



Commando Course

Leaders Notes Last Update and Review:
25 January 2026

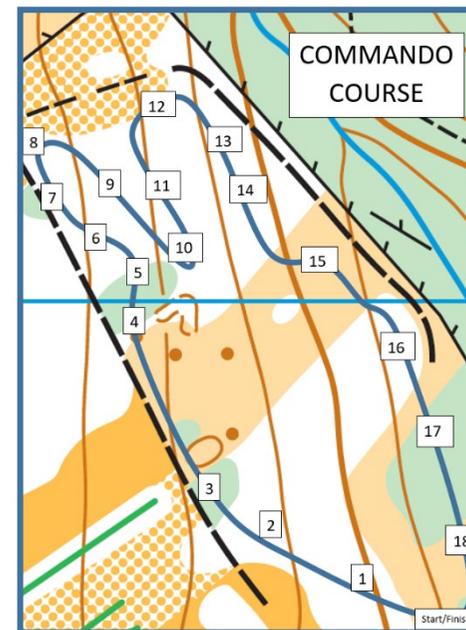
Objective: To challenge groups and individuals both mentally, physically and socially to work together as a team or to work individually to successfully complete the obstacles encountered, developing skills and strategies that will help them in real life. The course is based on experiential, adventure-based learning where education occurs from direct participation in the events. It consists of three stages: **Do** – go and have an experience **Review** – what happened and what can be learned **Plan** – a way to tackle the next round of experience

Location: Down the hill towards the creek on the left-hand side

Risk Assessment: Low/Moderate - Check document and include in planning before starting

Time: Suggested time frame is 1 ½ hours. Spend the first part of the time going around the course, talking about safety at each of the elements, having a go and reflecting on how they went and how they could do it better. They can then work as a team or individually to complete the course and try to better their times

Group Size: Recommended 12-20 people, or larger if you rotate groups through the different activities



Before You Start

1. Check the 3 E's at each element and sanitise participants hands

- **Element** – are the boards ok, splinter free, check wires, bolts etc.
- **Equipment** – Are individuals equipped with appropriate clothing, is footwear sturdy and enclosed, is hair secured, and no jewellery or watches or things are in pockets that could fall out. Sunscreen or insect repellent has been applied if needed.
- **Environment** – Is the area free of debris – sticks, stones, pinecones that a participant could fall on. Is area free of animals including snakes, ants, spiders, echidnas and bees on, under or around the structure and check the weather - Is it safe to continue?

2. Teach S.O.S. to ensure participants move in a deliberate manner when negotiating an element. Reinforce often to keep aware of trip hazards and to slow down movements when transitioning.

Step ON Safely

Step OVER Safely

Step OFF Safely

Go around the course with the group before starting, checking area (3E's), demonstrating techniques and skills required for each element and discussing safety.

3. Teach the Spotting ABCD. Spotting is defined as breaking a person's fall to prevent injury either to the person falling or to the spotter. This is required on some of the elements. The focus is on supporting and protecting the upper body and head. It is an important safety aspect that is shared by the whole group

- **A – Attitude** – check yours and the attitude of each other. Focus is on the participant and do not be distracted by anything while spotting
- **B – Body posture** – knees and elbows bent, feet apart, both side-to-side and front-to-back, fingers together, palms slightly cupped, stay alert and entirely focused on participant being spotted, review the verbal commands

• **C – Communication** between participant and spotters. Each person involved must invoke verbal contract that is encouraging.

• **D – Decision Making** – each person must decide to be consistently safety conscious and deliberately focus on the participant throughout the activity.

Participant	Spotters	Meaning
'Spotters ready!'		I am ready to start
	"Ready name"	I am ready to protect you
'Trusting'		I am ready to proceed with this action as soon as spotters give the go-ahead
	"Go-ahead"	Start

4. Develop your groups set of values or rules of conduct.

These are established and agreed to as a group to use for their time together on the low ropes course. This empowers each group member and helps the group to work toward attaining their goals, regardless of setting or objectives. A suggested contract is outlined below.

Hi Five Values Contract



Source: Ropes Course Facilitator Training Manual (Level 1) New Mexico Military Institute Chapter 3 Ropes Course Philosophy Page 24 - 26, Chapter Six: Low Ropes Course Facilitation Page 51 - 53

