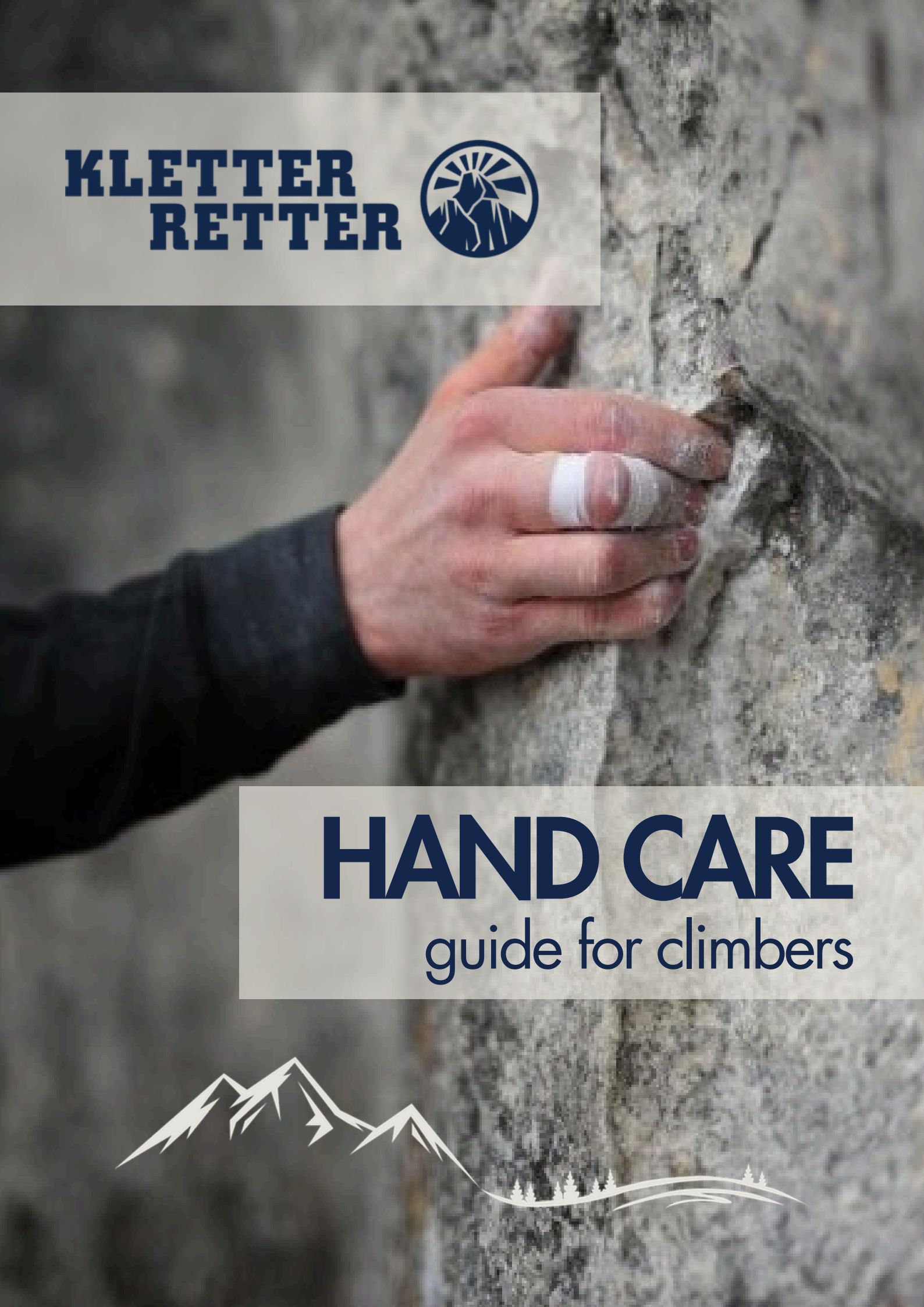
KLETTER RETTER



HAND CARE

guide for climbers

"Every hand tells a story."

David Holmes



Table of contents

About this guide 3

1 What is your skin type?

1.1 Skin type test 5
1.2 Common skin types 6

2 Understanding your skin

2.1 Your skin in layers 9
2.2 Calluses 10
2.3 The stress on your skin 10

3 Common Skin Problems

3.1 Calluses 12
3.2 Pinched skin 12
3.3 Flappers 13
3.4 Split fingertips 14
3.5 Dry and cracked skin 14
3.6 Sweaty palms 14
3.7 Nail injuries and infections 15
3.8 Grazes, abrasions and cuts 16
3.9 Thin skin 16
3.10 Allergic reactions and irritations 17
3.11 Quick reference guide 18

4 Skin care routines

4.1 Before climbing 19
4.2 During climbing 19
4.3 After climbing 20
4.4 Weekly maintenance routine 20
4.5 Hydration 21

5 Personal skin care set

5.1 Filing and cutting tools 22
5.2 Hand cream and balsam 23
5.3 Finger tape 24
5.4 First aid kit 25
5.5 Foot care tools 25
5.6 Recovery and circulation 25
5.7 Quick reference guide 26

KLETTER RETTER

6 Chalk and skin

6.1 How chalk actually works 27
6.2 Types of climbing chalk 28
6.3 Quick guide for chalk use 29
6.4 Minimising damage to your skin 30

7 Foot care for climbers

7.1 Common foot problems in climbers 32
7.2 Preventing problems before they start 32
7.3 Repairing and soothing damaged feet 33
7.4 Nail and skin hygiene tips 33
7.5 When to see a professional 34
7.6 Foot care routine 34

8 Sun protection and healthy skin outdoors

8.1 Why sun protection matters for climbers 36
8.2 What to look for in a climber's sunscreen 36
8.3 How to use sunscreen 37
8.4 Common mistakes climbers make 37
8.5 Skin care after sun 37

9 Hand training and recovery

9.1 The importance of antagonist training 38
9.2 PowerFingers 39
9.3 Finger and hand problems 40
9.4 Acupressure rings 41

10 First aid

10.1 Common injures 43
10.2 First aid essentials 43
10.3 Quick reference guide 44
10.4 When to stop climbing 44
10.5 Be prepared 45

11 Myths, mistakes and FAQs

11.1 Common myths about climbing skin care 47
11.2 Common mistakes climbers make 48
11.3 FAQs 49

12 About KletterRetter 51

13 Appendix

13.2 Further reading 52

KLETTER RETTER

About this guide

Climbing takes a toll on your hands and as the hand care experts, we're here to help!

If you've ever torn a flapper, dealt with dry, cracked fingertips or felt your grip give out too soon, you know just how much your hands matter.



At KletterRetter, we believe every hand tells a story. Your hands deserve the same attention you give the rest of your body. It's not just about avoiding skin damage or discomfort, it's about taking good care of your hands so you can get more out of climbing.

Whether you're new to climbing or you've been at it for years, resilient hands are what keeps you going. In this guide, we'll walk through everything from skin types, hydration, and grip strength to chalk, and how to get the most out of KletterRetter products with a simple, practical skin care routine.

This guide is built on what we've learned from years of climbing, testing and product development, because KletterRetter saves your skin.


What is
your
skin type?

1.1 Skin type test

Not all skin behaves the same. Genetics, hydration, climate, and even nutrition can influence how your skin responds to climbing. Knowing your skin type can help you choose the right chalk, care routine, and hand care products for your climbing routine.

Test your skin type and find out how to care for your skin in the best way. Most climbers are a combination of two skin types rather than fitting perfectly into a single category.

Your primary skin type describes the genetically determined characteristics of your skin - for example, whether it tends to be dry, oily or resilient.

Your secondary skin type, on the other hand, can change due to external factors such as climbing, weather, skincare habits, stress or nutrition. It reflects the current condition of your skin.

Take the skin type test now:



KLETTER RETTER



1.2 Common skin types

The most common skin types include dry, sweaty, balanced and hard skin, each with its own unique characteristics and care requirements.

