



29a-b. Two ways of using karabiners back to back in place of a screwgate karabiner

USEFUL APPLICATIONS

» *As an autobloc and safety back-up.*

Alpine clutch

Although it is not really a prusik knot of any description, the Alpine clutch is included here because it fits into the group of autoblocs. This is a particularly useful autobloc if you find yourself short of prusik loops. It does, however, generate a lot of friction, and if it is used in a hoist this often negates some of the mechanical advantage gained in a pulley system.

It works most efficiently on oval or HMS-shaped karabiners. D-shaped karabiners are not only less efficient but also



30. Alpine clutch

jam frequently. If you do not have oval karabiners available try to make sure that you do at least use identical karabiners.

Rig the clutch as shown in Photo 30. Clip the rope through both karabiners and decide which is to be the load rope. Take the dead rope, twist it over the load rope karabiner and clip it in. Do not under any circumstances use it as a belaying or abseil device. The rope moves freely in only one direction; it does not move at all in the other.

USEFUL APPLICATIONS

- » *As an alternative autobloc if no prusik loops are available.*
- » *Can be used for ascending a fixed rope if you have only one prusik loop available.*

Cowstail

A cowstail is a short attachment from the harness that can be used to clip into an anchor point without having to use the