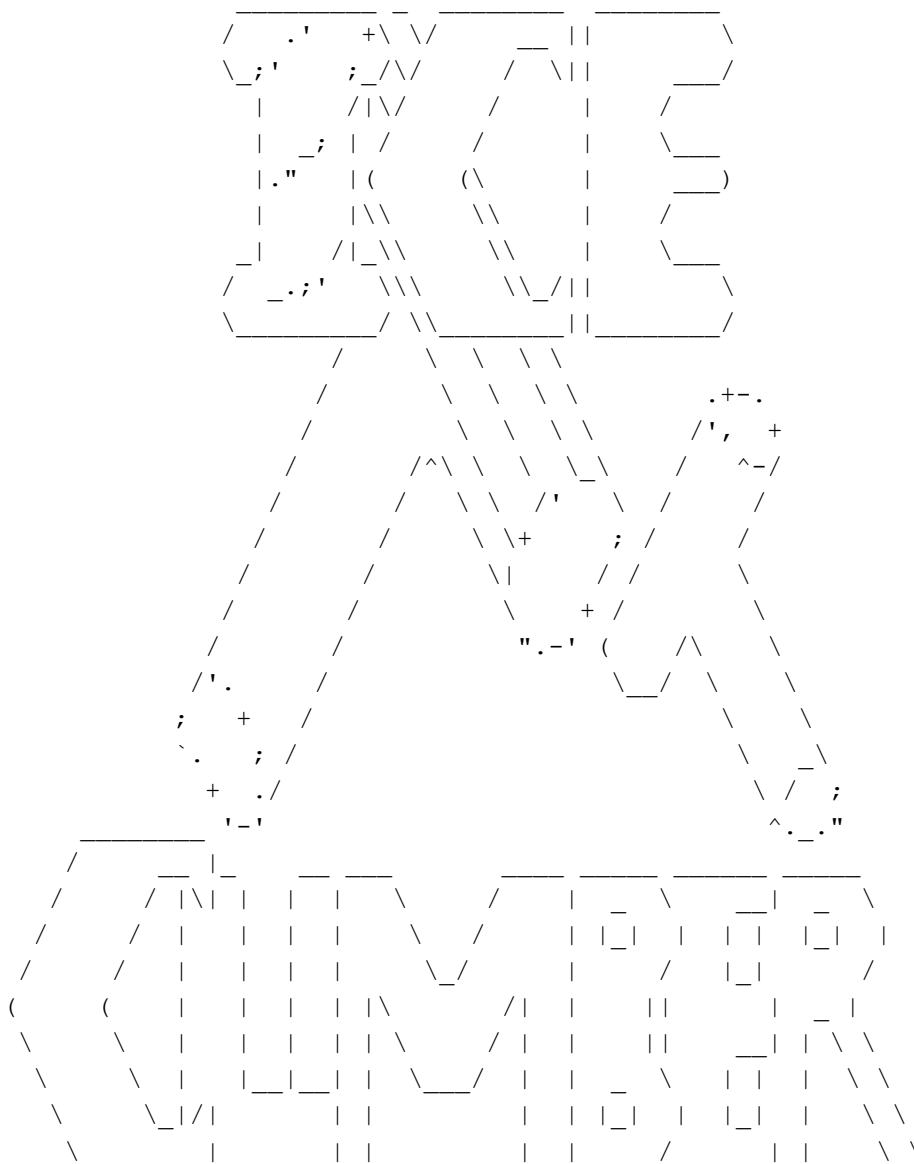


Ice Climber FAQ/Walkthrough

by Popo Nana

Updated on Feb 19, 2004



Ice Climber (NES) FAQ + Walkthrough

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This is my first guide, so if you've got any comments, any additions you'd like to see made to this FAQ, have a great high score, or would like to point out any corrections (spelling/grammar mistakes, incorrect information) please send an email to Popo_Nana@hotmail.com (Not case sensitive, and yeah, I've been obsessed for a while =P). Yes, I'll even give you full credit for it! Yowza!