Dry Skin

Dry skin has low moisture and elasticity. After climbing, it often feels tight, may become flaky, and is prone to cracking. Especially in cold weather or after intense sessions with heavy chalk use, it can develop splits and tears. Dry skin usually has good friction, but it becomes sensitive quickly if it loses too much flexibility.

What you should focus on

Build elasticity and support the skin barrier. Use KletterRetter hand cream regularly to keep the skin soft and supple, and keep the skin smooth with KletterRetter skindisc to reduce the risk of small cracks getting worse. Avoid aggressive filing, and give your skin a break when dealing with deeper cracks or irritated areas.

Chalk strategy

Start with a thin base layer of KletterRetter cream chalk for stable friction without drying the skin out too much. While climbing, only reapply lightly with regular chalk when it is really necessary. Avoid excessive chalk use and products that can dry out the skin, such as harsh soaps and cleansers.

Sweaty Skin

Sweaty skin produces more moisture while climbing. Your hands may feel greasy, especially during warm-ups or when you're nervous. Chalk often doesn't stay on for long. This can reduce friction and make holds slippery, especially plastic holds. The key is to stabilize the skin surface and control moisture throughout the session.

What you should focus on

Keep the skin surface as consistent as possible. Use KletterRetter skindisc to keep the skin smooth and reduce micro slipping. Use breathable tape when taping.

Chalk strategy

Start with a thin base layer of KletterRetter liquid chalk as a dry foundation. While climbing, reapply lightly with KletterRetter performance chalk to keep friction stable without overloading the skin. Avoid using hand cream before climbing, moisturize your hands after your session instead.

Balanced Skin

Your skin has a good balance of moisture, thickness, and elasticity. It is resilient, rarely tears, usually regenerates well between sessions, and keeps stable friction without developing major problems. The skin usually responds well to routine care.

What you should focus on

Maintain this balance. Keep the skin smooth with KletterRetter nanoglass skinfile, used carefully, and support long term elasticity with KletterRetter hand cream and KletterRetter repair balsam. This helps keep your skin well cared for, even with regular strain. Make sure you plan the occasional rest day.

Chalk strategy

Use a light layer of KletterRetter fine chalk and reapply as needed while climbing. Balanced skin usually works best with little chalk and consistent skin care between sessions.

Hard Skin

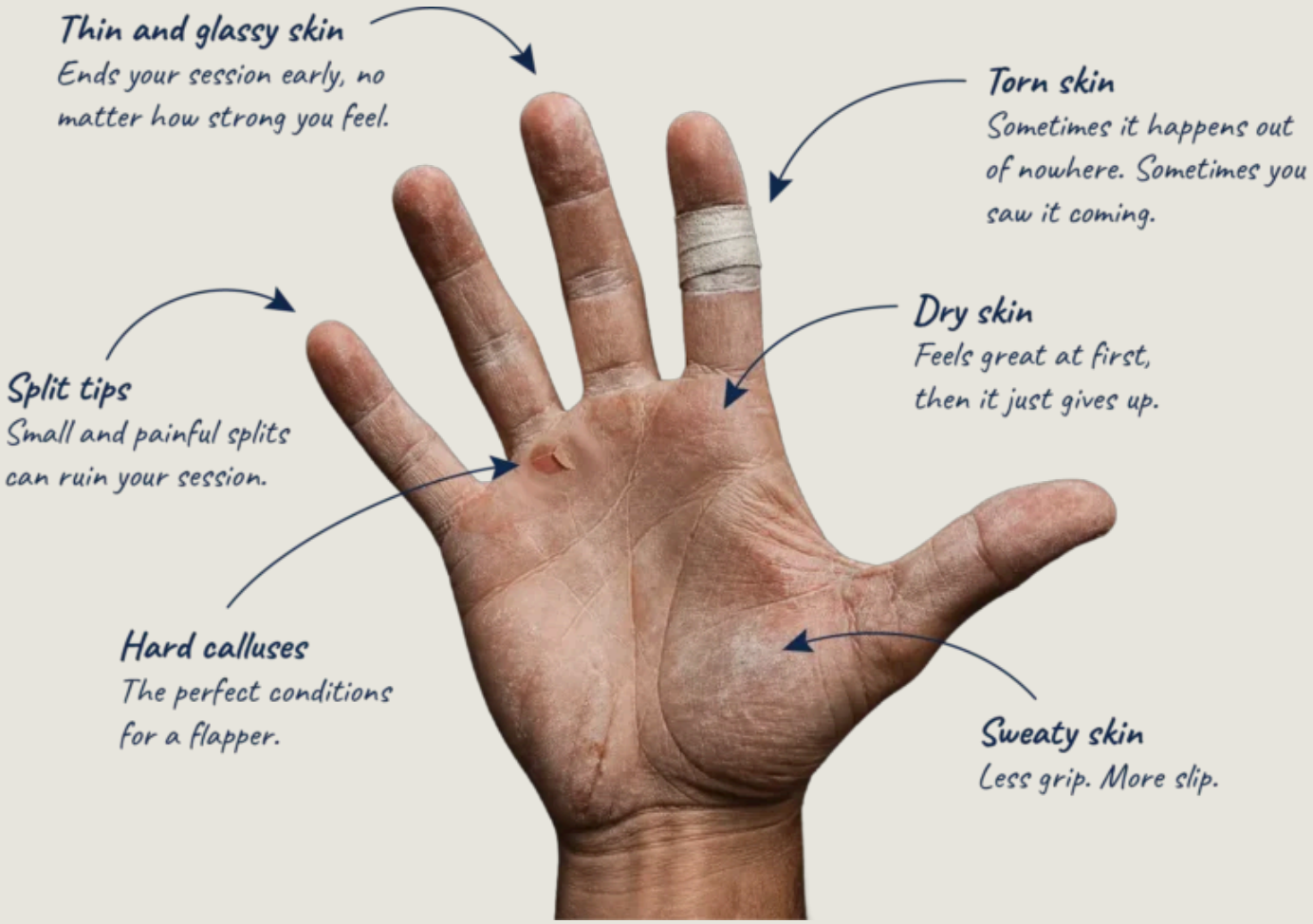
Tough skin is a climber's dream! It develops thick calluses and hard edges through repeated stress from climbing. Calluses protect the skin, but too much of them increases the risk of flappers and sharp edges that can catch on holds.

What you should focus on

Control callus thickness while maintaining elasticity. Reduce excess callus regularly but carefully with KletterRetter nanoglass skinfile, and support your skincare routine with KletterRetter repair balsam and KletterRetter foot cream with Urea to help keep the skin smooth and supple.

Chalk strategy

Use a light base layer of KletterRetter cream chalk for consistent friction without drying the skin out too much. While climbing, only reapply lightly and avoid building up thick layers of chalk on hard calluses.



2 Understanding your skin

Your hands connect you to the wall. But unlike muscles, which get stronger the more you train them, your skin has limits. Understanding how skin works and how climbing affects it is the first step toward keeping your hands in top shape.

2.1 Your skin in layers

Your skin is your body's largest organ. It protects you from the outside world, regulates temperature, and plays an important role in hydration and immune response. Understanding how your skin is built helps you take better care of it, so you can climb more and reduce unnecessary strain.

Your skin has three main layers:

Epidermis (outer layer):

This is your first line of defence. The epidermis consists of five layers and forms a barrier against friction, chalk, bacteria, and moisture loss. Most climbing-related damage such as splits, abrasions, and calluses occurs here.

