

## American Decimal Rating Scale - Yosemite Decimal System

Rating	Description
5.0 - 5.4	<p>Relatively Easy</p> <p>Most people in good physical condition can climb these routes without practice and without specialized footwear. Most climbs in this range are steep-angle slabs and not true vertical walls.</p>
5.5 to 5.8+	<p>Intermediate</p> <p>May require very good physical conditioning, balance, and coordination. Specialized shoes may be necessary. Few people can climb 5.8 without unusual natural ability or plenty of practice. Some locations that incorporate the old Yosemite Decimal System (see below) add a plus or minus sign to further delineate 5.8 and 5.9 routes. An "easy" 5.8 would be a 5.8-. A "hard" 5.8 would be 5.8+. A consistent 5.8 would retain the 5.8 rating without any other descriptor.</p>
5.9- to 5.9+	<p>Hard</p> <p>This used to be the height of the Yosemite Decimal System. It was considered the limit of human possibility until the 1950's, when climbers began rating routes 5.9 and later 5.9+ in extreme circumstances. Since then many "harder" routes have been established. In the 1970's climbers started using the imaginary number 5.10 and others to more accurately describe routes relative to previously established ones. These routes usually require specialized shoes.</p>
5.10a to 5.10d	<p>Very hard to extremely difficult.</p> <p>This is the threshold into elite status. Usually delineated by using a letter a, b, c, or d to further describe the route. A 5.10a is relatively much easier than a 5.10d. But still really, really hard. Exceptional balance, skill, and problem-solving is required.</p>
5.11a to 5.11d	<p>Almost always reserved for top-roped climbing, but few skilled climbers can lead 5.11's traditionally. Difficult holds and/or large spaces where no holds are available are common.</p>
5.12a to 5.12d	<p>Generally the highest rating anyone other than a professional climber can conquer. Very limited and difficult holds or some decent holds on steep overhanging walls.</p>
5.13a to 5.13d	<p>The best description I've heard is, "verges on science fiction".</p>
5.14a to 5.14d	<p>Currently the top of the rating scale. Only a handful of professional climbers can "on-sight" 5.14 and it is usually only once in a great while. "On-sight" means without prior practice or specific studying of the route, including information obtained through others. 5.14 usually requires lifelong dedication and unique physical characteristics such as tiny hands and feet and superior strength-to-weight and power-to-weight ratios.</p>

### Some tips about ratings

Routes are rated by the hardest move on the route. In other words, the rating will be equal to the hardest part of the route - or the "crux". Two similarly rated routes may seem dissimilar because one route may be consistently hard, whereas the other may be fairly easy with a single hard move. We also have abandoned the use of plus and minus signs in our 5.8 and 5.9 routes, and the letters in our 5.10 and higher routes.

Ratings are subjective but every attempt has been made by our wall staff to ensure their accuracy in relation to one another. A route we've rated as "5.5" will be easier than a route we've rated "5.7". But if one was to compare our ratings with another venue, our "5.5" may be easier or harder than the other venue's "5.5". Such is the case everywhere.