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Anyway, onto the FAQ!

History

23rd Mar, 2003 - It's been that long already? Well, thanks to the newfangled invention called "email", I was shown the many minor mishaps in this guide
Thanks to Ryan for

18th Jan, 2003 - Finally updated my FAQ for the first time. Took my time, yeah?

9th Jan, 2003 - Began updating and continue walkthrough, extended, lengthy writing possible thanks to Notepad+

3rd January, 2003 - Started my walkthrough and ASCII art. It looks terrible using quickview, so I'll have to find out the exact specifications for everything soon.

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For those of you who don't know how to use this function, look at the number/letter combination (For example, if you want to look at Two Player Strategies, note the combination 5a.) Then, go to your browser's 'Find' function, and enter the combination (5a in our example). Keep searching until you get to the chapter you wish to read

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- 1a. What is Ice Climber about?

So, what is this game you've heard about?

Unless you stumbled across this FAQ by accident, you probably played as the Ice Climbers on Super Smash Bros. Melee for the GameCube and wondered who this hammer-wielding pair are. Waaaay back in 1984, Nintendo released one of their first NES console games, around the same time as the classic game Super Mario Bros (1985). Thankfully, Nintendo decided to revive these two eskimos in their latest pursuit for domination over their rival Nintendo mascots on the GameCube.

However, back in the early days of Nintendo's video gaming industry, the

Ice Climbers had no interest in competing with the likes of Mario, Donkey Kong or Link. Instead, for unknown reasons, the duo decided to climb the 32 mountains of...somerhereland...in order to obtain the 4 vegetables that the condor, found at the top of every mountain, places at the top of each one (making a total of 128 vegetables). The Ice Climbers, once completing their ascent of the mountain, would compete to grab onto the talons of the condor and the fastest climber would gain a free ride to the bottom of the mountain. However, it is unknown how the remaining climber got back down to the bottom of the mountain...

2a. Various enemies on the mountains

The 32 mountains which the Ice Climbers scale all have the same enemies. This means that both level 1 and level 32, as well as all the levels in between, have the same enemies. These enemies are:

Nitpickers: These appear as red birds floating around the mountainside. A good source of points at 800 a pop. However, these birds are extremely frustrating, as they always seem to appear whenever you try to jump from one cloud to another higher cloud. Since you can't swing your hammer very well on top of a cloud, (you usually end up falling off the back of the cloud,) these enemies make for a very frustrating climb.

Seals/Toppies: Depending on your country of residence (or where you downloaded your ROM from...honestly people, it costs less than \$5!), you may be confused about what these enemies are. In the Japanese version of the game, you will see seals walk along the platforms until they arrive at a hole in the platform. They then run back to the side of the mountain, and bring an icicle with them to the hole. Very annoying in later levels, as the seals/toppies, like the nitpickers, also appear whenever you need them the least. This section is from Raging_DemonTEN's guide, and explains why some versions have seals and others have toppies: "In the Japanese version of Ice Climbers, the Yetis are actually seals. The head of US localization didn't want the game to be nicknamed Seal Clubber, so they changed the seals to Yetis." And yes, it is spelt "toppies" - just check your manual! =P Or, if you do not own one, check the link at the bottom of this FAQ.

Filling Icicle: This icicle fills in two missing blocks in the of the mountain. Seals and toppies bring these to the holes in an attempt to rebuild their mountain. Worth smacking if the risk factor is not too high. The seals/toppies would not be so frustrating if they did not refill the holes with these icicles.

Dropping Icicles: This genetically engineered breed of super-race-icicles forms on the roofs of platforms and underneath clouds. After a couple of seconds of droplet formation, they become heavy daggers, ready to drop and pierce through the heavy parkas you're wearing. These can be destroyed if timed right, however, you get no points for doing so. It's best to just leave these well alone, unless your fellow climber below you may be hit by the falling icicle. You get no points for destroying these icicles.