Sub-layers of the epidermis:

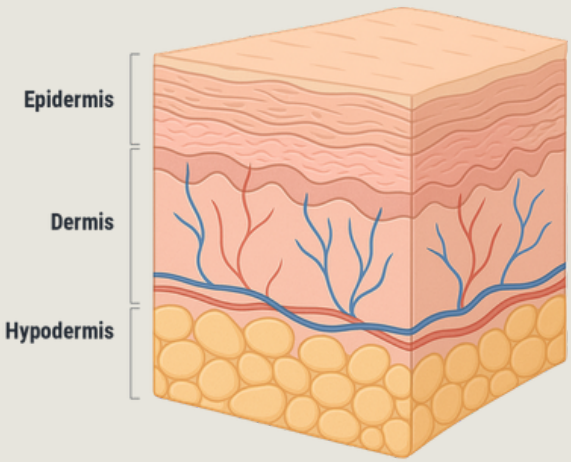
- Stratum corneum: a protective barrier, made from dead, keratinised cells, where most wear, flappers, and calluses occur
- Stratum lucidum: a transparent layer that adds extra protection to fingertips and palms
- Stratum granulosum: the layer where cells start to die and flatten
- Stratum spinosum: a layer of active cell for structural support and
- Stratum basale: a layer where cell division and regeneration occurs

Dermis (middle layer):

Located just beneath the surface, the dermis contains blood vessels, sweat glands, nerve endings, and collagen. If you tear into this layer (like with a deep flapper), healing takes much longer and the risk of infection increases.

Hypodermis (deep layer):

This layer consists mostly of fat and connective tissue. It cushions your body and stores energy. While rarely affected by climbing injuries, extreme trauma (such as deep cuts or crush injuries) can reach this level.



2.2 Calluses



When you climb regularly, your skin responds by building calluses. Calluses are essentially thickened skin on your fingertips, palms, and knuckles (and toes). Calluses are a natural protective mechanism, but they can become a liability if not managed correctly.

- Too thin: painful skin, increased risk of flappers
- Too thick: prone to ripping and tearing
- Uneven: hotspots that catch on holds and rip mid-move

Goal: Strong and smooth calluses that can take a beating, without tearing off. We will take a deeper look into that in the next chapter.

2.3 The stress on your skin

Different holds, rocks and climbing styles all affect your skin differently. Prolonged compression, shearing (where the layers of your skin move in different directions), friction, pressure and heat can cause damage to your skin.

Type of hold	Stress to skin	Common effects
Crimps	Compression and shearing	Split fingertips and calluses on the edges of your fingers
Slopers and pinches	Friction	Surface wear, thin skin and abrasions
Pockets	Pressure	Deep splits and damage to fingernails and nail beds
Jugs	Friction and shearing	Calluses, blisters and possibly flappers on your palms and fingers
Hangboards	Heat and shearing	Surface wear and thin skin

Environmental factors like humidity, temperature, and hold texture also play a big role. For example:

- Cold temperatures can cause brittle skin and a higher risk of splits
- Heat and sweat cause softened skin and more friction injuries
- Indoor climbing holds are often smoother but often involve repetitive friction
- Outdoor climbing holds are rougher but more variable



3 Common skin problems

Every climber's hand tells a story. Flappers, splits, calluses, sweaty palms are all part of the story. But with the right knowledge and tools, you can reduce many common skin issues and take targeted care of your skin after climbing.

Different types of climbing related skin injuries affect different layers of your skin:

- A mild abrasion affects the outer layer of the epidermis, the stratum corneum
- Calluses are caused by the thickening outer layer of the epidermis, the stratum corneum
- A pinched skin injury often shears or crushes deeper layers of the epidermis (stratum granulosum and the stratum spinosum), exposing nerve endings and creating that raw, glassy, stinging sensation.
- A flapper usually rips through the entire epidermis. If blood is visible, you've likely reached the dermis.

3.1 Calluses

What is a callus? Thickened areas of skin that form on the outer layer of your skin (epidermis/stratum corneum) in response to pressure and friction.

Good or bad? Both. Calluses protect the middle layer of skin (dermis), but too much build-up can lead to flappers or tears.

Caring for calluses:

- Use a skin file and apply KletterRetter repair balsam or use a KletterRetter skindisc/beedisc to gently reduce thick or uneven calluses
- Moisturize regularly with KletterRetter hand cream to keep the skin flexible
- Never file fresh skin or file calluses completely. The goal is to leave a protective layer.

3.2 Pinched skin

What is pinched skin? A type of compression and shear trauma that damages the deeper layers of the epidermis (stratum granulosum and stratum spinosum).

The outermost skin layer (stratum corneum) often remains intact, so there's usually no bleeding, but the area may appear raw, shiny, or glassy. These injuries can feel surprisingly deep and take several days to heal.

Causes: Pinched skin injuries occur when friction and pressure combine under tension, for example, during dynamic moves, slips on slopers, or hard contact with textured holds. These injuries often show up in the same places as calluses on the finger pads or the top of the palm, and can extend deeper than a typical flapper.

Pinched skin first aid

- Clean the area gently with water or antiseptic
- Apply a nourishing balm like KletterRetter repair balsam or KletterRetter skindisc/beedisc
- Cover with breathable tape, a non-stick wound pad or at the very least with a makeshift tape pad
- Avoid climbing for at least 24–48 hours, or until the raw surface begins to close

When to rest

Pinched skin wounds are prone to tearing open, especially if they extend into the lower epidermis. Climbing too soon can put additional strain on the affected skin and increase the risk of further skin issues. Give your skin time to recover and rebuild its protective barrier.

3.3 Flappers

What is a flapper? A flap of skin lifted or completely torn off, typically on your finger or palm.

Causes: Flappers are often caused from thick callus catching on a hold, sharp contact while climbing, or shearing where the top and middle layer of skin move in opposite directions.

Flapper first aid

- Clean the area with water or antiseptic (be careful because it might sting)
- Trim any loose skin, but only remove the flapper if it's already mostly detached
- Apply KletterRetter repair balsam and cover the wound with tape or a wound pad
- Avoid climbing the next day to give the affected area time to recover

Taping a finger flapper

One way to secure a flapper is with a protective tape ring that helps keep the affected skin in place without restricting movement:

- Tear off a 10 cm strip of finger tape slightly wider than the wound
- Fold one end so the adhesive sides touch, creating a clean wound pad
- Position the non-adhesive side of the pad over the raw skin, leaving the flap in place if it still offers cushioning
- Wrap the remainder of the tape smoothly around the finger to secure the pad in place. Avoid overtightening to preserve circulation.

Taping a palm flapper

For larger flappers on your palm, you can use the following method:

- Clean and dry your hands thoroughly, including your wrist and the back of your hand
- Tear a 15mm wide strip of tape, about as long as the distance between your fingertip and your elbow.
- Place the middle of the tape behind the base knuckle of the injured finger so both ends run diagonally across your palm
- Make a folded wound pad out of another short piece of tape and place it in the center over the flapper
- Extend the tape over the back of your hand, toward your wrist and secure both ends on your wrist. You can add another loose loop of tape around your wrist to keep it in place.



3.4 Split fingertips

What are split fingertips? Vertical or horizontal cracks in the skin on the tips of your fingers.

Causes: Dry, brittle skin combined with pressure and friction. Common in winter, cold conditions or after lots of board training.

Caring for split fingertips:

- Use KletterRetter repair balsam morning and night to care for stressed skin
- File the edges of the split flat to avoid deeper tearing
- Tape over the split if climbing can't wait. Keep the skin clean and avoid chalk contact on open wounds where possible.

3.5 Dry, cracked skin

What is dry and cracked skin: Dry, tight, or flaky skin, often with micro-cracks.

Causes: Overuse of chalk, frequent handwashing, cold air, dehydration or not moisturizing.

Caring for dry and cracked skin:

- Regularly apply KletterRetter hand cream
- Use a skin file once to twice a week to smooth rough edges
- Wash hands with mild soap after climbing, not harsh detergent or disinfectant

3.6 Sweaty palms



What are sweaty palms? Excessive sweating on the palms of your hands, even at rest or under mild stress.

Causes: Genetics, overactive sweat glands, or nerves

Prevention and care of sweaty palms:

- Use liquid chalk without resin for longer drying effect
- Avoid petroleum-based skin care products
- Improve grip with a chalk routine: base layer (liquid), top layer (powder) - read more in chapter 6

KLETTER RETTER

3.7 Nail injuries and infections

Fingernails and toenails are often overlooked by climbers, but they experience just as much stress, friction, and pressure as the rest of your skin.

