

Mount Shuksan: Women's Mountaineering Skills Seminar

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IMG's Skills Seminars are our most in depth, hands-on training programs, offering a generous amount of time to build your proficiency in critical mountaineering skills including glacier travel and crevasse rescue. Our women's programs are equally suitable as an introduction course for first time climbers, or a comprehensive refresher course for veterans of past climbing adventures looking for a spectacular climb and in-depth mountaineering curriculum. Our primary goal during our Women's Skills Seminar is to build your competence and confidence in the mountains while offering a unique team dynamic, building lasting relationships, and having a great time on an amazing adventure.

Throughout the seminar, your guides will delve into great detail during the training, lectures, informal discussions, and hands-on skills sessions to allow you to comprehensively understand the topics covered. At the end of the program we will make a summit bid as a team, utilizing the training we have learned during the seminar.



Safety is our number one priority. We make no guarantees with respect to the program objectives. Many circumstances, including weather and abilities of yourself or other climbers may inhibit you from reaching the summit. Our goal is to give each of our customers the best experience we possibly can, regardless of the weather, route conditions, or time of year.

Mount Shuksan is one of the highest non-volcanic peaks in the Pacific Northwest at 9,127 feet. It is also one of the most strikingly beautiful peaks in the United States, which makes it one of the most photographed mountains in the world. Our approach to Mt. Shuksan has it all for the aspiring mountaineer: A beautiful hike through dense forest and up into the alpine zone will lead to the base of permanent snow. Shuksan's varied and world-class terrain make it the perfect training ground for our women's mountaineering course which culminates in a summit bid of this breathtaking peak.

Our route of ascent to the summit is via the Sulphide Glacier, the most direct route up the mountain with the fewest technical difficulties. The broad rolling expanse of the Sulphide Glacier provides a moderate roped glacial approach to the final 600-foot rock summit. The final summit pyramid involves climbing steep snow in early summer, or later in the summer months it is fourth-class rock scrambling with a few low fifth-class moves. Your guides will take you through the comprehensive trainings and practical skills sessions necessary to successfully and safely reach the summit of Mt. Shuksan, providing a classic Northwest mountain experience.

Possible Course Objectives:

- Cramponing
- Belaying and rappelling
- Route finding and navigation
- Glacier travel and rope management
- Crevasse rescue haul systems
- Anchor systems in ice and snow
- Short roping and short pitching
- Ascending and descending fixed lines
- Glacier and snow camping and shelters

Prerequisites:

There are no specific climbing prerequisites for this program. All that is required is an eagerness to learn, a significant base of cardiovascular physical fitness, and previous experience carrying an overnight pack. You will be expected to carry this weight over the course of many hours each day. For training suggestions please review the information provided on our [Training for Rainier page](#). This is a novice climb for those interested in learning elements of travel on big, glaciated mountains. Technical training is conducted during the pre-climb orientation and continually throughout the climb.

While the Shuksan Sulphide Climbs are suitable for novice climbers with little or no previous climbing experience, this program does require adequate fitness and endurance training in order to be successful.

Dates: May – September (Please see the IMG website for [available dates](#).)

Land cost: \$1,600 **Client to Guide Ratio:** 2:1

Trip Length: 4 days (this program commences at 8:00 a.m. on Day 1)

Private Shuksan Sulphide Climbs are available on your own schedule, extended itineraries are available on request.

Cost includes:

- IMG's world-renowned guide staff
- All training curriculum and instruction
- Round trip transportation from IMG Headquarters to the start/end of the climb. *Note that this is subject to change based on Covid restrictions
- Group equipment including tents, stoves, fuel, climbing ropes and group hardware
- National Park entrance and climbing permits
- Hot meals (breakfast and dinner) and hot drinks (coffee, tea, cocoa). *Note that this is subject to change based on Covid restrictions

Cost Does Not Include:

- Personal gear (see [equipment list](#) for full details)
- Lodging the evening prior to the start of the climb or after the end of the program
- Lunch food and mountain snacks. Please refer to our [food suggestions page](#) for more details.
- [Travel Insurance](#)

Mt. Shuksan Sulphide Glacier Route Itinerary

This itinerary is approximate and subject to change due to conditions.

Day 1: The group meets at the Sedro Woolley Ranger Station in the North Cascades at 8:00 a.m. After check-in and a final pack check and issue of team equipment the group drives together to the trailhead. The trailhead is approximately 2,500 feet in elevation. The climb starts in dense forest and climbs up into the alpine zone to camp at approximately 6,000 feet on the edge of the Sulphide Glacier. A long day with 50 lb. packs, 5-7 hours in duration, probably the hardest day of the trip.

Day 2: Training day. After a leisurely breakfast, the team heads out to the nearby slopes for a day of training in crampon skills, ice axe arrest, roped glacier travel, snow anchors and crevasse rescue. A full and informative day.

Day 3: Summit day. The team will wake up early for an Alpine Start, don crampons, harnesses and ropes before beginning ascent of the Sulphide Glacier. The glacier is generally moderate with some navigation around crevasses required. The team will often break at the base of the summit pyramid and gear up for the final 600 foot push to the very top. This final ascent involves steeper (30-40 degree) steps kicked in snow or some sloping 3rd class rock to scramble up belayed by the rope. A full day getting to the summit and back, perhaps 6 hours up and half that time in descent.

Day 4: Up after dawn and a casual pack up of camp, then hike back down to the trailhead in an easy three hours. The team can make plans for lunch at the nearest town, then back to greater Seattle by early evening.