

## GEAR REVIEW- PETZL SITTA

Less is more. A concept that makes sense in architecture, art, minimalist design, strength-to-weight ratio. Maybe it doesn't make quite as much sense for education, medical care, love, lottery winnings, or puppies. The Petzl Sitta is somewhere in between. Or is it?

When I first saw the Sitta, honestly, I didn't think I would like it. Tally up one point against Malcolm Gladwell's snap judgement theory in "Blink", because the Sitta was released in Summer 2015 and 3 years later I've finally arrived at the party... but I'M SO STOKED! Let me tell you why:

### FEATURES

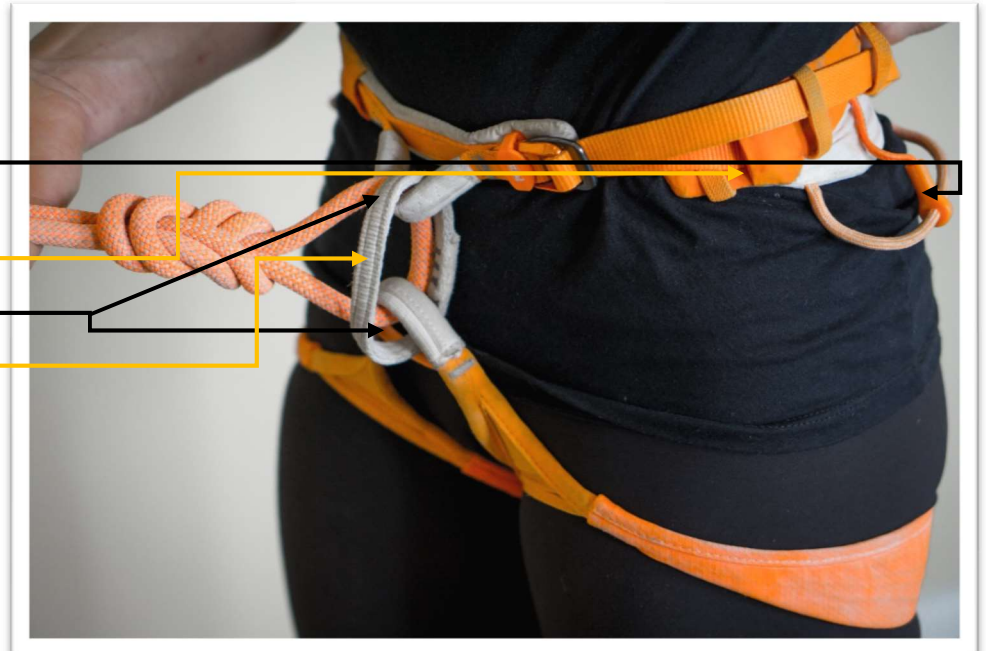
⇒ ① GEAR SORTING

DIVIDER

⇒ ② CARITOOLO SLOTS

⇒ ③ 2 TIE IN POINTS

⇒ ④ BELAY LOOP



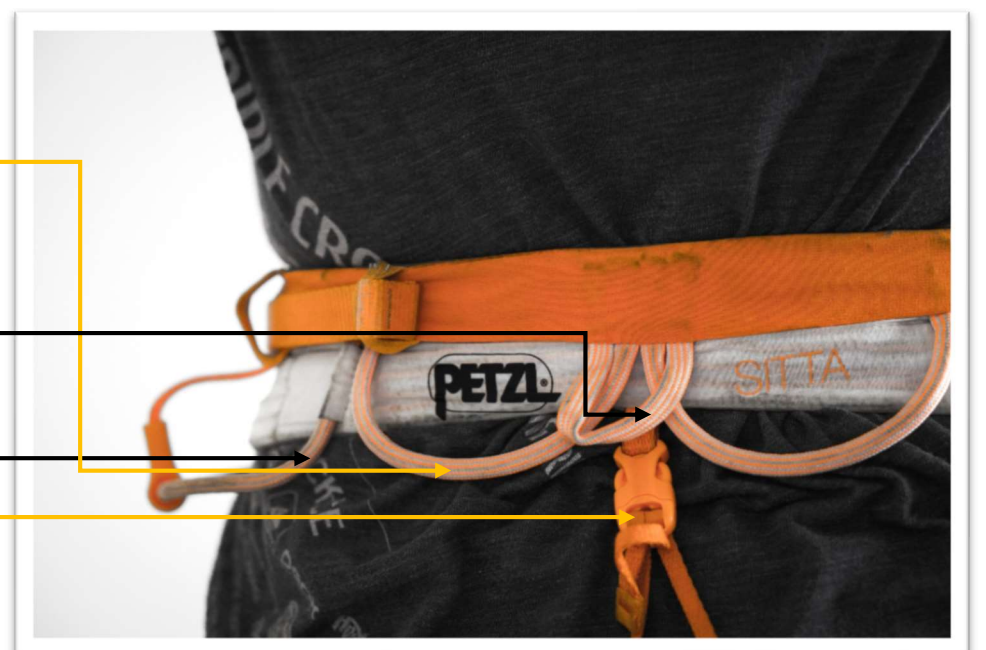
⇒ ⑤ ⑥ FOUR TOTAL GEAR

LOOPS (TWO RIGID  
FRONT, TWO NON-RIGID  
REAR),

⇒ ⑦ ONE HAUL LOOP,

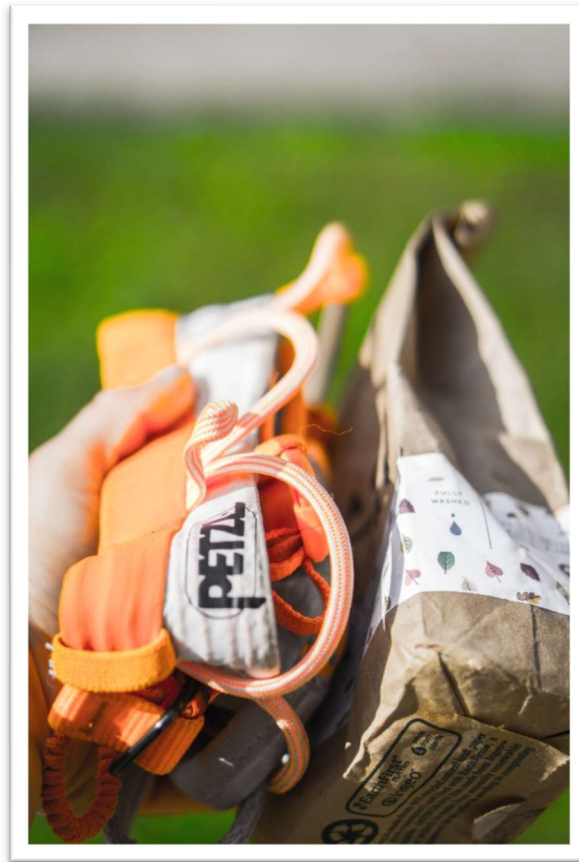
⇒ ⑧ ELASTIC 'DROP-SEAT'

CORDS WITH CLIPS FOR  
TENSIONING LEG LOOPS.



## **FUNCTION**

Two of the primary functions of a harness are to connect oneself to the system, and to rack and dispense gear. Immediately, I noticed upgrades from my former harness (Arcteryx SL-340) in both categories. The tie in points on this rig are made from high modulus polyethylene creating stiff, crisp targets to hit when tying in. The front racking gear loops are angled and rigid which creates a highly functional, clean gear dispensing system. One of the scintillating little details is the sliding micro divider that allows for sub organization of gear within each respective front gear loop. The rear gear loops are non-rigid cord intended to lie flat for comfort when wearing a pack. I find these less than ideal for a large rack, but I understand the design theory. Additionally, there are two CARITOOL slots for racking ice screws if needed but remain completely discrete otherwise. The rear haul loop is non-load bearing, as is standard for harnesses in this design class. I love how high functioning it is, yet it's so streamlined it packs down to the size of a bag of coffee.



*BFFs: Climbing and Coffee*

## **COMFORT**

Petzl's WIREFRAME technology is based on the concept that pressure points are the enemy. The waistband is composed of striations of membrane-esque Dyneema welded through the length of the belt. Other harnesses in the same class as the Sitta have similar technological concepts regarding

comfort and pressure points (ie Arc'teryx WARP Technology). In my judgement, they all perform similarly in this category. That said, though, the Sitta is aptly named; it is like wearing an ethereal chair.