From toes jammed into tight shoes to torn fingernails, nail injuries are painful, slow to heal, and prone to infection. Taking time to care for your nails before and after climbing is one of the easiest ways to prevent long-term issues.

Common nail problems

- Onycholysis: When the nail separates from the nail bed. Often triggered by impact, pressure, or repeated trauma. It can also result from over-filing or aggressive cleaning under the nail. It usually starts at the nail tip and moves inward, creating a gap where dirt and bacteria collect.
- Paronychia: An infection of the skin around the nail fold (where the skin meets the nail). It can be caused by a hangnail, a torn cuticle, or a small wound. The area becomes red, swollen, and painful, sometimes with pus. Untreated cases may require antibiotics or medical care.
- Fungal infections: Appear as yellow, thickened, brittle, or crumbly nails, especially toenails exposed to warm, damp shoes for long periods. Fungal infections are persistent and can spread if not treated early.

How to care for your nails

- Keep nails short and smooth. File rough edges to prevent snags on tape, rock, or holds. Avoid rounding toenails too much to reduce the risk of ingrown nails.
- Clean and disinfect any torn nails or cuts immediately using antiseptic wipes or spray.
- Don't force damaged nails back into place, let them grow out naturally. Only cover damaged nails if necessary for hygiene or pressure relief inside shoes.
- Air out your shoes between sessions and use odour- and moisture-absorbing inserts like SmellWell.



KLETTER RETTER



3.8 Grazes, abrasions, and cuts

What are grazes, abrasions and cuts? Surface wounds caused by friction, sharp holds or textured walls.

These types of skin wounds can become infected if they are not treated properly and may take longer to heal. Always carry a first aid kit with you, so you can respond quickly and provide appropriate care for injuries.

Care:

- Treat any bleeding and gently clean the wound as soon as possible
- Apply KletterRetter repair balsam to clean skin
- Cover the wound if it is exposed to chalk or dirt
- Use a first aid kit at the crag for on-the-spot treatment and remember to refill anything you might have used

3.9 Thin skin

What is thin skin? The bane of all climbers sooner or later! Skin that has become too thin or delicate to handle climbing friction. This is often caused by over-filing, excessive moisturising, or simply climbing too frequently without giving your skin enough time to recover.

Symptoms:

- Burning or stinging sensation when grabbing holds
- Smooth, glassy or transparent skin that lacks grip
- Increased sensitivity, especially on textured surfaces

Care:

- Stop filing and give your skin time to recover naturally
- Apply KletterRetter hand cream daily to support hydration and elasticity
- Use an acupressure ring or light massage as part of your massage routine
- Take a rest day to care for your skin, and remember that skin needs time to recover, just like muscles

KletterRetter hand cream is specially formulated for climbers' stressed skin and supports the skin's natural protective function.

KLETTER RETTER

3.10 Allergic reactions and irritations

Certain materials such as resin (rosin/colophony), latex, alcohol, and even specific cosmetic ingredients can cause skin irritation or allergic reactions.

Because climbers often use chalk, tape, and skin care products repeatedly, even a mild reaction can quickly become a long-term issue.

Possible causes

- Resin or rosin in chalk or liquid chalk
- Latex in gloves or adhesive tape
- Alcohol-based disinfectants or liquid chalk
- Fragrances or preservatives in creams or balms
- Synthetic dyes or textile coatings on gloves or clothing

Symptoms

- Redness or rash, especially around fingertips or joints
- Itching, tingling, or burning sensation
- Small blisters, peeling skin, or inflamed nail folds

What to do

- Switch to resin-free liquid chalk or cream chalk
- Use breathable zinc-oxide tape (without latex)
- Test every new product (cream, chalk, tape) on a small skin patch before full use
- If symptoms persist, stop using suspected products and consult a dermatologist

Even the best climbing skin care won't help if an allergen is working against your skin. Listen to your body and choose your products carefully.

KLETTER RETTER

3.11 Quick reference guide

We've put together a quick reference table for you, so you can quickly see what treatment is best suited to each specific climbing related skin injury.

Problem	Recommended products	Key course of action
Thick calluses	Skin file, KletterRetter skindisc/beedisc, KletterRetter hand cream	Keep your calluses smooth with a file, but don't completely remove them. The goal is to leave a protective layer of skin.
Flappers	KletterRetter repair balsam, tape and first aid kit	Clean the wound, close the flapper or remove loose skin and cover it and give it a rest
Pinched skin	KletterRetter repair balsam, skindisc/beedisc	Clean the wound, cover it and give it a rest
Split fingertips	KletterRetter repair balsam, tape, skin file	Clean and seal the wound, moisturise, remove loose skin and protect it from further damage
Dry and cracked skin	KletterRetter hand cream, skin file	Drink water, hydrate and moisturise your skin and keep it smooth
Sweaty palms	Liquid chalk (resin-free) or cream chalk	Develop a custom chalk routine
Nail injuries	Nail clippers, skin file, disinfectant/anti-fungal creams, shoe fresheners	Keep your nails short and clean. Wash your hands and your feet after climbing and keep your climbing shoes dry.
Grazes, abrasions and cuts	KletterRetter repair balsam, tape, first aid kit	Stop the bleeding and clean the wound
Thin skin	KletterRetter hand cream, acupressure ring	Give your skin time to regrow. Moisturise regularly and stimulate circulation.
Allergic reactions and irritation	Liquid chalk, cream chalk, zinc-oxide tape	Eliminate the trigger, test carefully and consult a dermatologist if symptoms persist



4 Skin care routines

Caring for your hands doesn't have to be complicated, but it does have to be consistent. A smart routine can help keep your skin cared for and resilient, so you can enjoy more days on the wall.

4.1 Before climbing: prep for performance

The goal with skin preparation before climbing is to reduce stress on the skin and maximise grip without unnecessarily stressing the skin.

Step-by-step:

- Wash your hands: use soap to remove excess oil and improve chalk function
- Check your hands: if you have any splits, loose calluses, or tender spots before climbing, you should address them before you warm up.
- File calluses if needed: use a skin file to smooth sharp edges and flatten thick calluses, especially on your fingers. Just don't overdo it!
- Use tape where needed: apply finger tape to protect existing wounds, support joints, or prevent flappers on sensitive skin.
- Optional: For dry skin, use a very small amount of KletterRetter hand cream at least 30–60 minutes before climbing (never immediately before).

4.2 During climbing: monitor and adjust

The goal with monitoring your skin during climbing is to keep an eye on any potential injuries.

Tips during climbing:

- Watch your tips: if you feel friction burn or your skin getting thinner, consider adjusting your grip or using tape
- Use chalk smartly:
  - For sweaty palms: start with liquid chalk or cream chalk to form a base layer and then layer your hands with chalk as required.
  - Avoid over-chalking, because it can excessively dry out your skin
- Take micro-breaks: let your skin rest between attempts on sharp holds. Even a few minutes makes a difference.



4.3 After climbing: repair and restore

This is an important part of your skin care routine. Taking the time to care for your skin after climbing can help you maintain it for future sessions.

Post-session routine:

- Wash your hands gently and thoroughly with lukewarm water and mild soap. Avoid harsh disinfectants. Pat or air dry your hands.
- Assess the damage: do you have any flappers, cuts, or painful calluses?
  - Apply KletterRetter repair balsam to care for cracked or stressed fingertips
  - Use KletterRetter hand cream to moisturise dry or tight skin and support its natural protective function
- File again if needed, but only if new edges have formed. Never file irritated or raw skin.
- Bonus step: use an acupressure ring for 5–10 minutes as part of a gentle finger massage routine.

4.4 Suggested maintenance routine

A consistent routine helps keep your skin cared for and balanced.

