

Conditions for Obtaining a Certificate of Completion of Basic Training for the Purpose of Practising Low-Difficulty Mountaineering in Tatra National Park – Basic Information

A climber who intends to practise low-difficulty mountaineering (routes graded UIAA I-II+) in Tatra National Park (TANAP) must, in accordance with the TANAP Visitor Regulations, among other requirements, present a certificate confirming completion of basic training. Based on the provisions of the Visitor Regulations, the Slovak Mountaineering Association JAMES (hereinafter also referred to as SHS JAMES) has established the following conditions for obtaining this certificate:

1. Obtaining the certificate through successful completion of basic training

The basic training will be conducted in the form of a course held in an environment corresponding to the character of the high-mountain setting. The course will be designed as a practical-theoretical training programme whose content will include a prescribed minimum scope, duration, and method of verifying the participant's preparedness. The detailed course curriculum will be defined in a document prepared by the Methodological and Safety Commission of SHS JAMES (hereinafter MBK) in cooperation with Slovak Tourists Association (KST) and the Slovak Alpine Tourist Association (SVTS). Courses will be conducted by authorised persons pursuant to Section 6 of Act No. 440/2015 Coll. on Sport, holding the qualifications "Instructor of Low-Difficulty Mountaineering, Qualification Level 1 and 2" and "Mountaineering Instructor, Qualification Level 3".

To obtain the certificate for practising low-difficulty mountaineering in TANAP under summer conditions, a climber must complete summer training of at least 4 days. For practising low-difficulty mountaineering under winter conditions, a climber must complete winter training of at least 4 days. The final examination must be successfully passed.

2. Obtaining the certificate through skills verification

Within the climbing and alpine-tourism communities there are experienced climbers who already master the techniques required for safe mountaineering activities, including the specifics of climbing at lower difficulty levels (routes graded UIAA I-II+). They are proficient in route finding, belaying, protection placement, descent techniques, rappelling, first aid and rescue procedures, follow nature-protection principles, and are able to assess both their own abilities and mountain hazards. However, the TANAP Visitor Regulations require proof of completion of basic training for low-difficulty mountaineering.

For this group of climbers, SHS JAMES provides the possibility of obtaining the certificate in a shortened form consisting primarily of verification of the climber's skills and knowledge, on the basis of which the instructor will assess the climber's competence for safe performance of low-difficulty mountaineering activities (routes graded UIAA I-II+). The shortened course will have a duration of two days.

To obtain the certificate for summer conditions, the climber must complete the shortened summer training; for winter conditions, the shortened winter training must be completed. The final examination must be successfully passed.

3. Obtaining the certificate on the basis of completed mountaineering education

Graduates of mountaineering training conducted up to and including 2023 in accordance with SHS JAMES methodology may apply for the issuance of the certificate for practising low-difficulty mountaineering. Depending on the type of completed training, the climber may apply for either the summer or winter certificate.

A condition for successful assessment of the application is that the training was conducted by an authorised person (Mountaineering Instructor, Qualification Level 3, or an equivalent qualification issued by another national mountaineering association) with a minimum duration of 4 days, and that complete documentation proving the relevance of the training is provided. Proof of successful completion must be attached to the application. The final decision on approval of the certificate by this method shall be made by the MBK.

4. Obtaining the certificate based on approval by the MBK of SHS JAMES

For a group of performance-level alpine climbers, SHS JAMES allows the MBK, upon application and assessment, to grant the certificate on the basis of the assumption that such climbers possess sufficient knowledge, experience, and skills for mountaineering activities, including terrain of lower difficulty (routes graded UIAA I-II+).

This group includes climbers who have long demonstrated performance through their activity in the High Tatras. A performance climber may apply for a summer certificate by documenting 10 summer alpine climbs of at least UIAA Grade III, and for a winter certificate by documenting 10 winter alpine climbs of at least UIAA Grade III.

5. Obtaining the certificate without assessment

For a limited group of climbers, SHS JAMES may, upon application, issue the certificate without further assessment, based on the assumption of their extensive experience and skills for mountaineering activities, including terrain of lower difficulty.

This group includes:

- Mountaineering Instructor, Qualification Level 3 – may apply for both summer and winter certificates.
 - Traditional Ski-Mountaineering Instructor, Qualification Level 2 or 3 – may apply for the winter certificate.
 - National team member in alpinism (including former members) – may apply for both summer and winter certificates.
 - Former High-Mountain Tourism (VHT) Instructor, Qualification Level 1 or 2 – may apply for both summer and winter certificates.
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Issuance of the certificate

The final certificate confirming eligibility for movement in low-difficulty mountaineering terrain as defined by the TANAP Visitor Regulations is issued by the SHS JAMES Secretariat as follows:

- For SHS JAMES members – upon submission of an application and proof of completed training, or confirmation by the MBK.
- For members of other national mountaineering associations – upon submission of an application https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc5sZ5ON9I2ioEICjMLORrNvQrkSvR-MXs1UzeV_KjCmKtcCg/viewform , proof of completed training or MBK confirmation, registration in the SHS JAMES database, and payment of a registration fee of €20.

The certificate is issued by recording it in the internal SHS JAMES database. Confirmation of completed training will be readable from the plastic membership card or from a certificate card (for members of other national associations) and is subject to a one-time administrative fee of €20. For authorised persons (nature wardens and others), confirmation of completed training will be accessible from the issued plastic cards via a mobile application. The certificate is issued for an indefinite period.