

# **Considerations for the Client When Teaching SRT**



# Cave Instructor Certificate: Considerations for the Client

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# **Cave Instructor Certificate: Considerations for the Client**

## **Introduction**

This came from a presentation, at a CIC update workshop, by Jo White aimed at considerations when teaching SRT to women. It is, however, reasonable to think about these issues when coaching anyone, especially those that may be a bit less confident or have additional needs.

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Published June 2026

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## Experiences

Cavers have reported that, during SRT training sessions, and generally when doing SRT and rigging in caves, they have felt:

- Self-conscious
- Underestimated
- Lacking confidence (which can also lead to a lack of representation)
- Uncomfortable
- Unwilling to speak up/ ask questions
- Left behind in larger groups
- Less confident and experienced than their peers (especially compared to men)
- Unwilling to take a lead
- Allowing more confident/ louder people to take a lead

## Equipment

- There is a greater variety of equipment available than there used to be. This means that we can allow people to try different things and feel what works best for them. Consider chest harnesses and sit harnesses, find which are the most comfortable/ efficient for each caver.
- Think about whether there are any extra bits of SRT equipment, or adaptations to equipment, that might help (e.g. King crabs, a sling for passing awkward re-belay, extendable cowstails etc.).
- Make sure that cowstails, security cords, harnesses are correctly fitting before starting. This may change between a surface session and then going underground.
- Struggles with oversuit sizing is common amongst women who might find this off-putting.

## Representation

Consider the importance of having a range of people and gender represented amongst SRT trainers. This is not easy as there is a limit in the number of trainers available, but we could consider, for example, female trainers for a female group.

## Techniques

- When rigging think about user friendly rigging. E.g. extend mid traverse alpine butterfly knots to lower the traverse line for shorter people.
- Consider using King Crabs to make difficult Y hangs easier.

Supporting document for the CIC Scheme: Considerations for the Client When Teaching SRT

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- Lower Y hangs, King crabs etc can all help with shorter and less strong group members and therefore make the instructor's life easier in the long run.
- Bolt installers should consider shorter cavers when placing bolts where possible.

### **Thoughts on how to manage the training to improve client experiences during SRT training?**

(Relevant for women, but also good practice for SRT training in general)

- Train in small groups (suggested 1 trainer to 4 participants)
- Don't move too fast and give people time.
- Consider approaches for different teaching and learning styles; remember different people learn in diverse ways. Good, real time, demonstrations, good separate explanations. Allow multiple practices to consolidate learning.
- Encourage quieter and less confident cavers to take a lead.
- Consider difficulties cavers might experience.
- Make sure everyone in your group is involved.
- Be:
  - Patient
  - Calm
  - Encouraging
  - Positive
  - Non-competitive