Ski

From your first slide to carving, moguls, powder and the park. A structured ski progression across 6 levels.

by the Progresspedia community

Compiled November 2026

Contents

Chapter 1 · Beginner

1. Introduction
2. Putting On and Taking Off Skis
3. Basic Skiing Stance
4. Moving on the Flat
5. How to Fall
6. Getting Up from a Fall
7. Straight Run
8. Wedge/Pizza/Snowplow Stop
9. Magic Carpet
10. Button Lifts
11. Getting Ready for Skiing

Chapter 2 · Upper Beginner

12. Mountain Etiquette and the Responsibility Code
13. Reading the trail map
14. Side Stepping and Herringbone
15. Kick Turn
16. Wedge Turns
17. Linked Wedge Turns
18. The Chairlift
19. Side Slip
20. Traversing
21. Your First Green Run

Chapter 3 · Intermediate

22. Turn Shape and Speed Control
23. Plough Parallel / Wedge Christie
24. Pole Plant
25. Hockey Stop
26. Balance Drills
27. Snow Park Safety
28. Side Hits
29. Your First Blue Run

Chapter 4 · Upper Intermediate

30. Parallel Turns
31. Edging and Angulation
32. Short Turns
33. Ice and Hard Pack
34. Skiing Switch

35. Straight Air
36. Shifty
37. Switch Straight Air
38. Riding Boxes

Chapter 5 · Advanced

39. Carving
40. Skiing Steeper Terrain
41. Moguls
42. Powder
43. Small Drops
44. Flat Light and Whiteout
45. Safety Grab
46. 180
47. Switch 180
48. Tail Grab
49. Your First Black Run

Chapter 6 · Expert

50. Tree Skiing
51. Crud, Slush and Variable Snow
52. Off-Piste Safety
53. Avalanche Rescue Basics
54. Steeps and Chutes
55. Jump Turns
56. 360
57. Mute Grab
58. 50-50 on a Rail
59. Rail Slide
60. 540

Appendix

Beginner

CHAPTER 1

11 articles

- Introduction
- Putting On and Taking Off Skis
- Basic Skiing Stance
- Moving on the Flat
- How to Fall
- Getting Up from a Fall
- Straight Run
- Wedge/Pizza/Snowplow Stop
- Magic Carpet
- Button Lifts
- Getting Ready for Skiing

Introduction

CHAPTER 1 · BEGINNER



Source: cdn.pixabay.com

Introduction to Skiing

Welcome to Skiing!

Whether you're a complete beginner or looking to understand the basics, this introduction will help you get started.

Skiing is an exciting sport that combines balance, coordination, and technique. With practice and patience, anyone can learn to ski and enjoy the mountain.

What You Need



Before heading onto the slopes, make sure you have:

- **Skis:** Appropriate for your height and ability.
- **Ski boots:** Properly fitted for comfort and control.
- **Poles:** Used for balance and rhythm.
- **Helmet:** Essential for safety.
- **Goggles and gloves:** Protection from weather conditions.
- **Ski clothing:** Waterproof jacket and pants.

Equipment basics

Your local ski hire place can often rent you most of the gear you will need to enjoy yourself on the slopes including helmets, waterproof clothing and of course your skis, boots and poles. Often the will not have gloves and goggles to rent so consider borrowing some from friends and family or investing in your own. When starting out, expect your skis to be between chin and nose height, this will enable you to learn to stop and turn easily. There are many different types of ski but for now you will most likely rent a beginner piste ski for maximum progression. Please be sure to rent a helmet, all the cool kids do, it is a great way of keeping your head warm as well as protecting your brain from any crashes or collisions that can happen on the slopes.