Day	Action
Daily	Regular moisturising with KletterRetter hand cream, foot cream, and repair balsam
Day before climbing	Massage with acupressure rings. Check for any wounds or sensitive areas and treat them.
Climbing days	Trim nails and remove loose skin. Lightly file down hard calluses and tape sensitive spots before warming up.
Once per week	Full filing session for calluses on hands and feet.
Outdoor days	Don't forget to apply sunscreen

Rest is part of your routine

Don't ignore warning signs like burning fingertips, shiny skin, or small tears. Sometimes the best skin care is a day off, giving your skin time to recover between sessions.



4.5 Hydration

Climbing dehydrates you fast, especially during long sessions or on hot days. But few climbers realise how much this also affects their skin.

Dehydrated skin becomes brittle and prone to cracks and splits where well-hydrated skin stays elastic and tolerates friction better.

What to do:

- Drink 500–750 ml of water per hour of climbing (more if it's hot and you're sweating heavily).
- Don't wait until after your session — start hydrated and sip throughout.
- Add electrolytes during longer sessions to support fluid balance.

Signs you're not drinking enough:

- Tight, flakey fingertips
- Chronic skin splits
- Wounds that take longer to heal
- Dark urine or headaches after climbing

Skin care isn't just what you put on your hands, it's what you put in your body, too.





5 Personal skin care set

You wouldn't hit the gym or the crag without your shoes and chalk, so why climb without proper skin care tools? The right tools support proper preparation and skin care, helping you stay on the wall longer.

5.1 Files and nail clippers

Maintain smooth, supple calluses to reduce cracks and flappers. Remove excess skin to smooth rough patches.

KletterRetter skin file:

- Finely graded sandpaper for a smooth skin finish
- Best for large or dry callus areas
- Use once to twice per week, never on raw or sensitive skin

Pro tip: File before or after sessions, not both. Wash your hands and moisturise after climbing.

KletterRetter nano file

- Fine, etched glass for precise control on fingertips
- Excellent for travelling or quick post-session touch-ups
- Washable and long-lasting

KletterRetter nail clippers:

- Sharp stainless steel, which is great for nails, but also ideal for cutting off excess skin
- Available in small and large for fingernails and toenails

Pro tip: it might be tempting to use a razor blade to remove excess skin, but slipping or making a wrong cut can cause further skin damage and prolong recovery.

5.2 Hand cream and balsam

Your hands need different care at different times. Here's how to choose the right product for every situation.

KletterRetter hand cream

- Lightweight, fast-absorbing, non-greasy formula
- Ideal for daily skin care in the morning, during the day, at night, and after climbing
- Supports the skin's natural protective layer (epidermis)
- Helps keep the skin supple and maintain its flexibility

KletterRetter repair balsam

- Formula enriched with the nourishing properties of natural beeswax
- Designed for the care of cracked fingertips and heavily stressed skin
- Well suited for very dry and brittle skin
- Best applied at night or on rest days due to slower absorption

KletterRetter skindisc (vegan)

- Compact, solid balm made with mango butter, calendula, and sunflower oil
- Designed for the care of cracked fingertips and dry patches of skin
- Forms a protective layer that helps reduce moisture loss and care for the skin
- Ideal for overnight care or cold, dry conditions

KletterRetter beedisc (with beeswax)

- Similar to the Skindisc, but enriched with beeswax for added protection
- Particularly suitable for the care of dry or weathered skin
- Slower to absorb, making it perfect for intensive overnight use

Expert tip: If you have the feeling that the hand cream isn't quickly absorbed, try a Skindisc or a Beedisc instead. There are a lot of different skin types and your skin might be better suited for a slower absorbing product.

5.3 Finger tape

Tape is an effective tool for support, protection and first aid. It is a must have in your personal skin care set.

What can I use tape for?

- Support strained joints (pulleys, tendons)
- Protect existing skin damage (splits, flappers)
- Help protect the skin when climbing on sharp holds or during high-volume sessions
- Quickly treat injuries during a climbing session

What should I look for in a tape?

- Breathable and skin-friendly (without allergens such as latex)
- Easy to tear and apply mid-session
- Strong enough to stay in place without restricting movement

Taping tips:

- Don't tape too tight
- Use the right width of tape. KletterRetter finger tape comes in convenient 15mm and 50mm rolls
- Don't tape undamaged skin unless necessary
- Learn and practice correct taping methods for:
  - Flappers (see Chapter 3)
  - Split tips
  - Joint support
- Store your tape in a container or a bag to keep it clean

For more detailed tips from experts on different taping methods, check out our tape blog at kletterretter.com/tags/tape



5.4 First aid kit

A first aid kit should be compact, lightweight, and built for climbers. The kit should contain the following tools for climbers:

- Alcohol wipes
- Climbing finger tape
- Wound pads
- Bandage scissors
- Cold pack
- Survival blanket

5.5 Foot care tools

Don't ignore your feet: climbing shoes create pressure, sweat, and skin stress just like handholds.

KletterRetter foot cream

- Cares for dry heels and cracked areas of skin
- Contains urea to moisturise dry skin
- Ideal post-session, especially after long days in tight shoes
- Supports foot and shoe care routines and helps prevent odour issues.

KletterRetter nano glass file

- For keeping calluses and cracked skin smooth

Bonus tip: Use SmellWell inserts in your climbing shoes to absorb moisture and keep your shoes dry and fresh.

5.6 Recovery and circulation

Healthy skin benefits from good circulation and regular care, not just rest. Recovery tools can support circulation and help maintain skin flexibility.

PowerFingers

- Resistance rings for antagonist and finger training
- For a preparatory warm-up routine
- Choose from 5 resistance levels

KletterRetter acupressure rings

- Roll over each finger for 2–5 minutes
- For a soothing massage of overworked fingers
- Excellent after cold outdoor sessions or hard bouldering days

KLETTER RETTER

5.7 Quick reference guide

Even though every climber's skin is different, we've put together a quick reference table for you, so you can see what a basic kit should include.

Must haves	Optional extras
Skin files (for hands and for feet)	Nail clippers (for nails and loose skin)
Hand cream	Acupressure rings
Repair Balsam	PowerFingers
Skindisc / Beedisc	Liquid chalk or cream chalk
Finger tape	SmellWell shoe inserts
First aid kit	
Foot cream	

Useful tip: Pack your skin care products into a small wash bag, so you have everything in the same place when you need it.



6 Chalk and skin

Chalk is one of the most important tools in climbing and one of the toughest on your skin. Understanding how chalk works helps you improve grip, reduce injuries, and choose the right product for your needs.



6.1 How chalk actually works

Chalk (magnesium carbonate) absorbs sweat from your hands to improve grip. However, it also removes natural oils and water from the epidermis, which can dry out and weaken the outer skin layer. Over time, excessive chalk use can cause:

- Cracks and splits from over-dried fingertips
- Polished skin that feels glassy or too smooth to grip
- Overuse injuries when chalk is used as a crutch for poor technique

The goal isn't to remove all moisture, it's to maintain balance. Your skin should feel dry but still flexible.

KletterRetter magnesium carbonate is derived from magnesite. At KletterRetter, we consciously avoid raw materials with unclear environmental standards and instead use medical-grade magnesium carbonate refined in the EU.

6.2 Types of climbing chalk

Different types of chalk affect your grip and your skin differently. Use the right chalk for the right conditions can be the difference between sending or not sending.

