

SAC Alpine Grade Scale

Schweizer Alpen-Club SAC
Club Alpin Suisse
Club Alpino Svizzero
Club Alpin Svizzer



1. The combined rating provides the overall grade of the route.
2. From WS up, + or – may be added to further define the grade.
3. In the case of clearly defined character changes within a tour, an extra description may be added, e.g. "ZS + to the summit ridge; WS thereafter".
4. If one section makes an easier tour overall more difficult, 1/3 of a grade is added (e.g. a WS + becomes a ZS-), in the case of several harder sections, 2/3 of a grade are added (e.g. S + becomes SS).
5. The UIAA scale (with Roman numerals) applies to the climbing sections.
6. At a grade of AS and especially with EX, the leader basically has one choice of where to go.

Grade	Criteria			Example
	Rock	UIAA-Grade	Snow and glacier	
L	Easy terrain, e.g. scree slope, simple rock ridges,	from I	Easy firm slopes, low crevasse risk	Piz Tschierva, East ridge of Wildhorn from Wildhorn hut Bishorn from the Tracuit hut
- WS +	Mostly walking terrain, surefootedness required, climbing obvious and problem-free	from II	Usually not very steep, possible short steep passages, some crevasse risk	Piz Palü, Normal route Balmhorn, Normal route Weissmies, Normal route
- ZS +	Security aids often necessary (bolts, rope, etc.), longer and exposed climbing sections	from III	Steeper slopes, occasional pitched climbing, high crevasse risk, small bergschrund	Piz Bernina, Biancograt Mönch West Ridge Matterhorn Hörnli ridge
- S +	Good route finding skills and efficient rope handling required, long climbing sections where belaying is required	from IV	Very steep slopes, mostly pitched climbing, high crevasse risk, large bergschrund	Piz Palü, E-Pillar of E-Summit Eiger, Mittelegi ridge Weisshorn, Schaligrat
- SS +	Continuous pitched climbing, persistently demanding.	from V	Persistently steep terrain, solid pitched climbing	Piz Bernina, Westface direct Doldenhorn, East ridge Dent Blanche, North ridge
AS	Technical wall climbs that require great commitment	from VI	Very steep with vertical sections, ice climbing	Eiger, Nordwand (Heckmair) Matterhorn, Zmuttnase
EX	Extremely steep, often overhanging wall climbing	VII +	Steep/extreme ice or mixed climbing	Eiger, Nordwand (various routes towards the western side)

Additional information may be added for specific tours: e.g. challenging orientation, difficult to protect, loose rock, especially committing.