

Safety on via ferratas

10 recommendations of the alpine associations

There are risks involved in the use of via ferratas. Insufficient preparation, inadequate equipment and inappropriate conduct increase the risk of falling. Alpine associations recommend that you train with a qualified expert before following any via ferrata.

1. Plan carefully

Planning is the key to ensuring safe and enjoyable via ferrata tours. Make sure you are fully informed of the difficulty, length, ascend and descend, the weather, and other conditions.

2. Base your goals on your capabilities

If the via ferrata you have chosen is too difficult, it will reduce your enjoyment of the experience and may increase the likelihood of you finding yourself in a dangerous situation.

3. Ensure you have all the equipment you need and that it meets the required standards

Climbing harness, via ferrata set and a helmet. Only by using the equipment correctly and professionally will you have a safer via ferrata experience. In emergencies you should have a first-aid kit and mobile phone at hand (emergency number in Europe in 112).

4. Do not use via ferratas if there is a risk of storm

Thunderstorms endanger people's lives. Rain, wetness and cold increase the risk of falling.

5. Check the wire rope and anchoring equipment thoroughly

Pieces of rock, snow pressure, frost wedging and corrosion can all damage the via ferrata. Do not climb via ferratas which are closed or barred.

6. Check on your partner when climbing

Monitor each other: check that the climbing harnesses, the tie-in with the via ferrata set and helmets are securely in place.

7. Stay an appropriate distance apart

Only one person can move on the cable-segment between two fixed anchors.

8. Clear agreements when you overtake

Communication and care prevent dangerous situations when overtaking others or when you encounter people going in the opposite direction.

9. Watch out for falling rocks

Careful climbing reduces the likelihood of falling rocks.

10. Respect nature and the environment.

Travel on public transport or by car pool. Do not litter and avoid making noise.

Resolved at the General Assembly in September 2012 in Poschiavo, Switzerland.