

READING

1 BEFORE YOU READ

What do you think El Capitan is? And what do you think Alex Honnold does?



Alex Honnold

El Capitan

Have you ever seen anything like this?

1. Free solo climbing

Q: What is free solo climbing?

Free solo climbing is a form of rock climbing. The climber climbs alone, without ropes or other equipment. It is very dangerous. Only 1% of climbers try it.

Q: Who is Alex Honnold?

He's one of the best free solo climbers in the world. On June 3, 2017, he did a free solo climb of El Capitan.

Q: What is El Capitan?

It's a **vertical rock formation** in Yosemite National Park, California. It's about 3,200 feet high (more than 900 meters). Someone once said, "Climbing El Capitan is like climbing glass."

Q: How many times has Alex Honnold climbed El Capitan?

He climbed El Capitan more than 40 times with ropes and a partner before he tried it free solo.

2. Filming the climb

Free Solo is the film of Alex Honnold's climb of El Capitan. It won the Oscar for best documentary in 2019. A climber named Jimmy Chin and his wife Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi directed it.

There were a lot of challenges making the film. First of all, people can't use **drones** in Yosemite. So the directors needed **camera operators** with experience in both filming and climbing. The crew filmed Honnold on El Capitan for two years before the climb, when he was practicing with ropes. The camera operators often had to climb quickly ahead of Honnold and be careful not to get in each other's **shots**.

Sound was a problem, too. They wanted to hear Honnold **breathing**, as well as the sounds of his hands and feet on the cliff, but he didn't want to wear a **microphone** on his back. They put it in his **bag of chalk** instead.

Free Solo is one of the most exciting documentaries about climbing. Go and see it!



2 Read the article. Correct the information in the statements.

1. About half of climbers try free solo climbing.
2. Honnold practiced for two weeks before doing the free solo climb of El Capitan.
3. *Free Solo* won the Oscar for best movie in 2019.
4. The camera operators used drones for the filming.
5. Honnold didn't want to wear a microphone on his ankle.