

# TECHNIQUES, TRAINING & GEAR REVIEWS.

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## Petzl Stop

Almost a year ago I purchased a Petzl Stop. I was required to, as this is the required descender in the NSW Cave Rescue Squad. I had been using a rappel rack previously for caving.

I have found the Petzl Stop to be my new preferred choice of descender for caving now, as it provides greater flexibility. The Stop is now the most commonly used descender for caving worldwide.

### Advantages are:

1. Easier to pass rebelay.
2. Assisted braking function.
3. A carabiner can be used to eliminate the self braking function. This is handy for very tight rappels.
4. A carabiner can be used to add friction if required on rappel. This does however change the brake hand position from below the waist to above the descender. This can take some getting used to.
5. Can be used to ascend a rope for a small distance. A foot loop and hand ascender is also required.
6. Can be used as a capture device in a haul system.
7. Rope can be installed without removing from the harness.
8. Easy to lock off.
9. Individual parts can be replaced as they wear out.
10. Can be used to rappel a weighted rope. This is for emergency situations only and requires a prussik or similar backup.

### Disadvantages are:

1. The carabiner attachment point could be a little larger to allow the locking part on the carabiner to pass through.
2. Attaching the rope can be a little confusing at first.
3. Can only be used on single ropes.

Its heat dissipation is good as it has a good surface area. Not as good as a rappel rack though.

A big issue I have heard many stories about is people squeezing the handle in an emergency, eliminating the assisted braking function and having fast rappels resulting in injury. This is a natural reaction. It takes a bit of re-learning to let go of the handle in an emergency.

### Technical info:

Safe Working Load = 150kg

Weight = 326g

Cost = from \$90

There is a similar device from Petzl called the "Simple". It is the same device, but without the auto braking function. The only real advantage is it is slightly lighter.

My next months review will be on the rappel rack.

**JSSS**



Photo 1: Petzl Stop in closed position.  
Photo: Chris Curtis.



Photo 2:  
Petzl Stop in open position.  
Photo: Chris Curtis.



Photo 3:  
Petzl Stop in open position with rope fitted.  
Photo: Chris Curtis.



Photo 4: Petzl Stop in closed position with rope fitted.  
Photo: Chris Curtis.