Polar bear: This enemy appears once you spend an extended amount of time on one level. This rarely seen enemy is not terribly hard to kill, however, it can easily kill you. This is easy to see in two player mode, when your inexperienced friend cannot make that jump to higher ground. Generally though, you will rarely come up against one of these in the earlier levels of one player mode, unless topis block your progress for long enough. Be careful, since each Mountain you finish increases the chance of meeting up with the Polar bear,

especially if you're forced to make a jump up two clouds and then through a sealed off floor. If you try to attack the Polar bear, watch out - it can push you along the mountain. This means it can easily force you into the way of passing toppies, and force you to lose a life.

Condor: Not really an enemy, but the condor is what brings you to the mountain in the first place. In the beginning of each level, the condor places the four vegetables in the bonus round area of each level, and then waits for you to climb the mountain, find the veggies, and grab onto his claws. Maybe it's a sport, then, if it's all set up to see how well the Ice Climbers go?

3a. Point allocations

This part should be short and sweet. Hopefully.

23rd Mar, 2003: A reminder that there is no penalty if you fall off the mountain if you are playing in a bonus stage. However, I don't recommend it, unless you wish to try speed-climbing. Points are always there to help you.

Also, where I wrote "First Mountain," this refers to the mountain you start on. For example, if you started on Mountain 12, you would get 300 points per veggie. Then, on Mountain 13, you would earn 500 points per veggie. Quite simple to follow, really.

9th Jan, 2003: *Update* Apparently, there's no formula to follow when calculating the points awarded per vegetable or for finishing the bonus round. Hence, the correct values are as follows:

Getting a vegetable:

First Mountain:	300 each
Second Mountain:	500 each
Third Mountain:	600 each
Fourth Mountain:	700 each
Fifth Mountain:	800 each
Sixth Mountain:	1000 each
Seventh Mountain:	2000 each
Eighth Mountain:	3000 each
Ninth Mountain:	4000 each
Tenth Mountain (and onwards):	5000 each

Getting to the condor at the end of each level: Similar to above, multiplied by 10

First Mountain:	3000
Second Mountain:	5000
Third Mountain:	6000
Fourth Mountain:	7000
Fifth Mountain:	8000
Sixth Mountain:	10000
Seventh Mountain:	20000
Eighth Mountain:	30000
Ninth Mountain:	40000
Tenth Mountain (and onwards):	50000

Breaking a block of land: Level number x 10

Icing an Icicle: 400 each

Nuking a Nitpicker: 800 each

Smacking a Seal: 0 points

Taking out a Topi: 0 points

Petrifying a Polar Bear: 0 points

Destroying a Dropping Icicle: 0 points

Order vegetables appear in:

Those marked with an * need confirmation on what they are - please email

First Mountain: Eggplants

Second Mountain: Radishes/Carrots/Strawberries *

Third Mountain: Cabbage/Apple *

Fourth Mountain: Cucumbers

Fifth Mountain: Corn

Sixth Mountain: Onions

Seventh Mountain: Pumpkins (Jack O'Lanturns)

Eighth Mountain: Buk Choy?! *

Ninth Mountain: Oranges? *

Tenth Mountain: Mushrooms

4a. Single player strategies

Is this the bit you came for? Well, let's see what I can help you with.

- My first piece of advice is this: PRACTICE MOUNTAIN 1! It may seem easy, and it is, but you MUST learn how to jump properly, use run-jumps successfully, and just get a general feel for the game. Far too many people have written reviews stating "i palyed tehis gaem, and teh contro!s were suxx0rz!!!! SO I ddin't ddint' didttn paly it, i gaeve up!!! tihs gaem suxx0rz!1111!!!!1!!!!!" Just give it a chance. Remember that no game made before 1990 was intended to be easy. Games HAD to be hard, because they didn't have the capabilities to make them long and innovative every single level. If they weren't difficult and slightly repetitive, the player would finish them too soon to get their money's worth out of the game. Nowadays, games don't need to be extremely hard because they can be longer, due to save features in nearly all games. So guys, practice the first mountain! It really does help.

