

Developing Skills

A ski lesson should focus on a skier's skill development through the use of various encouraging tactics which include using exercises to help a student:

- Reinforce key movement
- Ski in a specific manner
- Ski on specific terrain (green, blue, black diamond, double black diamond)

The instructor uses a series of steps or "progressions" to provide the structure for the lesson. These steps begin with basic, easy to perform movements and "progress" into more advanced steps. **Balance** is key to developing confidence and learning the other skills which, when blended together, produce a proficient skier. Refer to the **BERP** table below.

Skiing Skills: BERP

	Proficiency in	Leads to...
B	Balancing	Maintaining balance while in motion
E	Edging	Aiding in adjusting the edge angle of the ski relative to the snow
R	Rotary	Turning and guiding the skis
P	Pressure Control	Managing and manipulating pressure variations between the ski and the snow

Skill Development

Your students will come to you with varying levels of athletic ability. All children, over the age of 8, have their fine motor & large muscle skills sufficiently developed, but how much use those muscles have received will affect how quickly students adapt to the skiing exercises you will be providing.

Beginning steps for First Timers: (Boots only! No skis on!)

- Introduce yourself & meet your class (create a team atmosphere)
- Walk in ski boots, with and without poles – develops balance & provides warm up
- Stand in place and tilt ankles, knees, hips into hill (edging); pickup leg and turn the leg in the hip socket (rotary); jump up and down, land "soft" (pressure control)
- Squat and stand, place weight on one foot and pick up the other (balance), both feet on the ground lean forward/lean back to help find center (stance & balance) Point out "athletic stance."
- Demonstrate "bow tie" movement and relate the movement to the wedge (pizza slice) they will be making when they put on both skis.

Beginning steps for First Timers: (One ski on!)

- Discuss Ski, binding, ski brakes, pole & boot use and safety. Boots buckled? Not too tight & on the correct foot? Demonstrate correct use of poles, how to wear the straps and keeps the pole tips behind you.
- Practice putting on skis and poles. Allow student time to place boot in binding. Show them how to release the binding (with pole or hand).
- Have the student put on the “outside” ski. Walk in place with the one ski on. Walk in a square so the ski is on the outside. Have the student balance on the one ski, walking and sliding on it.
- Introduce sidestepping with the one ski on the downhill side. Get the students comfortable on one ski. Introduce herringbone position. Practice both on one ski.
- Begin introducing the concept of edging. When proper edge and pressure applied to the ski, it does the turning for you.
- Demonstrate walking forward down slope with the outside ski turned on edge at a 60 to 90° angle from your body. This gives the student an idea of edging and pressure. It takes force to “push” the ski on edge shaving the snow while you walk forward.

Beginning steps for First Timers: (Both skis on!)

- Practice putting on **both** skis and poles. Make sure you are on FLAT terrain and students are spaced well apart.
- Show students how to fall and get up without removing skis (worse case..., remove skis)
- Demonstrate wedge. Have students practice.
- Demonstrate straight run and how to STOP using wedge.* Have students practice. Have students place hands on knees (keeps weight forward and upper body movement to a minimum). Discard poles for this phase of learning (they tend to get in the way).
- Start introducing the concept of turning through edging (DO NOT use upper body movement to turn!)
- Allow students on the chair when they have shown mastery of three turns and full STOP using the wedge.
- Focus on individual skills and work toward blending them together as student advances.
- At this point, skill development will be obvious. Consider skill levels and regroup.

*An alternative to wedge is turning the ski on edge, keeping it on edge as you move down the fall line and allowing the ski's camber to make the turn for you. (Difficult to explain on paper...easier to demonstrate ;).

Class Organization

To be an effective teacher, it is important to build a team feeling among your students. Class organization can aid in team building. Some example of class organization:

Class Organization: Title	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages
Line Up	Class lines up in front of instructor	Formal arrangement. Students face instructor	Does little for encouraging camaraderie within group
Semicircle	Class forms a half circle around instructor	Less formal, people are closer to each other & instructor	
Circle around Instructor	Group forms circle around instructor	Best structure for a beginning class as it gives everyone room to move.	Instructor needs to project voice more and be aware to constantly turn around and address all those in the group.
Instructor with the Circle	Instructor is part of the circle of students	Establishes a sense of belonging. Students feel less intimidated as they do not stand out from the group.	Difficult for instructor to perform demos
Follow Me	Instructor provides a visual example which students can follow	Sets pace and direction of run. Be sure to give complete instructions before you start moving.	Instructor cannot effectively assess what the class is doing
Call down	Instructor skis downhill demonstrating technique and calls students down one at a time.	Provides excellent opportunity to observe what each student is doing. Provides chance to comment on what you observe.	Students at top are left unsupervised and they may feel "exposed" in front of the rest of the group. Important that instructor give complete instructions before beginning descent.
Human Slalom	Students ski down and stop spaced out along run improvising as "slalom poles." First person at top of the "line" skis to the bottom of the line keeping at least a 4 foot space between the skier above them. Students can be used as obstacles that the other students ski around.	Each student gets a chance to observe what the others are doing. Participate in a group effort that advances their edging and turning maneuvers.	Be clear on where students stop and where they are to gather so observations and comments can be discussed. (Student "line" can get away from the instructor.)
Demonstration	Instructor creates a desirable standard for	Student sees the proper technique.	

	students to emulate.	Can be used with any skill set.	
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Basic Lift Safety

Each year, the Summit at Snoqualmie lifts are inspected by the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission and The Summit's insurance company to ensure a high level of standard and care.

To keep passengers, lift operators and lifts safe, lift loading and riding should be understood by all. A few highlights to remember and pass along to your students include:

- Explain loading and unloading procedures **PRIOR** to getting in the lift line. Stand a safe distance from the lift, but in a position where the students can see lift loading and discuss how to load and unload. Remove your poles. Face your partner. Grasp the center pole (Holiday chair).
- Stay alert and communicate with the lift operator. It's "OK" to let them know it is your first time on the lift or that you are tentative about how to get on and off it.
- Loose clothing or long hair must be tucked in. Back packs or packs of any kind should not be worn.
- Remember the phrase, "Back to back and bottom to Bottom."
- If poles or other equipment drop, don't try to retrieve them. It's the lift operator's job to observe these types of situations. If it's a pole or ski, they will send it up with the next passenger on the lift.
- DO NOT throw articles from the chair! It is against state law!
- DO NOT swing your legs or arms while on the chair. Excessive movement or severe swinging can cause cable derailment.
- If the chair lift has them, use chair bars for safety.
- Lift operators are trained to use and understand three basic hand signals:
 - Thumbs up! – fast or full speed
 - Thumbs down –slow speed or slow down
 - Arm extended, hand open, palm facing operator (like a police officer's stop signal) – STOP!!!

Skier's Responsibility Code

- Always stay in control, and be able to stop or avoid other people or objects.
- People ahead of you have the right of way. It is your responsibility to avoid them.
- You must not stop where you obstruct a trail, or are not visible from above.
- Whenever starting downhill or merging into a trail, look uphill and yield to others.

- Always use devices to help prevent runaway equipment.
- Observe all posted signs and warnings. Keep off closed trails and out of closed areas.
- Prior to using any lift, you must have the knowledge and ability to load, ride and unload safely.

Where to Go for More Information

Training videos: <http://www.bsss.com> (Whistler- Blackcomb ski & snowboard training videos)

Reference Materials:

<http://www.psia-nw.org>

<http://www.thesnowpros.org>