 scale maps of the Irish mountains. **FALSE**
15. Handrail features are always along ridges. **FALSE**
16. Aiming off involves navigating using the sun and the compass to get bearings. **FALSE**
17. Pacing is a mountaineering technique for walking very quickly. **FALSE**
18. Proper hillwalking boots, although important for comfort, have no real bearing on safety. **TRUE**
19. Ordnance Survey maps are always waterproof. **FALSE**
20. Most mountains in Ireland are privately owned land. **TRUE**
21. Walking along the centre of a muddy path causes less environmental damage than walking on the edge of the path. **TRUE**
22. Dogs are welcome on the hill provided they are kept on a lead. **FALSE**
23. Field gateways provide a good place to park on narrow country roads. **FALSE**
24. Sundew is an insectivorous (insect-eating) plant commonly found on the Irish mountains. **TRUE**
25. It's OK to leave banana skins on the mountains as they are bio-degradable. **FALSE**

Route Planning Question

- You are planning a one-day walk in Co. Kerry during March.
- You have a car and are using Killarney for accommodation.
- Your aim is to reach the summit of Carrauntoohil, 1039m (GR:V8084)
- The weather forecast for Co. Kerry is 'A cold front bringing rain and increasing winds veering from westerly to south westerly'

Plan a route for the above day including

- Expected route
- Emergency escape routes
- All other relevant information

Your Mountain Skills Log Book

NAME:	DATE OF BIRTH:
ADDRESS:	
TEL HOME:	TEL MOBILE:
EMAIL:	

SUMMARY OF HILLWALKING EXPERIENCE NOT INCLUDED IN THIS LOG BOOK:

FIRST AID CERTIFICATE (TO BE PRESENTED AT ASSESSMENT)		
ISSUED BY:	LEVEL:	DATE:

MOUNTAIN SKILLS TRAINING ATTENDED
Mountain Skills 1
COURSE DATE:
LOCATION:
COURSE PROVIDER:
PROVIDER'S SIGNATURE:
Mountain Skills 2
COURSE DATE:
LOCATION:
COURSE PROVIDER:
PROVIDER'S SIGNATURE

MOUNTAIN SKILLS ASSESSMENT ATTENDED
Mountain Skills Assessment
COURSE DATE:
LOCATION:
COURSE DIRECTOR:
OUTCOME (Pass/Fail/Defer)
DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE:

MOUNTAIN SKILLS ASSESSMENT
MOUNTAIN SKILLS ASSESMENT PROVIDER STICKER TO BE PLACED HERE

Guidance notes for completing your Mountain Skills Logbook

Information should be presented in a clear and legible format.

(Extra pages can be photocopied or downloaded from www.mountaineering.ie)

At the start or prior to the Mountain Skills Assessment you must present the following to your assessor:

- an official Mountain Skills log book
- at least 14 logged walks
- **OR** at least 28 logged walks, if you have exempted yourself from Mountain Skills 1 & 2 training
- at least 4 walks completed in the 2 months prior to assessment
- walks in a variety of upland areas
- a current and valid First Aid Certificate

Criteria for a logged walk:

- To occur in a recognised hill/mountain environment of Ireland or the UK
- Not a repeat of an already logged walk
- A minimum of 4 hours duration
- The candidate should have personally played an active part in organising and implementing the day
- The route should not solely follow a way marked way or path
- The candidate should have presented themselves with an opportunity to use relevant skills learnt through Mountain Skills training