Of course, not all aspects of the game are covered in Mountain 1. For example, there are no clouds in this level at all. Raging_DemonTEN's guide suggests the following.

"- Spend a lot of time on Mountain 10. It is the best mountain to practice your jumping skills, without being overtly difficult. You'll become a master in no time if you play this level a ton."

I agree with this completely. Mountain 10 features just about all of the obstacles you'll come across. These include: Fast clouds, constant enemies, small 2-by-2 block platforms, extremely fast moving conveyor belts, unbreakable platforms, clouds that transport you to the other side, and toppies ready to block every bit of your progress. Despite all the turmoil, it is still hard to fall off the screen unless you make several mistakes in a row. Also, in the bonus stage, you can practice your SUPER high jumps, which you

will need later on in other bonus stages.

- To destroy a Dropping Icicle:

If you do want to destroy one of these for some reason, while it is falling, stand right underneath it, then walk one block to the right or left. Turn around, and swing your hammer constantly until it hits, or goes right past you. This strategy often does not work, as the icicle slips through your hammer.

An alternative method to the above listed is to line up underneath the icicle. Walk away one block, and DO NOT TURN BACK AROUND. Once it begins to fall, jump straight up. Your hammer should connect with the falling icicle before Popo or Nana place the hammer above their heads.

If the icicle is not fully formed yet, then you can destroy these icicles by knocking out the block it is forming on. If it is forming on a cloud, you must jump and hit it with the hammer while it is directly above Popo or Nana's head.

- Jumping difficulty

Yes, it's this part of the game which turns so many people off. It's true that the Ice Climbers jump up about 5 times higher than they do left or right. Still, this is an immense feat for anyone to accomplish. To truly master this game, you must use this jumping ability to your advantage, as you should do with any NES game. There are a limited number of actions you can take at all times - you can swing your hammer, continue to walk in the current direction, turn around, jump, stand still, perform a running jump, or BONG your teammate. As you can see, there isn't a great variety, but it shows that, if you want to survive, mastering these techniques are essential to mastering the game. So, my advice? The same as Raging_DemonTEN's. Practice up on level 10. It has early examples of all things that you need to practice.

- 5th level

CORN! The fifth level you attempt will always have corn at the top of it. Get at least one of these babies before you try something risky, as getting even one piece of corn gives you an extra life. Don't be scared if it looks like you still only have 3 heads showing at the top, as it will only display up to 3.

- Refilling holes

Often, a topi appears, bringing with it an icicle to fill in a hole. Don't think you have to destroy it. Especially in two player mode, you should wait for them to fill in holes in case you have to make a large jump, to prevent falling into the abyss below.

- Walking in circles

Don't ever forget that you can often walk around the left side of the screen and appear on the right side of the screen. In later levels, you need to use this for a fast climb.

- When attempting a mountain for the first time...

When I thought about how I could answer this section, I remembered these lines from Ecco The Dolphin on Sega Genesis/Megadrive:

"Your journey is long and dangerous
Always look beyond your eyes with your song
Swim slowly to keep control
Swim fast for your breath
Remember your way and think ahead"

~Excerpt from <http://cavernsofhope.com/>

Ice Climber is no different (except for the song bit). Your journey really is long, and very dangerous. You must move slowly and steadily to keep control of your climber, but you must also climb quickly to prevent being pushed down by the Polar Bear, to avoid being blocked in by the icicles the toppies push, and to stay clear of the many enemies that come your way. The last section is the most important of all - remember previous obstacles, and how you overcame them, and then think about how you could overcome your present challenge by using those skills needed.

Remember, no mountain was designed to be impossible - they all have many ways in which they can be completed!