Ski Boots

Ski boots are the most important part of equipment you will have, having correctly fitting ski boots can make or break your holiday. Everyone has different shaped feet, ankles and calves so it is important to let a professional fit the right boots for your feet in your rental shop. Here are some tips to help with your ski boots:

- Ensure you are only wearing one pair of socks, preferably ski socks, multiple layers in your boots can cause blisters and make the whole experience very unpleasant
- Make sure you have trimmed your toe nails, long nails can cause pressure on your toes and even lead you to have a boot that is too big for you
- Boots should feel like a firm handshake, snug around your feet and ankles with enough room to wiggle your toes, your feet should not be able to rotate at all

Safety Basics

1. Always wear a helmet.
2. Learn to control your speed.
3. Look in the direction you want to go.
4. Keep your knees slightly bent and maintain a balanced stance.
5. Give priority to skiers downhill from you.
6. Never stop in narrow or poorly visible areas.
7. Stay on trails appropriate for your ability.

Your First Steps on Skis



Start on flat terrain and become comfortable with your equipment. If possible as you start your journey into skiing, supplement these useful articles by booking some ski lessons, it will help you progress faster and master the basics. The first few times you go skiing can be the hardest, the content on these pages are an excellent way to progress your skills but in the very beginning when yours and others safety is paramount, learning in person with a professional can be the key to getting the most out of your trip.

Enjoy reading the following articles and practise the following movements:

- Walking on skis.
- Side stepping uphill.
- Gliding on gentle terrain.
- Making a snowplough (wedge).
- Controlling your speed and stopping.

Before skiing, remember these important principles:

Your Learning Progression

A typical beginner progression includes:

1. **Flat terrain:** Balance and equipment familiarization.
2. **Beginner slopes:** Gliding, snowplow, and stopping.
3. **Basic turns:** Learning to change direction.
4. **Green runs:** Linking turns and controlling speed.

5. **Blue runs:** Developing parallel skiing and edge control.

Putting On and Taking Off Skis

CHAPTER 1 · BEGINNER

Getting your boots and skis on and off smoothly is key to a good day on the slopes. You'll learn how to do it comfortably, so you can focus on skiing.

Warm boots are happy boots. If you're renting, keep them inside overnight or bring them into the lodge to warm up before you start. Wear dry, synthetic or wool ski socks, pulled up snugly without wrinkles. Avoid cotton and thick hiking socks.

Putting on your boots

1. **Open up**: Undo all buckles and the power strap. Pull the tongue forward to create space.
2. **Slide in**: Slide your foot in, then make sure the tongue is seated correctly between the liner sides.
3. **Buckle up**: Loosely buckle all clips. Stand up and flex your knees forward a few times to push your heel back.
4. **Tighten**: Sit down and tighten the top two buckles and power strap to lock your heel in. Keep the lower buckles over your foot snug but not too tight to avoid cutting off circulation.
5. **Outer layers**: Make sure your base layer and ski pant powder cuff are *outside* your boot, not tucked in, to prevent discomfort and keep snow out.

Putting on your skis

1. **Prepare your gear**: Separate your skis and place them side-by-side on the snow, facing downhill.
2. **Clear the way**: Scrape any snow off the bottom of your boot and out of the binding's toe and heel pieces.
3. **Click in**: Slide the toe of your boot into the binding's toe piece. Align your heel with the heel piece, then press down firmly until you hear a click.

Taking off your skis

1. **Release the heel**: Turn around and use your ski pole to press down and back on the heel piece of the binding. This will release your boot.

Taking off your boots

1. **Reverse the process**: Pull your ski pant leg and powder cuff up and out of the way. Undo the power strap and all buckles completely, pushing them aside so they don't re-buckle.
2. **Step out**: Pull your foot underneath you, press on the back of the boot, and flex your knee forward. Your foot should slide out easily.
3. **Store them right**: If you're skiing again soon, bring your boots inside to dry and warm up overnight. You can use the power straps to clip your boots together for easy carrying.

