

What it takes to climb Everest with no oxygen

By Colette Harris, Outside

In 2017, Adrian Ballinger of Olympic Valley was determined to stand on the top of the world without the help of supplemental oxygen. He had spent the better part of a decade guiding people to their Everest dreams as founder of Alpenglow Expeditions and had already summited six times with supplemental oxygen. But, Ballinger says, Everest is all about finding your limits, and for him, that meant making the ascent sans oxygen bottles.

He and his climbing partner, Cory Richards, first attempted to summit Everest without supplemental oxygen in 2016. Richards was successful. Ballinger was forced to turn back just 200 feet shy of the top. But 2017 was different. Ballinger and Richards, both Eddie Bauer-sponsored alpinists, summited Mount Everest together, and this time it was Ballinger who made it without supplemental oxygen.

Ballinger had started training for that moment six months in advance. But how, exactly, does one prepare for arguably the most daunting physical challenge on the planet? We asked him.

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