



NATIONAL YEAR OF READING 2026



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# TALL STORY



Alex climbed this huge building...with no ropes or safety equipment!

An American climber has scaled the outside of one of the world's tallest buildings using no ropes, tools or safety equipment.

Incredibly, Alex Honnold completed the climb in just 91 minutes. After a day's delay because of bad weather, the 40-year-old used a technique called 'free solo' which doesn't use any safety gear or outside assistance.

The building, Taipei 101, is in the capital of the island nation of Taiwan off the coast of China.

It stands 1,667ft (508m) high and takes its name from its 101 storeys – not counting five more in the basement.

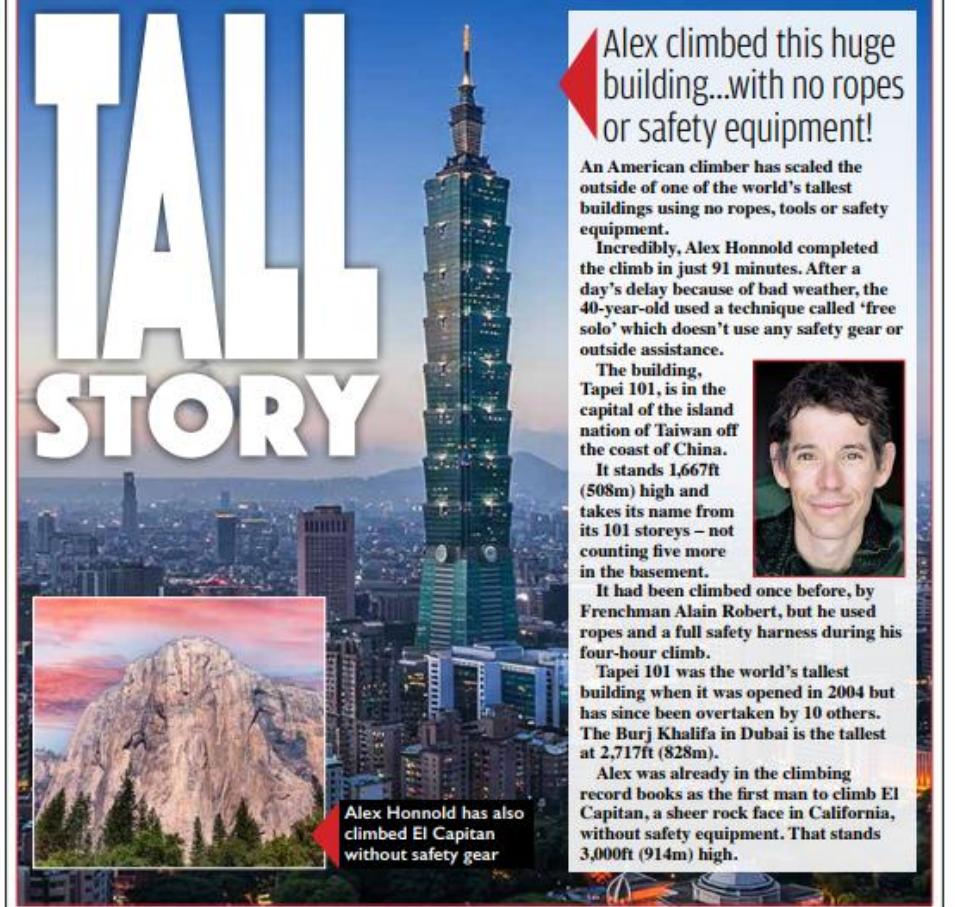
It had been climbed once before, by Frenchman Alain Robert, but he used ropes and a full safety harness during his four-hour climb.

Taipei 101 was the world's tallest building when it was opened in 2004 but has since been overtaken by 10 others. The Burj Khalifa in Dubai is the tallest at 2,717ft (828m).

Alex was already in the climbing record books as the first man to climb El Capitan, a sheer rock face in California, without safety equipment. That stands 3,000ft (914m) high.



Alex Honnold has also climbed El Capitan without safety gear



What does the word **scaling** mean in the article?

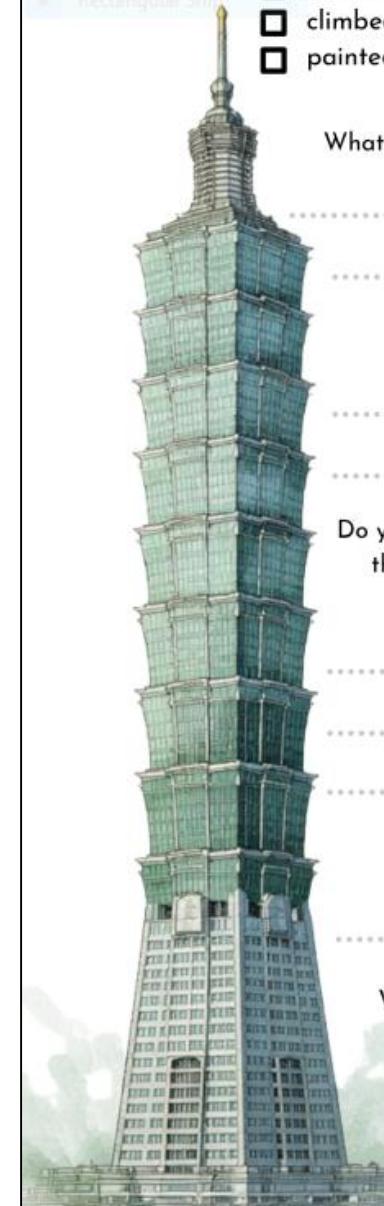
- measured
- cleaned
- climbed
- painted



What does the term **free solo** mean?

Where did the building get its name from?

Do you think Alex's attempt is more or less dangerous than Alain Robert's climb of the same building? Explain why.



What is the world's tallest building called?

What does the word **sheer** mean in the article?

- very steep and smooth
- rugged and rocky
- covered in plants
- easy to climb