Fine chalk

- Powdery, soft texture
- Coats evenly and sticks well to dry skin
- Less abrasive than crunchy chalk
- Best for: Training boards, indoor climbing, sensitive or dry skin

Crunchy chalk

- Coarse chunks you crush in your hands
- Feels gritty and offers more grip
- Can wear down skin faster, especially on volume-heavy sessions
- Best for: Outdoor climbing, humid conditions, sweaty hands

Performance chalk

- Premium blends with Upsalite, a super absorbent form of chalk
- Engineered for maximum friction with less product
- Dries skin faster, so it should be balanced with good hand care
- Best for: Limit attempts, comps, hard redpoints

Liquid chalk with resin

- Contains resin or colophony to improve grip, but liquid chalk containing resin is often banned in gyms
- Stays on longer, helps on slopers or humid rock
- Can be harsh on skin and cause allergies or buildup
- Best for: Use as a base layer in the gym

Liquid chalk without resin

- Dries clean and removes fat and oil from your skin
- Gentler on the skin and better for frequent use
- Easier to combine with powder chalk
- Best for: Use as a base layer for sweaty palms

Cream chalk

- Creamy emulsion with alcohol, water and magnesium carbonate
- Similar to liquid chalk but softer on skin
- Easy to apply evenly without a dust cloud
- Best for: use as a base layer in dry conditions, ideal for skin-conscious climbers

6.3 Quick guide for chalk use

Here is a quick guide to outline the different strategies and combos you can use when chalking up.

Situation	Recommended chalk combo
Sweaty session	KletterRetter liquid chalk or KletterRetter cream chalk base-layer with a crunchy chalk top layer
Skin already dry	Fine chalk, with minimal use
Limit attempts	KletterRetter performance chalk or KletterRetter cream chalk
Slopers or humidity	KletterRetter liquid chalk with resin or KletterRetter cream chalk
Indoor gym session	KletterRetter liquid chalk, KletterRetter cream chalk or fine chalk

Expert tip: Chalk absorbs moisture from the air, which can cause it to clump together or harden. This reduces its effectiveness. Only fill your chalk bag with as much chalk as you need for your session. Keep the rest dry in the original resealable packaging.





6.4 Minimising damage to your skin

It is important to be aware of the damage chalk can do to your skin and what you can do to stay in control.

Common mistakes:

- Re-chalking after every move will quickly wear out your skin
- Using too much chalk doesn't always improve grip, but it almost certainly dries out your hands and can even reduce friction
- Not washing your hands after climbing means that chalk residue continues drying your skin long after the session
- Forgetting to moisturise after a session can leave the skin dry and stressed over time

Skin care tip: After every session, wash your hands with gentle soap and apply KletterRetter hand cream or KletterRetter repair balsam. This helps maintain the skin's natural protective function and is part of a regular skin care routine.



7 Foot care for climbers

You look after your hands, but why not your feet?

Climbers put a lot of stress on their feet: tight shoes, constant pressure, sweat, and friction. But while everyone talks about cracked fingertips and calluses, foot skin is often overlooked until problems arise.

Proper foot care is about more than comfort. It supports hygiene and can help reduce the risk of painful cracks and skin injuries that could cut your training session short.

7.1 Common foot problems in climbers

We've put together a quick overview of the different types of foot problems climbers face and what causes them.

Problem	Cause	Symptoms
Dry, cracked heels	Tight shoes, dehydration, lack of regular skin care	Bleeding, infection
Blisters	Friction from ill-fitting or new shoes	Open wounds
Fungal infections	Damp shoes, poor hygiene	Long-term skin damage
Smelly shoes	Sweat and bacteria in enclosed space	Odour, fungal growth
Nail trauma	Pressure from downturned shoes	Bruising, loss of nails

7.2 Preventing problems before they start

Wash & dry properly after climbing

- Always wash your feet thoroughly with mild soap
- Dry between your toes completely
- Don't walk barefoot in communal showers or gyms

Let your shoes breathe

- Never leave your climbing shoes in a closed bag
- Use SmellWell inserts or air them out overnight
- Rotate pairs if possible



Check your feet weekly

- Look for cracking, peeling, swelling, or discolouration
- Address small issues early to avoid downtime

KLETTER RETTER

7.3 Repairing and soothing damaged feet

Looking after your feet can be as easy as using the right moisturiser and removing dead and dry skin.

KletterRetter foot cream

- Rich, deeply moisturising formula with Urea to care for dry skin
- Contains ingredients that care for cracked or stressed skin and help keep it supple
- Ideal for feet exposed to sweat and friction

When to use it:

- At night, after showering, before bed
- After long outdoor days in aggressive shoes
- On visible cracks, dry spots, or hardened skin areas

How to use:

- Massage into heels, toes, and between toes (if dry)
- Let absorb fully before putting on socks
- Use 2–3× per week or daily for recovery phases

KletterRetter nano glass file

- A quick and easy way to remove dry and dead skin
- The goal is to have smooth skin on the soles of your feet

7.4 Nail and skin hygiene tips

Well-maintained nails can help reduce the risk of foot pain and other problems

- Keep toenails short and smooth with nail clippers to avoid pressure and bruising
- Never file cracked toenails – let them grow and trim gently
- If a nail lifts or is bruised, disinfect and let it regrow naturally
- Don't pick at dry skin or peeling areas – use KletterRetter foot cream and file gently if needed

KLETTER RETTER

7.5 When to see a professional

Sometimes you need to consult a professional to get your skin in the right shape. If you experience any of the following issues, it might be time to make an appointment!

- Repeated fungal infections (white, flaky, or itchy skin)
- Ingrown nails or infected cuts
- Dark nail discoloration that doesn't grow out
- Deep heel cracks that bleed or don't heal

7.6 Foot care routine

We've put together an easy to follow foot care routine to keep your feet in good shape:

Routine	Tool / product
Visual check	None
Trim nails	Nail clippers (every 2-3 weeks)
Moisturise and soften skin	KletterRetter foot cream (1-2x a week)
Dry and deodorise shoes	SmellWell inserts (after every session)
Disinfect minor cuts	Disinfectant
Treat blisters	Blister plasters





8 Sun protection and healthy skin outdoors

Slip. Slop. Slap. Send.

If you grew up in Australia, you know the drill: Slip on a shirt, Slop on sunscreen, Slap on a hat. It's not just a catchy slogan, it's a lifesaving habit. And it applies more than ever to climbers who spend long days exposed to sun, rock, and altitude.

So whether you're belaying in the sun, topping out a boulder, or grinding through a multi-pitch, UV radiation is a risk factor for your skin's health. Chalk, altitude, and reflected light can further increase UV exposure, often without you even noticing.

8.1 Why sun protection matters for climbers

Climbers are especially vulnerable to sun damage for a number of reasons:

- We spend hours outdoors, often without shade
- We climb at high altitudes (increased UV intensity)
- We use chalk, which reflects light and strips oils
- We often skip sunscreen to avoid greasy hands

The risks:

- Short-term: sunburn, dried-out skin, increased chance of splits
- Long-term: premature ageing, pigmentation, skin cancer

8.2 What to look for in a climber's sunscreen

You need a sunscreen that performs like you do!

Feature	Why it matters for climbers
Both UVA and UVB protection	Prevents both sunburn and long-term damage
Sweat-resistant	Won't run into your eyes mid-route
Quick-drying, non-greasy	Doesn't affect grip or leave residue on holds
Skin-safe	Avoids irritation, works with sensitive skin
Chalk-safe	Works on chalky skin
Modern, reef-safe filters	Better for the planet and your conscience

SPF 30 sunscreen provides a high level of protection against UVB radiation. In addition to choosing the right SPF, it's important to apply sunscreen generously and regularly, especially after sweating or washing it off.

8.3 How to use sunscreen

- Apply sunscreen 30 minutes before you go into the sun, to give it time to start working and to avoid getting it on gear
- Reapply every 2–3 hours or after heavy sweating
- Don't forget to cover:
  - Backs of hands
  - Ears
  - Neck
  - Nose and cheeks
  - Calves (especially when belaying in shorts)

Pro tip: Keep a tube in your skin kit or first aid pouch for quick access on long days.

8.4 Common mistakes climbers make

- "I don't burn, I don't need sunscreen". UV damage can quickly happen without you noticing at the time.
- "It's cloudy". Up to 80% of UV rays still gets through clouds.
- "I'm in the shade" UV rays reflect off rock, snow, sand, and water.
- "Sunscreen ruins my grip". Apply sunscreen 30 minutes before you climb.

8.5 Skin care after sun

Even with good sun habits, your skin can still get dry and stressed after a big outdoor day.

