



MY STORY: SIR EDMUND HILLARY

Mt. Everest Glossary

Want to become an expert on Mt. Everest and mountain climbing? First you need to know the language of climbing.

Altitude: Height above sea level.

Assault team: Two or more climbers who attempt to reach a mountain summit.

Avalanche: A mass of snow, ice, or rock pouring down a mountainside.

Base camp: A central setup of tents where food, equipment, and medical supplies are stored; a relay site for climbers.

Buddhist: (adj.), Based on the teachings of Buddha; (n.), a member of the religion that adheres to the teachings of Buddha.

Col: A depression or pass in a mountain range.

Cornice: An overhanging mass of hardened snow at the edge of a ridge, usually formed by wind.

Cwm: (pronounced coom) A valley on the side of a hill or mountain.

Crampon: Metal frame with spikes worn on hiking boots for ice climbs.

Crevasse: A deep, open crack in a glacier.

Icefall: A cascade of ice that results when a glacier descends over a changing slope of ground beneath.

Ice pick: (also called ice axe) A tool for chopping ice or securing oneself while climbing over ice.

Oxygen system: A system of oxygen tanks carried by climbers. A "closed system" allows climbers to breathe pure oxygen from the tank; an "open system" allows climbers to breathe a mixture of pure oxygen and outside air.

Porter: A person who carries supplies.

Sherpa: A clan of people originally from Tibet who live along Nepal's mountainous eastern border with Tibet.

Sirdar: A Sherpa leader on a mountaineering or trekking expedition.

Summit: The highest point.

Traverse: (v.), To cross a mountain slope; (n.), a steep slope that has to be climbed from side to side.