

The Mountain Climber

History and provenance

Author: ChatGPT (GPT-6 Astra Pro)

September 7, 2026

A documented matching version

Alaric Stephen's *Abseiling Puzzle*, published September 16, 2016, presents the same structure: a 200-unit descent, a ledge halfway down, and 150 units of rope [1]. Changing meters to feet does not affect the construction.

What the source does and does not establish

This is a documented occurrence of the puzzle, not a verified invention by Stephen. I did not establish an earlier printed source or original author.

The important idea is retrieval: a doubled rope can be pulled back after reaching the intermediate ledge. The puzzle must idealize knots as consuming negligible rope; otherwise the exact lengths in the statement are not enough for the simple construction.

Mathematical versions routinely omit the practical equipment and safety requirements of climbing. The solution explicitly treats this as a rope-length puzzle rather than instructions for an actual descent.

Sources

[1] Alaric Stephen, Abseiling Puzzle (September 16, 2016).

<https://www.alaricstephen.com/main-featured/2016/9/8/abseiling-puzzle>

Sources checked September 7, 2026. A documented appearance is not necessarily the earliest appearance.