5a. Two player strategies

-Being pushed

It's no big secret, but in two player games, you and your sibling/spouse (up to you to decide ;)) CANNOT occupy the same space. If you try to walk into your teammate, you will both turn and face the opposite direction. This can be a huge advantage or disadvantage, depending on its use (see below).

- BONGing your teammate

Over the years, my friends and I gradually got used to calling this technique "BONGing" your teammate. Don't ask how, just try it out next time both Nana and Popo go climbing together on your NES. Get one person to walk underneath the blocks, preferably two levels up, which you wish to destroy. Get one player to jump straight up, then get the second player to run underneath the first. Get the second player to jump so that as the higher one is at his/her peak, the other player hits the bottom of the higher climber. If performed correctly, the first climber should bounce off the head of the lower climber, and make an effective second jump. This second jump can destroy another block above his head. Try to repeat this for an infinite amount of jumps! Very useful for breaking blocks on higher levels, or for getting one player on top of a high level to clear out enemies. Practice this on Mountain 2. This is a positive way of being pushed.

- Avoiding BONGing when you don't want to BONG

There will be times when you're sitting on top of a very small area, often with conveyor belts and pillars, when you don't want to be affected by your teammate's movements around you. The only thing I can say here is to talk to your teammate. Tell them "Walk around to the other side of the mountain and move up there," or something. Just don't get angry at them unless you first warn them to stay away.

-5th level

Like in single player mode, the fifth level you play will have corn in the bonus stage. Let your teammate get at least one of these, as getting at least one will give you an extra life at the start of the next level.

6a. Single Player Strategies for each Mountain

Oh..my...I'm actually including this in my FAQ? This is going to take a long time. I hope you guys find it useful!!!

Mountain 1: If I actually have to help you through this level...

Well, there really is no strategy to it. Jump, Jump, Jump+Right, lather, rinse, repeat. It's just the basic, practice-your-skills level. So, practice

them up good, and smack a few enemies so you can begin your high score early. Learn to stay cautious if there are ever Nitpickers around. As Ryan W says,

"I swear, I have been killed on this level by hanging around too close to the left or right edge of the screen -- when the screen scrolls upward, sometimes there's a nitpicker right in your face." Very true, and you'll find this occurring more and more each level.

Mountain 2: Jump up onto level 2 on either side (preferably the left side,) and make a hole. Jump up to level 3, run to the right of the area, and jump on the cloud. Around this area, watch out for toppies and dropping icicles. Once on the cloud, wait till it takes you towards the left of the screen and jump up. You can't die here unless you land on something nasty, so don't be afraid to jump a bit. On level 5, break through, jump up to level 6, and use Mountain 1 techniques to finish the mountain. Not that hard now, was it?

Mountain 3: Jump up onto the cloud on level 2. Start to take out the floor of level 3. If a topi appears on level 1, you should probably drop down to whack it, or just make sure you don't aim for getting up to level 3 until the topi is nowhere near the hole you make. Get up to the third level, and if you're on the left side of the screen, walk around the mountain until you get to the right. Otherwise, start breaking blocks where you are. It should be straight-forward up to level 6, but watch out for toppies and dropping icicles. Level 7 & 8 are a bit tricky. Use level 7 to practice your wall-jumps, like in Super Mario 64. Of course, this isn't mandatory, but it's a good spot to practice without it being too dangerous.

