How High Can You Climb?

Mountaineers can climb about 1000 feet in a day safely (allowing their bodies to adapt to the altitude change). Commonly, they will climb up about 2000 feet in a day and then climb back down to “sleep low”.

How high can you climb? If there isn’t a nearby mountain, climb the stairs!

How to Measure How High You Climb:
First, measure how high the step or riser is, and how many steps to the next floor. Generally steps are about 8 inches high, and about 12 per flight of stairs.

If you multiply the height of a step by the number of steps (e.g., 8 inches x 12 steps = 96 inches) and then divide that number by 12 to get the number of feet (96 ÷ 12 = 8 feet). If your building has multiple floors, you can keep climbing and multiply the # of feet by the number of floors. If there is only one flight of stairs, just follow the mountaineer creed of “climb high and sleep low” as you climb up, then down, then up, then down….. How many feet did you climb up?

Extra Challenge: Wear a packed back pack while you climb to better experience the physical work of mountaineering.

Not into climbing stairs or want to train for the expedition? Remember that Steve jogs and participates in marathons to train for his mountain climbing; he spends about 2 hours each day training. Get a pedometer and count steps as you walk and jog. The length of your stride will determine how many steps equal 1000 feet or a mile, but a good estimate is 2,000 steps equal 1 mile or 5,280 feet. How many feet can you walk or run? Health and wellness professionals recommend 10,000 steps a day or 100 minutes of physical activity. How close are you to meeting this goal on a daily basis?

New Sport Incentive: Tower Running or Stair Running is a relatively new, some say painful, sport that is gaining in popularity. Popular races have been held in skyscrapers around the world, including Tower 42 (920 steps/183 meters) in London, Taipei 101 (2046 steps/448 meters) in Taiwan, Sydney Tower Eye (1,504 steps/260 meters) in Australia, Milad Tower (421 meters) in Malaysia, New York’s Empire State Building (1,576 steps), and Chicago’s Hancock Tower (1,632 steps). The best racers suggest winning tactics of climbing two steps at a time, using the hand rail to ‘pull’ yourself up, and maintaining a constant speed and heart rate.

Extra Challenge: Climb a wall! Many 4-H camps, local schools and community centers have climbing walls where you can test your skills under supervision.