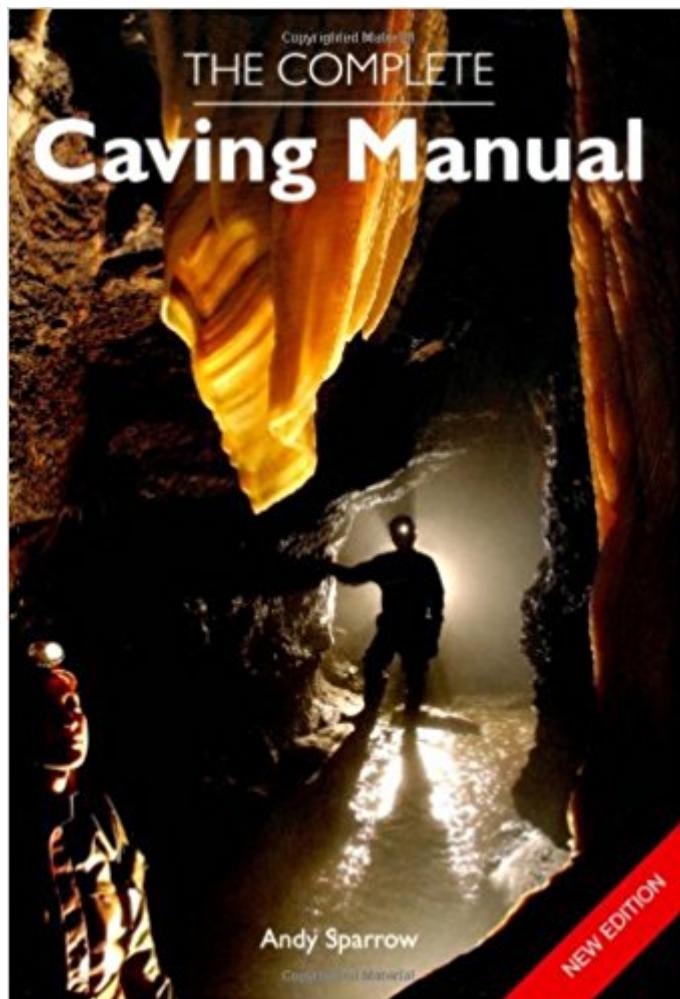


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# Complete Caving Manual



## Synopsis

Underground cave systems have a unique fascination for explorers, with their soaring caverns, breath-taking formations, and potential for finding uncharted passageways. Illustrated throughout with stunning photographs and explanatory diagrams, The Complete Caving Manual is a comprehensive guide to safe, responsible caving for novices and experts alike. Topics covered include: how caves and cave formations develop; modern caving equipment; planning and preparation for a caving trip; party leadership; horizontal techniques; vertical techniques and rope work; dealing with emergencies; exploring underground; cave flora and fauna, and where to cave.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Andy Sparrow is the director of the films *A Rock and A Hard Place* and *A Sold*.

This is a compact intro into caving. I learned something new with every paragraph, and that is what I like in a book. Every chapter provides no-nonsense instructional material and thus a time-efficient way to learn. Only the preface/intro is a bit unfocused. It's a practical book with clear and compelling explanations, about 200 pages strong and amply illustrated. Various technological advances have found their way into the 2009 edition, such as LED headlamps, digital cave photography, and even videography. Among my favorite tidbits are the wisdom of eating a substantial breakfast on the day of the caving trip, long crawls where you cannot turn around, the physical concept of the fall factor for a rope, the warning that an on-camera flash will reflect on otherwise unnoticed fog, and the use

of photo stacking for cave photography. That said, the book is far more systematic than this random list of items may suggest. As others have pointed out, the book is centered on Great Britain. Where location matters, the rest of the world receives at most half of the attention. Life in caves is divided into Britain and 'overseas'. 'Where to cave' dedicates 12 pages to the UK and 2 pages to North America, where most native speakers of English live. In conclusion, I really like this book, because it's tremendously useful and up to date---also beautifully illustrated.

The Complete Caving Manual left me feeling unsatisfied. I am a novice caver who has only been twice. I don't know enough to know what questions I should be asking, so while I felt that the information provided was good, I didn't feel like it made me a whole lot more confident than I was before. There is a lot of information about cave life, safety, conservation, and things like that that were interesting. Most of the examples talked about caving in Britain, so if you aren't in the UK, you will have to relate in a more general way. I will keep this book. It may become more useful to me as my knowledge grows, but in the meantime I am looking for something else as well.

Has anyone ever asked you what caving is all about? Give them a copy of this excellent manual and they will soon know. Has anyone ever asked if there is a book that they can read when they are taking their first steps underground, or on the end of an SRT rope or trying to photograph the wonder of the subterranean world? This is the book to point them towards. By turns instructional and inspirational, this manual will instruct you in the basics of all the techniques that you need for underground exploration in Britain and Europe, while taking time out to tell you how the caves formed in the first place, what creatures you might encounter underground and why you shouldn't break that straw off! If you cave already you will want it as a reference; if you're just starting out it will help you to get the most out of your next training trip/course; if you're introducing someone to caving it will be an invaluable resource of the why as well as the what in a clear and consistent style. Beyond the basics of clothing, equipment, ropework, ladderwork and moving underground, Andy has included valuable chapters on conservation, speleobiology, digging, photography and an overview of cave-diving (with all the appropriate warnings). He advises you where to go caving, how to find a club, how to evaluate the flood risk - just how to do it really. Highly recommended for anyone who has ever pulled on a headlamp and doesn't know it all yet. Highly recommended.

I have had personal experience with Mr. Sparrow and find him to be a very competent caving instructor. His book, which I wish I had autographed, is very insightful. Mr. Sparrow has taken me

caving several times and have felt completely safe and at ease as a novice. Highly recommend this book and his caving services. From the start of this book it gives you the very basics you need to know about caves and caving. Don't go caving without at least having this book on hand. What a guide.

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