*Male climber wearing size small Sitta*

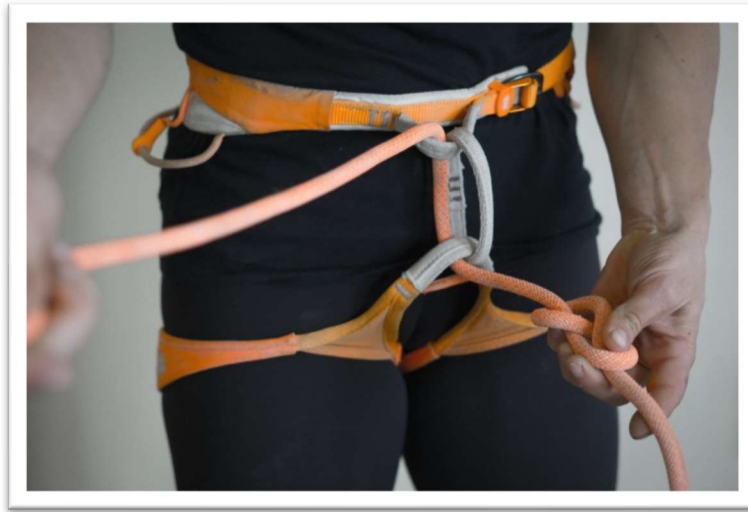
### ***DURABILITY***

Tie in points are generally considered the limiting reactant in the equation of harness lifespan; they take the most abuse. As such, Petzl designed the Sitta with 100% Dyneema tie in points and belay loop. This is a bold move in harness-land where most of the harnesses on the market have primarily nylon tie-in components and loops. Essentially, we trade some properties for others, playing the game of which properties are most relevant to the climbing equation. Dyneema is a super strong fiber yielding maximum strength with minimum weight. Some relevant facts (positive and negative) about Dyneema:

- ⇒ *15 times stronger than steel (weight-for-weight basis)*
- ⇒ *Excellent resistance to abrasion, chemicals, and moisture*
- ⇒ *Lower dynamic absorption when compared to nylon (effectively this means that the onus falls most heavily on the rope in the system for dynamic absorption, as opposed to the nylon components in the harness sharing some of the load)*
- ⇒ *Poor heat resistance due to relatively low melting point (140 °C)*

When compared to other harnesses with nylon components in these same areas, the Sitta prioritizes weight minimization and combatting abrasion at the tie in points. This truly is a knockout combo. Having personally worn down many harnesses to the point of cringeworthy retirement, I'm thrilled to say that my Sitta is still going strong after 6 months (3+ climbing/belaying days/week) and shows no sign of

significant wear on either tie in point. In my best judgment it is on a trajectory to significantly outlast any of the other harnesses I have owned.



*Female climber wearing size small Sitta*

***Fit***

This is such a personal thing. That said, I feel like it is true to size, and the fit is accurately represented by the following size chart found on Petzl’s website (*approximate English conversions added*):

References	C10AO S	C10AO M	C10AO L
Size	S	M	L
Color(s)	orange/white	orange/white	orange/white
Waist belt	67-77 cm	74-84 cm	81-92 cm
	26-30 inch	29-33 inch	32-36 inch
Leg loops	48-53 cm	52-57 cm	55-60 cm
	19-21 inch	20-22 inch	21-24 inch
Weight	240 g	270 g	300 g
	8.5 oz	9.5 oz	10.5 oz

Located at the base of the leg loops is an apt triangle\* of stretchy web material providing comfortable contact surface as well as a bit of play to accommodate minor differences in leg size or layering options (\*notice the change in the web triangle in above photos to accommodate male and female climbers wearing the same size small Sitta).

## CONCLUSION/PROS AND CONS



- |   |   |
|---|---|
| ⇒ Strength to weight ratio ( <i>so light!</i> )   | ⇒ Price (MSRP \$179)                    |
| ⇒ Resilience against abrasion (longer lifespan)   | ⇒ Reliance on rope for shock absorption |
| ⇒ Two, high-functioning, rigid gear loops (front) | ⇒ Two floppy ( <i>rear</i> ) gear loops |
| ⇒ Packable, comfortable, + style points           |   |

*Real talk:* I straight up love-love this harness. It makes me feel like a bonafide goddess. Down to the finest technicalities this thing was really crafted in the details with top shelf minutiae. If featherweight components get you psyched, then this harness will really sell itself. It's an ultralight dream with all the other bells and whistles too. Ideal use for alpine rock, ice, mountaineering and high-end sport climbing; and still a great choice for gym pitches.



*Bio:* Rachel Avallone is an Environmental Engineer, AMGA Rock Guide Apprentice and Single Pitch Instructor, climber of 14 years, climbing coach, whipper taker, gear abuser, dog lover, project slayer, photo taker, empress of STROKE, located in Lexington, KY.