SAMPLE WALKS

Walk No.1	Date 22/05/16	Status Equal	No. in group 3
Area Wicklow		Maps used OSi Sheet 56 1:50'000	
Weather Rain all day, strong wind gusts on the summit, cool temperatures			
Route description, skills practised and duration Started at the Wicklow Gap car park, climbed Tonelagee, descended to the SE along the Brockaghs, ending in Laragh village. Practiced; timing, pacing, feature recognition and relocation. Duration: 5 hours.			
Walk No.2	Date 15/06/16	Status Group member	No. in group 8
Area Kerry		Maps used Harveys Macgillycuddy's Reeks 1:30'000	
Weather Sunny, dry & warm, some light showers in the afternoon			
Route description, skills practised and duration Parked at Muckcross Lake and climbed Torc Mountain, taking in the two summits and the waterfall. Practiced contour interpretation, distant feature recognition and route choice whilst moving through steeper terrain. Duration: 4 hours			
Walk No.3	Date 20/06/16	Status Solo	No. in group 1
Area Mayo		Maps used OSi Sheet 22 1:50'000	
Weather Very calm, dry and clear for the morning and some cloud in the afternoon			
Route description, skills practised and duration The Croaghnaun horseshoe from Keem around to Keel West. Practicing, route finding, map memory, timing and some compass work in the afternoon. Identified 5 new plants. Duration: 5.5 hours			
Walk No.4	Date 08/08/16	Status Equal	No. in group 4
Area Mourne Mountains		Maps used OSNI Mourne Country 1:25'000	
Weather Grey, overcast, misty and cold.			
Route description, skills practised and duration Parked at the Trassey car park and followed the Trassey track to the Hare's gap. Climbed Slievenagloagh, point 573 and then descended via Lukes Mountain. Practiced, timing to the summit and poor weather navigation in descent. Duration:5 hours			

Walk No.	Date	Status	No. in group
Area		Maps used	
Weather			
Route description, skills practised, duration and any learnings			
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Area		Maps used	
Weather			
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Assessment Check List

The Mountain Skills Assessment is an opportunity for you to demonstrate your knowledge and your ability to perform the basic hillwalking skills required for a safe and enjoyable journey within the hills of Ireland and the UK. Although set as an assessment process with a pass/deferral/fail result, it should also encompass an opportunity for further learning. To help make it a more enjoyable learning experience it is recommended that you ask yourself the following questions before putting yourself forward.

- ✓ Have I completed Mountain Skills 1 and 2 and clearly presented evidence of at least **14 quality walks** in this log book?
- ✓ **Or** have I gained the required level of skill through experience and informal training and clearly presented evidence of at least **28 quality walks** in this log book?
- ✓ Have I got a valid and current **first aid certificate**?
- ✓ Do I have suitable **personal equipment** to look after myself within the normal conditions found in the uplands of the UK and Ireland?
- ✓ Do I currently have the **personal fitness** to spend two full days hillwalking, including a night navigation session?
- ✓ Do I demonstrate **respect for the mountain environment** when I'm hillwalking?
- ✓ Am I confident in my ability to demonstrate any of the **navigational techniques**, presented through the Mountain Skills syllabus, including during poor visibility and at night time?
- ✓ Am I confident in my ability to understand my own personal limitations and make due assessments towards safety when moving across **steeper terrain & broken ground**?
- ✓ Have I developed an interest and understanding of issues, past, present and future that have a bearing on hillwalking in Ireland?
- ✓ Am I looking forward to spending 2 days out with a group of like minded individuals, walking, learning and getting an opportunity to show of my personal mountain skills?

Further Guidance

The Mountain Skills Scheme provides a firm grounding for the fundamental skills required to become a self-sufficient hillwalker within the normal conditions found in the upland regions of Ireland and the UK. Further training towards specialised skills are needed for other aspects of mountaineering including, climbing, scrambling and winter mountaineering and these are also available through approved Providers. Upon successful completion of the Mountain Skills Assessment you will be eligible to register for the Mountain Leader scheme. This scheme trains the individual to lead groups in both the Irish and British hills by building on the skills learnt in the Mountain Skills scheme and combining these with modules on leadership. You can gain further information on the Mountain Leader scheme by visiting www.mountaineering.ie or talking to your Course Provider or the Mountaineering Ireland Training Officer.

Mountaineering Ireland is the representative body for hillwalkers and climbers in Ireland.

Mountaineering Ireland's Mountain Training Board (MTBI) has delegated authority to represent all aspects of Mountain Training and to keep under review all training schemes and awards.

For further information on training schemes and a list of approved Course Providers contact:

training@mountaineering.ie

or visit

www.mountaineering.ie

Mountaineering Ireland
Irish Sport HQ,
National Sports Campus
Blanchardstown
Dublin 15

Telephone: (+353 1) 625 1115

Email: training@mountaineering.ie