Participant's Rights and Responsibilities

	RIGHTS	RESPONSIBILITIES
In the palm of your hand you hold - Courage to choose what is right and to do the Hi-Five	Little Finger - Safety - Both group and personal	
	To be safe and feel safe	To show self-control making sure your actions are sensible and safe while monitoring behaviours and safety violations of others in the group
	Ring Finger - Commitment - made to yourself and the group	
	To participate in program activities by my choice	To accept the choices of other group members
	To do my best	To support and encourage other group members to achieve their best
	Not to be exposed to undue pressure from other group members	Be willing to share myself with others
	Middle Finger - Respect - Each person gives consideration to both personal and group goals by giving supportive and helpful suggestions.	
	To be treated as a respected individual	To preserve the confidentiality of other group members
	Pointer Finger - Critical Thinking/Goal Setting - individuals use rational thoughts and creative ideas to help others succeed. They are focused on developing a plan and accomplishing the task.	
	To express my opinions, thoughts, creative ideas and feelings to help everyone succeed.	To help develop a plan and accomplish the task. To speak only for myself and <u>not</u> other group members.
	Thumb - Support and Fun - Individuals value all members and are considerate of their feelings.	
	To celebrate personal and team success	To ask for what I want and need
	To feel valued as an individual and team member	To be considerate of my team and their feelings
	To be myself (Thumbs up mentality)	To observe the rules especially safety

Ready to Roll – Enjoy the Activities (You can do all of these or select ones best suited to your group and the skills you want to focus on)

Element Name	Safety Considerations	Do	Review	Variations to Activities
1. Balance Beams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Carefully step on and off the beam - Spotters bottom side of each Beam - Remain on one beam from start to finish (do not jump across to the other beam) - One person crossing a beam at a time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure spotters are ready to go - Step up onto the Beam and walking along the beam make your way to the end. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which element did you find difficult? Why? 	<p>1. Time Trials: Participants race through CAREFULLY to get their best time</p> <p>2. Race: Two participants at a time will compete to make it to the finish line first</p> <p>3a. Relay: Similar to the race except there are two teams as the one pair finishes the commando course they tag the next team mate who then proceeds to complete the course to tag the next team mate. The winning team is the team to get all their members through first</p> <p>3b. Large group Relay alternative: Instead of meeting the next team member at the end of the course have them located at various spots throughout the course. E.g. every 2 elements switch team member</p> <p>4. Sampler: pick an element here or there and turn it into a group activity helping each other learn or refine the technique. Or be creative and invent your own techniques. Be sure to let the Spring beach staff know if you come up with a good alternative.</p> <p>5. Hardcore: After each element do five or more push-ups/sit-ups. Are you tough enough?</p> <p>6. The Commando: Was Hardcore to easy? Do number 5. Hardcore with a backpack loaded with 5-10kg Do you have what it takes!?</p>
2. Over under	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible rough spots may cause abrasions - Do not walk on top of element. - No jumping down from the top 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Going over the High beam then under the low beam and continue to the end. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which element was the easiest? - Which element was your favourite? Why? 	
3. Tarzans Crossing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One participant on the rope at a time. - No pushing the participant on the rope - Make sure landing area is clear before attempting element. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grab the rope and swing to the other side. Be sure to let go so you can land safely. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are some ways you could improve your time? 	
4. Hole in Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inspect inside tyre for wildlife eg. Snakes, Spiders, ants etc. - No diving through the tyre. - Make sure exit area is clear of branches and rocks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Climb up and through the tyre then lower yourself down on the other side. - As a group pass each person through the tyre. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What did you think of the techniques that you used? - Can you think of other techniques that you could use on any of the elements that could make them easier? 	
5. The Crawl	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No climbing on or pulling on net. - Clear area of branches - Make sure there is no wildlife eg. Ants, spiders, echidnas etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Crawl along the ground under the net from one end to the other. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are some things you learnt from this activity? 	
6. Side Climb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spotter is required for each person on this element. - Maximum of two participants on the element at one time. - Check holds for spiders, ants. Remove wildlife from the immediate area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure spotter is ready to go. - Using the hand and foot holds, cross the wall to the other side. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What was something you learnt about yourself? - If you could change an element which one would you change? - What change would you make to it? Why? 	