Mountain 4: Jump up to level 2, and take out the nitpicker which is circling overhead. Just wait for it to line up above you, and jump. Following this, move over to the right of level 2, and wait for the cloud to come. Jump onto it when the time is right, and begin to take out level 4's floor. Again, watch out for toppies on level 1, dropping icicles from the top of level 3, and the toppies above which try to fill in the holes you make. Rest assured, it's not as hard as it looks, as you cannot fall and die yet. On level 4, there are about 5 block spaces between the pillar on level 5 and the pillar on level 5. Break a hole as far right on the left side of the pillar as you can. Jump up to your left, and the conveyor belt should take you to the pillar on the left of you. Jump straight up and break open a hole, jump up to level 6 and destroy all nitpickers. Use this section to practice moving from cloud to cloud. Beware of toppies carrying icicles, and start your jump from the left side of the screen. Jump up on the cloud on level 7, when about halfway, the cloud on level 8 should pass above you. Jump onto this, and aim for the far left hole which leads to the bonus stage. Enjoy this one, as it's as cool as a cucumber, and one of the last easy bonuses left. Enjoy the thrill of barely making the last double-cloud jump, too!

Mountain 5: Appearance making it look tough? It's not. Forget about the hole in the middle with the two pillars. Jump onto the (small) clouds, and start breaking through on the right side of the screen. Work your way up to level 4, and begin to break through to level 6 on the small cloud. You may find yourself tackling only one block each time you jump onto the cloud. Don't fret, just be patient. Levels 6-8 look like doosies, but they're easy too. Just wait for the topi to start to fill in level 8 before you try to make any silly jumps. It should be easy from there, and when you get to the top - CORN!!!! Enjoy this bonus stage too, as it's your last life filler for a while.

Mountain 6: Be thankful that the clouds are moving at the speed they are. If this was Mountain 16, they'd be moving twice as fast at half the size. Anyway, jump onto the second cloud and start to break the blocks where it is only 1 block deep. Don't forget to constantly be alert for toppies below.

Once you make it up to level 4, make your way to the left side of the screen. Jump onto the conveyor belt and either run into the direction it's moving, or swing your hammer so you don't fall off. Wait for the topi on this level 5 to refill the land on either side of the screen. If the topi is coming in from the left, once it hooks up with the centre island, destroy the topi and jump to the left side of level 6. If the topi is coming from the right, wait for it to hook up with the island with the pillar, and jump up onto the right side of level 6. Whichever side you jumped onto, run around if you have to so that you're on the left side of the screen. Now, when the time is right, jump onto the cloud and wait for it to carry you to the right side of the screen. Try to jump onto the far right section of level 8, as if you fall, you don't go all the way back to level 5. Toppies refill level 8, so run around to the side they're working on and make you way up to the bonus stage.

Mountain 7: Run to the right side of the screen and jump onto the cloud. You're going to need to wait for the topi on level 3 to refill the platform. Wait until it's mostly complete, then jump onto level 3. On the far right of level 4, there's a section 3 blocks wide and 2 blocks deep. Can you see it? Good. Jump onto it, and you can make it easily up to level 5, unless the topi has filled it in. Whether you have to break through or not, jump up to level 5 and make your way to the left. Jump up onto the first platform to the right of where it says "6" (first of four unbreakable ones). Time your jumps onto the cloud well, and make sure you go for the 1 block deep sections of level 8. One more thing: the topi above you WILL get annoying, especially if you're having trouble jumping to level 8.

Mountain 8: This level is much easier with two people. Anyway, run to the far right of the screen and make as small a hole possible, so that you don't have to worry about falling through later on. Once on the cloud on level 3, take out the blocks towards the middle which are (only 1 block deep). Jump up when there are no enemies around, as the conveyor belt may unexpectedly carry you to the right. The next section will take a bit of time to get through. Make your way to the left side of the screen. Jump onto the cloud when it comes over, and start to work through the blocks on the far left. The rest of the climb should be easy.

!Update! When doing the walkthrough for this level, I realised that the game randomizes where it places blocks when they are two blocks deep. See the diagram for Mountain 9 for an example.