- If you do get sunburnt, a moisturiser or cooling gel can help care for the affected skin. Avoid petroleum-based products.
- Drink plenty of water, because UV exposure accelerates moisture loss
- Prioritise sleep and rest days to support full skin regeneration

Remember:
Slip on a layer of protection, such as a t-shirt
Slop on high-performance sunscreen.
Slap on a hat or a helmet.
Send your project.



9 Hand training and recovery

Climbing makes your hands strong, but only in one direction. Tendons, pulleys, and skin get worked hard, but antagonists (the opposing muscles) are often neglected. Over time, this can contribute to muscular imbalances and overuse injuries.

9.1 The importance of antagonist training

Training and recovery are important parts of a balanced climbing routine. By training antagonist muscles and giving your body enough time to recover, you can build a solid foundation for long-term strength and a well-rounded training routine.

Climbing heavily activates the pulling muscles, but tends to neglect the opposing (antagonist) muscles. These neglected muscles are often the first to get overused or injured, simply because they're weaker or undertrained.

That's where PowerFingers and the KletterRetter acupressure rings come in. These tools are compact, effective, and easy to use at home, at the gym, or on rest days.

Combine antagonist training with your skin care routine (chapter 4), filing, and taping strategies (chapter 6) to support your body and care for your skin while climbing.



9.2 PowerFingers

Most climbers train pulling: hangboarding, campus boards, weighted dead hangs. To train your fingers more comprehensively, you should also work on extension, which involves the pushing and opening movements of the fingers.

Benefits of PowerFingers:

- Targets the finger extensor muscles
- Complements grip and pulling exercises in climbing
- Supports finger mobility and balanced training

Powerfingers come in 5 resistance levels

Level 1: For gentle finger movements and mobilisation
Level 2: For warming up and activating the fingers
Level 3: For supplementary finger and antagonist training
Level 4: For muscular endurance and more intensive training
Level 5: For maximum strength and finger-specific workouts

There are countless possible combinations and exercises. Check out our detailed training videos on: powerfingers.kletterretter.com

Training with PowerFingers:

Training with PowerFingers is fun and easy and because PowerFingers is compact, you can take a set with you everywhere you go!

Basic routine:

- 3 sets of 10 reps for each hand
- Hold each rep for 3–5 seconds
- Focus on full extension – not just speed

When to train:

- As part of your climbing warm-up (using level 1 or 2)
- On rest days for recovery or quick training sessions in-between
- After climbing to maximise the pump
- During rehab (consult a physio if recovering from injury)

Extra tip: Combine multiple rings to increase resistance, or isolate individual fingers.

9.3 Finger and hand problems

Sooner or later, most climbers experience it: aching pulleys, overworked tendons, or excessive joint wear. But what can you do about it?

Pulley and tendon issues

- The pulley system in your fingers is made up of bands of connective tissue that hold the tendons close to the joints, allowing you to bend your fingers in the first place.
- Because these structures are not directly trainable, adapt only slowly over years, and climbing performance tends to improve faster than ligaments and tendons can keep up, injuries are common.
- The most frequent diagnoses among climbers are pulley injuries and tendon sheath inflammation (tenosynovitis).
- Many doctors recommend long rest periods without understanding the specific demands climbers place on their fingers.
- It's best to consult a doctor or physiotherapist experienced in climbing injuries.
- You can find a directory here: kletterretter.com/practitioners

Typical symptoms:

- Sharp, localised pain — often after hard moves
- Reduced mobility
- Possible "popping" sound during climbing
- Swelling around the affected finger

What you can do:

- Always seek medical advice!
- Use a tendon protection ring or tape for support
- Take warm hand baths with KletterRetter deep recovery hand bath with sulphur as part of a relaxing hand care routine
- Use KletterRetter acupressure rings as part of a gentle finger massage routine
- When cleared by your doctor, resume training gradually and gently



9.4 Acupressure rings

These small, spiky rings may look strange, but they're ideal for a soothing massage of the fingers and hands.

How they work:

- Roll the ring up and down each finger for 2–5 minutes
- Massages the fingers and hands, providing pleasant stimulation
- Can provide a soothing sensation for strained or stiff fingers
- Ideal for a short massage session, especially for cold hands after training outdoors

When to use them:

- During warm-up or cooldown
- On rest days
- After long sessions on fingerboards or slabs



10 First aid

Being able to respond to an injury quickly and effectively can make a big difference! Always be prepared and stay safe out there!

In the case of a serious injury or emergency, always call your local emergency number first. Bleeding that won't stop, deep lacerations, head injuries, or anything involving loss of consciousness is beyond the scope of a first aid kit. In these cases, you need to seek help immediately.

But for minor injuries that can ruin your climbing day, such as flappers, cuts, abrasions or nail trauma, being prepared can help you care for the affected area and adjust your climbing session if needed.

10.1 Common injuries

Climbing is an extreme sport. Combined with the elements we face, things can escalate quickly! The most important thing is to stay calm and act quickly.

Common climbing injuries	Examples
Open wounds	Flappers, cuts, deep splits
Blisters	Common on palms and heels, especially in heat
Abrasions	From rough hold or falls
Cracked skin	From dryness, over-chalking, or cold conditions
Nail trauma	Torn fingernails, stubbed toes, crimp-related bruises
Broken bones or joint dislocations	Broken fingers, arms, ankles or dislocated shoulders
Head trauma	Bumping your head, falling or rock fall

10.2 First aid essentials

You should always have a first aid kit nearby.

- Fingertape: climbing grade tape strong for emergency treatment
- Emergency blanket: to keep warm in the event of an injury
- Sterile wound pads: for covering cuts and keeping chalk out
- Alcohol wipes: for quick cleaning when water isn't available
- Bandage scissors: for cutting tape or pads cleanly
- Instant cold pack: to soothe and calm injuries
- Gloves: for safe treatment

Tip: carry your first aid kit with your personal skincare set to cover all bases and quickly treat climbing injuries.

10.3 Quick reference guide

We've put together a quick guide on how to quickly treat common skin injuries.

Flapper mid-session

- Wash your hands or use an alcohol wipe
- Trim the flap (if fully detached)
- Apply KletterRetter repair balsam
- Cover with a wound pad or tape
- Rest or tape and climb carefully

Split fingertips

- Rinse or wipe clean and pat dry
- Dab a thin layer of KletterRetter repair balsam onto the split
- Tape flat to keep edges from tearing further
- Rest 1–2 days or climb with a secure wound dressing

Nail traumas

- If bleeding or bruised, disinfect and leave open (if possible)
- For toes: avoid tight shoes for the session
- Monitor for infection signs (swelling, redness, pus)

Abrasions / grazes

- Clean with water or alcohol wipe
- Apply KletterRetter repair balsam
- Cover with sterile pad if area is exposed to chalk/dirt

10.4 When to stop climbing

It's tempting to just keep pushing on and climbing. Remember, if it's too painful, it's time to stop.

Signs it's time to have a rest:

- Bleeding that won't stop: seek medical advice
- Deep wounds into the middle layer of skin (dermis)
- Fingertips so raw they sting when touched
- Infection signs (red, swollen, warm to the touch)

Your skin is your biggest organ, so remember that if it gets damaged, early rest is much faster than rehab.

KLETTER RETTER



10.5 Be prepared

The scouts aren't wrong when they say "be prepared". Make sure everyone in your group know where to quickly access the closest first aid kit.

- Check your first aid kit before each outdoor trip
- Refill tape, cool packs and wound pads regularly
- Make a travel-sized version for quick gym visits
- Keep one in the car or your crag bag, not just at home

Pro tip: carry your first aid alongside your personal skin care set

You'll need first aid less often if you:

- File calluses regularly
- Treat your wounds and skin with care
- Moisturise daily
- Train smart and rest early



11 Myths, mistakes and FAQs

Skin care isn't complicated, but it's easy to get wrong.

Over the years, we've heard all sorts of advice passed around gyms and crags. Some of it's helpful. Some of it, not so much. This chapter clears up the confusion so you can make smarter choices for your skin and your climbing.