Activities Continued

Element Name	Safety Considerations	Do	Review Suggestions	Variations to Activities
7. Funnel Web	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No stretching or pulling on the cord. (Participants can make contact with cord when passing through element) - Maximum two people passing through element at a time - Make sure there is no wildlife eg. Ants, spiders, etc 	Make your way through the web touching the web as little as possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which element did you find difficult? Why? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Time Trials: Participants race through CAREFULLY to get their best time 2. Race: Two participants at a time will compete to make it to the finish line first 3a. Relay: Similar to the race except there are two teams as the one pair finishes the commando course they tag the next team mate who then proceeds to complete the course to tag the next team mate. The winning team is the team to get all their members through first 3b. Large group Relay alternative: Instead of meeting the next team member at the end of the course have them located at various spots throughout the course. E.g. every 2 elements switch team member 4. Sampler: pick an element here or there and turn it into a group activity helping each other learn or refine the technique. Or be creative and invent your own techniques. Be sure to let the Spring beach staff know if you come up with a good alternative. 5. Hardcore: After each element do five or more push-ups/sit-ups. Are you tough enough? 6. The Commando: Was it Hardcore or too easy? Do number 5. Hardcore with a backpack loaded with 5-10kg Do you have what it takes!?
8. Monkey Bars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No Climbing on top of the monkey bars. - Maximum two participants on the element at one time. - drop down from the last bar carefully to prevent injury. - do not walk underneath monkey bars while it is in use. 	- Jump up and grab the first bar. Then swing from bar to bar until you reach the end. Once at the end drop down onto the ground and continue to the next element.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which element was the easiest? - Which element was your favourite? Why? - What are some ways you could improve your time? 	
9. The Wall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use the steps provided to get down off the wall (No jumping down from the top of the wall) - No standing or walking on the top of the wall - Make sure there is no wildlife eg. Ants, spiders, etc 	Ascend the flat side of the wall. Once on top descend the other side of the wall using the steps provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What did you think of the techniques that you used? - Can you think of other techniques that you could use on any of the elements that could make them easier? 	
10. Stepping Stones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aim to step in the middle of each stepping stone as to prevent ankle injury - The area on the outside of the track is to remain clear to prevent collision in the event that a participant comes off the stepping stones 	- Starting at the first stone, stepping from one to the other to reach the other end.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are some things you learnt from this activity? - What was something you learnt about yourself? 	
11. Cargo Net	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do not jump off the sides or use the poles to help climb the net. Participants are to climb in the middle of the supporting poles - No walking along or standing on the top of the A-frame. - Maximum of two participants on the net at one time - Make sure there is no wildlife eg. Ants, spiders, etc - no swinging from the underside of the net 	Climb up the net to the top of the A-frame then make your way down to the bottom using the net on the other side.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If you could change an element which one would you change? - What change would you make to it? Why? 	

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Activities Continued

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12. Zig Zag	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do not climb on the rocks - No jumping off or between rocks - Make sure there is no wildlife eg. Ants, spiders, snakes etc 	Make your way through the rocks from the uphill side to the downhill side	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which element did you find difficult? Why? - Which element was the easiest? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Time Trials: Participants race through CAREFULLY to get their best time 2. Race: Two participants at a time will compete to make it to the finish line first 3a. Relay: Similar to the race except there are two teams as the one pair finishes the commando course they tag the next team mate who then proceeds to complete the course to tag the next team mate. The winning team is the team to get all their members through first 3b. Large group Relay alternative: Instead of meeting the next team member at the end of the course have them located at various spots throughout the course. E.g. every 2 elements switch team member 4. Sampler: pick an element here or there and turn it into a group activity helping each other learn or refine the technique. Or be creative and invent your own techniques. Be sure to let the Spring beach staff know if you come up with a good alternative. 6. Hardcore: After each element do five or more push-ups/sit-ups. Are you tough enough? 6. The Commando: Was Hardcore to easy? Do number 5. Hardcore with a backpack loaded with 5-10kg Do you have what it takes!?
13. Tunnels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No climbing onto tunnels - Make sure there is no wildlife eg. Ants, insects, spiders, snakes etc - Be careful when entering and exiting not to bump your head. 	Crawl through the tunnels from one end to the other.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which element was your favourite? Why? - What are some ways you could improve your time? 	
14. Rope Traverse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a possibility of rope burn on this element. - Make sure there is no wildlife eg. Ants, spiders, etc. - No climbing onto the top of the frame -Maximum 1 participant on each rope. <p>Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LEgOSIT87bY</p>	Reach up grab the rope. Then bring your legs up and cross your feet over the rope. Now pull/push your way along the rope till you reach the other side.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What did you think of the techniques that you used? - Can you think of other techniques that you could use on any of the elements that could make them easier? 	
15. Wobbly Bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Carefully walk across bridge as feet can get caught between the boards. - No jumping or running on the bridge. 	Step from board to board to make your way across this element.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are some things you learnt from this activity? 	
16. Hurdles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Go carefully to prevent tripping and possible injury. - Do not step from one log to the next. - Make sure there is no wildlife eg. Ants, spiders, snakes etc 	Make your way to the end by stepping, hopping or climbing over the logs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What was something you learnt about yourself? - If you could change an element which one would you change? 	
17. The Weaver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible abrasions from rough spots. - Do not walk along top of element. - Do not jump down from element. - Do not use head and neck when doing the element <p>Watch: www.youtube.com/watch?v=YDXnimirWt18</p>	Participants start by sitting/lying on the first log, then weave their bodies through the rails without touching the ground going under, then over the poles to the end. Use their arms and legs to hook onto the logs and pull/push through not their heads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What change would you make to it? Why? 	

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