Mountain 9: On level 1, make as small a hole as possible on the left side of the mountain. On level 2, jump onto the cloud between the middle of the level and the right side of the level. Jump onto the fast moving cloud, and you'll see two conveyor belt blocks on the right side of the roof of level 4. The level should look like this from about halfway:

Key: 0 = Unbreakable/Pillar
 / = Moving to the left + Breakable
 - = Half-block + Breakable
 = = Breakable
 } = Mountainside

```

0           }
0           }5
0           }
0 0 / / / / / / 0 0 0 0
  - = = - ^ - =
        |

```

Break and jump through this bit

Your level may not look exactly like this, as I wrote in the update, the game randomly puts blocks and halfblocks underneath everything. Anyway, there's generally always a weak spot, just find it and break through. Hurry though, as either the Polar Bear will arrive, or the toppies will make life difficult.

Once on the far side of level 5, break up to level 6 and race around to the left side. Jump from the level 6 left mountainside to the level 7 left mountainside. Wait for the topi to fill in ALL the ground, jump up the cloud, and you should be right.

Mountain 10: Ah, one of my favourites, especially when doing two-player mode. Well, first thing, hitchhike with the cloud until it takes you to the far side of level 2. Jump up to level 3 WITHOUT destroying any blocks, and you'll notice that you can easily make it up to level 4 so long as you stand on the little block that juts out. If the topi is refilling this area, fine, let it go. Run to the left side of level 4..

Err...I realised that my guide suddenly stopped there for some reason. Notepad couldn't hold more than 28kb and, I didn't realise this until I went to update my guide, but it seemed to delete the rest of mountain 10 and 11.

Sigh - Will finish off in the holidays (Mid April for moi)

7a. High scores collected from the Ice Climber Message Board

ICE CLIMBER HIGH SCORE:

Apparently, this is the world record: 1,000,000 (Tom Vatanga)

T'is a lie though. It's only the highest recorded score. So, for this guide, post your high scores, and the mountain you died on, and I'll put them up.

1. 1,322,780 (Ryan W) - Mountain 26
2. 1,000,000 (Tom Vatanga)
3. 941,700 (Nintendofan100)
4. 552,520 (Popo2002)
5. 455,000 (The50)
6. 418,510 (Meowthnum1)
7. 360,910 (LadyofPain)
8. 215,110 (Saltydogs4884)
9. 104,900 (LadyofPain)
10. 90,600 (Popo2002)
11. 16 332 (Dark Void) <-- Currently new and working hard
12. 0,000 (Alf, I'm still waiting for your score!)

8a. Interesting Ice Climbing facts

- So far, the Ice Climbers have had a very small gaming career. To the best of my knowledge, the only games which they appear in are this one (Ice Climber), Animal Forest, Animal Crossing and Super Smash Bros. Melee.

Don't quote me on it, and if any of the above information is incorrect, or incomplete, PLEASE email me! It only takes a second, I don't look like such an idiot, and I give you credit. We're all winners! Popo_Nana@hotmail.com is

the address.

- Agent RandX, wrote the following on <http://www.neschedda.com/>:

"UPDATE! ...Someone on the NES World message board informed me that a topi is the same thing as a yeti, which is an abominable snowman that resides in the Himalayas."

There you have it. Toppies do "exist" in some cultures, much like dragons and fairies do in others.

9a. Ice Climbing links + Credit

Thanks to the following people/companies:

- Ryan W, for many, many errors pointed out. Thanks very much for showing me where I went wrong :)
- Adam Lamontagne, for inspiring fellow NES guide writers, especially when it seems we're not needed
- Alf B, the regular reader AND feedback-ee
- Raging_DemonTEN, for allowing me to use two tips from his guide in my own. You can find his guide at <http://gamefaqs.com/console/nes/game/7808.html>, then by clicking the link leading to his guide
- Notepad+, for providing a program where there is no limit to the size of notepad files
- Nintendo, of course, for starting my fascination with ice climbing
- Agent RandX, for investigating the two different versions of Ice Climber, and identifying the origins of the Topi. See his article here: <http://www.neschedda.com/nfiles/nfileice.html>
- NESWorld, for hosting an online manual for Ice Climber
<http://nesworld.parodius.com/manuals/iceclimb.txt> is the link

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