11.1 Common myths about climbing skin care

Here is a list of things we hear from time to time and our thoughts on each myth.

Moisturiser makes your skin soft and useless

False. Good moisturiser like KletterRetter hand cream keeps your skin flexible, not soft. Dry, brittle skin is more likely to crack and split. Well-moisturised skin remains more supple and can better tolerate friction.

You should file your skin every day

Only if you're training hard daily and developing thick edges. Over-filing thins your skin too much. Aim for 1–2× per week, and always follow with KletterRetter hand cream.

Chalk is harmless, use as much as you need

Chalk dries out your skin. Too much = polished skin, cracks, and callus buildup. Use chalk wisely and choose types that match your skin and session (see chapter 6).

Calluses are bad and should be removed completely

Calluses are your skin's natural armour. The goal is to keep them smooth and even, not eliminate them. Use a KletterRetter skin file to control buildup, but never file calluses down completely.

Climb through the pain and toughen up your skin

Climbing on damaged skin doesn't toughen it. It can put additional strain on the skin and increase the risk of further injury. Follow your personal skin care routine, rest when needed, and come back stronger.

Taping an injury will tear the skin when you remove it

Good climbing tape isn't actually very sticky. It only sticks lightly to the skin, but sticks well to itself. The trick is to stick tape on tape instead of onto your skin.

My feet and my shoes smell bad because of genetics

What you are smelling is bacteria. Bacteria needs moisture and warmth to develop. Keeping your feet clean and your shoes dry with SmellWell can help reduce unpleasant odours.

11.2 Common mistakes climbers make

We're all human, and we make mistakes. Even experienced climbers sometimes make simple mistakes.

Not moisturising after sessions

If you use chalk and wash your hands, your skin needs recovery. Apply Handcreme or Repair Balsam after every session—especially in dry or cold conditions.

Reusing old tape over wounds

Dirty tape traps bacteria. Always use clean, finger tape from your personal skin kit.

Forgetting to drink enough

Dehydrated skin is brittle, thin, and more prone to splitting. Remember to drink consistently before, during, and after climbing, especially in warm gyms or on sunny days.

Thinking foot care doesn't matter

Your feet take a beating too. Dry, cracked heels or fungal issues can ruin your session. Use KletterRetter foot cream weekly and rotate shoes to allow them to dry.

It's not sunny today, I can skip the sunscreen

80% of UV rays get through the clouds. Exposed skin can burn fast, especially with chalk exposure. Always remember to apply KletterRetter sunscreen on days with high UV levels.



KLETTER RETTER

11.3 FAQs

As the handcare experts, we get asked all sorts of questions. Here are a few common questions and their answers.

Q: When is the best time to apply hand cream or balsam?
A: After climbing, before bed, and on rest days. KletterRetter hand cream absorbs quickly and works well during the day. Our KletterRetter repair balsam or skindisc/beedisc are best used overnight or with a bandage.

Q: Should I use chalk if my skin is cracked?
A: Only if you have to. Cover the crack with tape and use liquid chalk or cream chalk to reduce dust and friction.

Q: Can I still climb with a flapper?
A: Yes, but clean it, apply KletterRetter repair balsam, and tape it properly. Don't push if it's deep or painful.

Q: How do I know when I should use a skin file?
A: If your skin stings on contact or feels "thin and glassy," file less often and moisturise more frequently. Post-session filing and removing loose and dead skin helps keep your skin smooth and reduces buildup over time.

Q: Can I use regular lotion instead of climbing-specific products?
A: Maybe, but check the ingredients. Many drugstore creams can be problematic due to potential health and environmental risks from harmful ingredients or inadequate care properties. These ingredients can clog skin, cause irritation, or leave hands greasy. KletterRetter products are tested for climbing conditions.

Q: Do I need a first aid kit even if I'm just bouldering at the gym?
A: Yes. Flappers, cuts, and split nails can happen anywhere. A compact KletterRetter first aid kit and a (personal skin care set) is lightweight and fits in any gym bag.



Q: Why not just use a cheap standard cream? Why do I need your products?
A: We get this question all the time, and the answer is simple: because you need it!

Just like a car mechanic can't wash off oil stains with regular soap, or a surgeon can't disinfect his hands with just water, standard skincare products simply aren't enough for people who push their skin to the limit.

That's exactly what you do as a climber. Climbers wear down their skin far beyond what a non-climber ever experiences. In a single session, you rub your skin hundreds of times across surfaces often rougher than sandpaper, constantly breaking down your skin's natural protective layer.

Regular hand creams, designed for everyday use, can't handle this kind of stress. At KletterRetter, we're all climbers ourselves. We've spent years researching what climbing skin needs and and developing products designed to meet those needs.

Our products use high-quality ingredients, carefully selected to meet the specific demands of climbers' skin. But don't just take our word for it, try them yourself and feel the difference.

Final reminder:
Skin care is just as much a part of everyday climbing as training your fingers, shoulders, and tendons. A regular skin care routine helps you keep an eye on your skin and prepare it for the demands of climbing.



12 About KletterRetter

Built by climbers. Backed by science. Focused on your hands.

KletterRetter was born in 2013 from one simple frustration: our skin couldn't keep up with our climbing. After too many split tips, painful flappers, and taped-up fingers, we set out to create skin care that actually worked: for climbers, by climbers.

What started as one handmade hand cream has grown into a full product range trusted by athletes across Europe and beyond. Today, KletterRetter is known as the hand care expert for climbers, offering practical products designed to support their skin care routines and help them care for their hands.

What makes KletterRetter different?

- We climb. This isn't just a skincare company, we're climbers who understand the demands of sharp crimps, sweaty gyms, dry winter rock, and everything in between.
- We test. Every formula is tested by real climbers on real projects. If it doesn't work under pressure, it doesn't make the cut.
- We care. From ingredients to packaging, we make decisions that protect your skin, your environment, and your session.
- We innovate. From chalk technology to UV filter research, we keep improving, because your skin deserves more than recycled pharmacy products.

Our product philosophy

- Clean formulations. No harsh alcohols, unnecessary perfumes, or cheap fillers.
- Climbing-specific design. Our skin care products are designed to be integrated into the daily routine of every climber.
- Sustainability where it counts. Recyclable packaging, local suppliers and biodegradable materials where possible, and constant improvement behind the scenes.

Our mission

We are the hand care experts for climbers. Our high-quality, functional products are specifically developed to meet the needs of climbers' hands – whether you're climbing indoors or outdoors.

Thanks for reading. We hope this guide helps you take better care of your hands, your feet, and your performance. If you've got questions, suggestions, or stories to share, please get in touch. We're always up for a good skin conversation.



13 Appendix

13.1 Further reading

We work together with a team of experts and recommend the following resources for climbers who want to explore hand care, injury prevention, and taping in more depth:

Winkler, R. (2020). Taping im Klettersport
Zielgenau Verlag. ISBN 978-3-945274-06-1
A practical guide to taping techniques for climbing injuries, with clear instructions and illustrations

Hochholzer, T. & Schöffl, V. (2008). Soweit die Hände greifen
Panico Alpinverlag. ISBN 978-3-936740-28-7
Comprehensive medical advice for climbers, written by two leading sports medicine experts

Schöffl, V. et al. (2015). One Move Too Many
Lochner-Verlag. ISBN 978-3-9814287-0-4
The go-to guide on climbing injuries and prevention strategies.

The Climb Injury Handbook, by Dr. Jared Vagy
Available as an eBook and print edition via theclimbingdoctor.com
A modern, evidence-based injury prevention guide by a physical therapist and climber

Make or Break, by Dave MacLeod
Available via davemacleod.com
A thoughtful take on training and injury from a top climber and coach



"Every hand tells a story."

David Holmes



KLETTER RETTER

KletterRetter GmbH

Breslauer Str. 4a, 79379 Müllheim, Germany

+49 7631 9371550

contact@kletterretter.com

www.kletterretter.com

