

## THE SRT PICK OFF.

*Chris Curtis.*

A person has become stuck on rope and is unconscious. You are now required to go and get them down the pitch as quickly as possible. Taking them back up the rope will almost always take longer.

### **Patient on autostop - Access from above.**

1. You can either down prussik or abseil down to them. The rope will be tight so abseiling down to them required rigging any bobbin style descender as per the image below. The rope below **MUST** remain loaded at all times or your descender will not function and you will drop unless you have a backup prussik cord attached. (Photo 1)
2. Clip your short cowstail to their descender.
3. Lock off the descender.
4. Down prussik until you are hanging from the patient.
5. Remove your ascenders.
6. Unlock the descender and abseil down.

### **Patient on autostop - Access from below.**

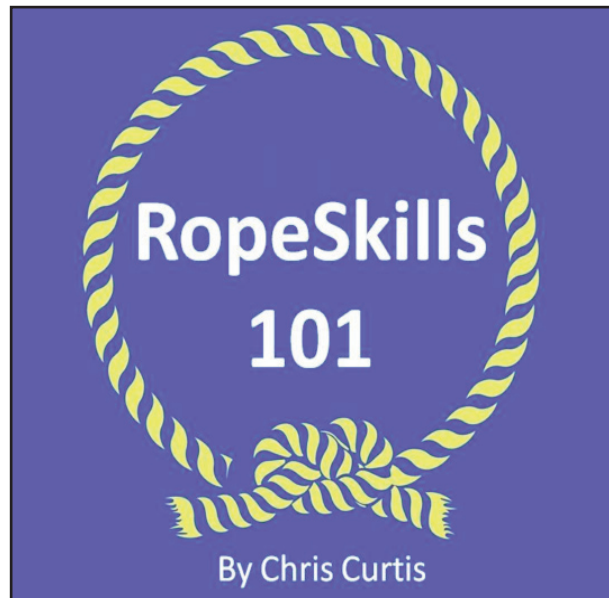
1. Prussik up using the conventional SRT method to the patient.
2. Clip your short cowstail to their descender.
3. Lock off the descender.
4. Remove your ascenders.
5. Abseil down.

### **Patient on ascent – access from above.**

If the caver is on the descender and has auto stopped, for example they are on a Petzl Stop or similar device with an assisted braking function, follow the below steps.

1. Prussik up using the conventional SRT method to the patient.
2. Attach your short cowstail to the cavers descender.
3. Remove you ascending gear so you are hanging on their descender.
4. Release the brake on their descender and slowly abseil to the ground. Ensure you use a friction carabiner.

If the injured caver loses control of the rope or is unconscious and is on a non-assisted braking device, they will continue to descend the rope until they either: hit the ground, get caught at a rebelay or they could get caught at a redirect if the rope is



**Photo 1:** Bobbin Style Descender.

**Photo:** *Chris Curtis.*

tied off at the base or another rebelay below. If the rope isn't tied off below a redirect, the caver will still descend to the ground and simply pull the rope back up and through the redirect.



### Patient on ascent – access from below.

1. Prussik up using the conventional SRT method to the patient.
2. Release the patients footloop and foot ascender if in use.
3. Move the rope from between the patients legs to the right hand side of the caver.
4. Attach the patients short cowstail to the D-ring on your harness.
5. Ascend past the patients chest ascender so your chest ascender is above the patients.
6. Remove the patients long cowstail from the hand ascender.
7. Attach a pulley to the patients hand ascender.
8. Remove your hand ascender from your long cowstail and store the hand ascender.
9. Run your long cowstail through the pulley and attach to the top hole on the patients chest ascender.
10. Push the hand ascender up until the long cowstail pulls tight.
11. Attach a descender hard under the patients chest ascender and lock off. Ensure a friction biner is used.
12. Attach your footloop to the hand ascender.
13. Stand up and remove your chest ascender.
14. As you sit down, push your knees up under the patient to the patient and release the other cowstail.
15. Stand back up to allow the patient to load the descender.
16. Remove the long cowstail and pulley.
17. Sit back down until you are hanging from the patient. You may need to down prussik.
18. Unlock the descender and abseil down. You can leave the hand ascender in place if you choose to. (Photos 2, 3, 4).

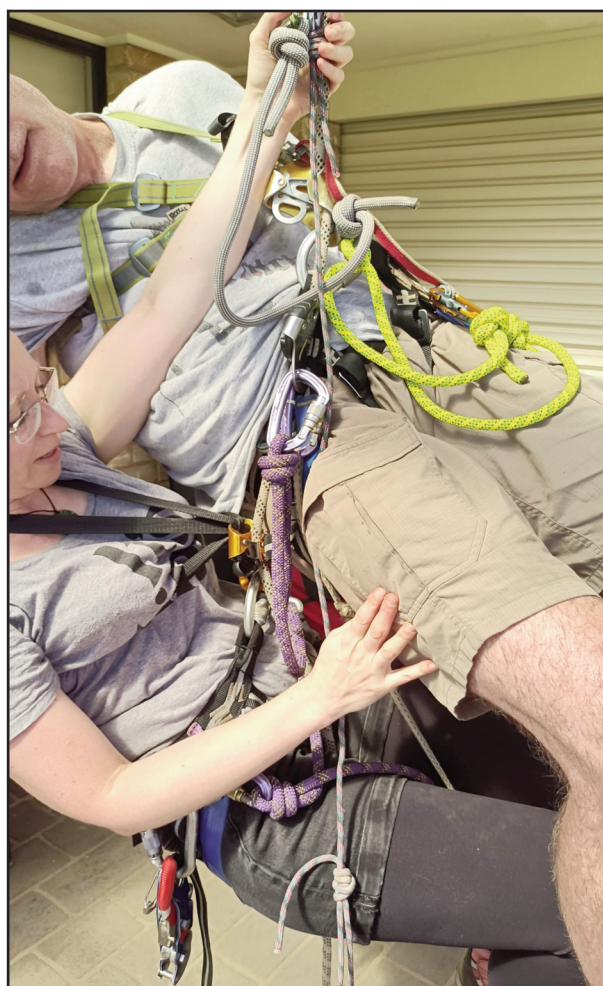
### Tips

- Remove anything that won't be used from the front of the patients or your harnesses. Put it on the side of the harnesses out of the way.
- Keep everything tidy and check every step. It's easy to get things tangled up.

*JSSS*

**Photo 3:** Patient on ascent – access from below.

**Photo:** Chris Curtis. —>



**Photo 2:** Patient on ascent – access from below.

**Photo:** Chris Curtis.







**Photo 4:** Patient on ascent – access from below. **Photo:** Chris Curtis.  
*Journal of The Sydney Speleological Society, 2023, 67 (7):191*