Common mistakes

- **Snow in the way**: If your boot or binding has packed snow, it won't click in properly. Scrape it clean.
- **Over-tightening**: Buckling the lower foot buckles too tightly can cut off circulation and cause discomfort or pins and needles. Keep them snug, not crushing.
- **Clothing inside**: Any clothing tucked into your boots can create pressure points, blisters, or circulation issues. Keep everything outside.

Learn more

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: REI ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Basic Skiing Stance

CHAPTER 1 · BEGINNER

This is your fundamental body position on skis. It's how you stay balanced and in control, whether you're gliding, turning, or just standing still. Master this, and everything else gets easier.

How to do it

1. **Get Centered**: Stand tall, feeling your weight evenly distributed over the middle of both skis.
2. **Relax and Engage**: Keep your knees slightly bent, hands naturally in front of you. Stay relaxed but ready to move.
3. **Look Ahead**: Keep your gaze up and forward, not down at your skis. Trust your skis to do their job when you're in the right spot.

Common mistakes

- **Sitting back**: This is a big one. You'll feel your quads burning and struggle to steer. It happens when you put too much weight on your heels.
- **Leaning too far forward**: While you don't want to sit back, don't overcompensate by pushing too far forward. Find that sweet spot where you feel balanced and neutral.

Learn more

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: SKNG Ski School ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Moving on the Flat

CHAPTER 1 · BEGINNER

This skill helps you move across flat sections of the mountain, like connecting trails or getting to the lift line, without taking your skis off. You'll use a combination of leg pushes and pole pushes to glide forward.

You should be comfortable wearing your skis and maintaining your balance on flat ground. It helps to have a feel for gliding a little on gentle slopes.

How to do it

Using your legs

1. **Stance:** Stand in your athletic stance, knees slightly bent, weight centered.
2. **Push and Glide:** Push one ski slightly out to the side and back, using the edge to propel yourself forward. As you push, shift your weight onto the other ski and glide.
3. **Alternate:** Repeat with the other leg, alternating pushes to keep moving. Think of it like a subtle ice skate push.

Using your poles

1. **Plant:** Plant both poles firmly in the snow beside you, slightly ahead of your body.
2. **Push:** Lean into your poles and push down and back to propel yourself forward.
3. **Recover:** Lift your poles and bring them forward to plant again, maintaining your momentum.

Common mistakes

- **Feet parallel:** If your skis are too parallel when pushing, you won't get enough grip to move forward effectively. Angle them slightly.
- **Pizza (wedge):** Don't put your skis in a wedge (pizza) shape. This will slow you down or even make you slide backward on flat ground.
- **No weight transfer:** Not shifting your weight from one ski to the other means you're just pushing snow around instead of gliding.

Learn more

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: Ronchen's Studio ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

How to Fall

CHAPTER 1 · BEGINNER

Everyone falls. Beginners fall constantly, and good skiers fall trying new things. It's not a matter of if but how. Fall the right way and you get up, shake it off, and go again. Fall the wrong way and your season is over. Most of the fear that stops people trying new things is really fear of getting hurt, so learning to fall well makes you a braver skier too.

Buy the protection, and get your bindings checked. A helmet is not optional. Crash pants (padded shorts with a tailbone pad) are cheap and you'll be glad of them on day one. On skis, though, the gear that saves you most is the one you don't see: your bindings. A binding that doesn't release twists your knee instead of letting the ski go. Have a shop set the release value for your weight and ability, and never crank it up yourself because a ski came off once.

The three rules

1. Don't fight the fall. The most common serious ski injury is a torn knee ligament, and most of them happen when a skier tries to stay upright after they've already lost it. Sitting back, weight on the tail of one ski, trying to stand back up mid-fall is the classic way to twist a knee. When you feel yourself going, give in to it early: get low, pull your arms in, and go down to the side or onto your backside. A fall from low is short and soft.

2. Keep your hands to yourself. Your instinct is to catch yourself with your hands. Straight arms snap wrists and collarbones, and a pole in your hand on the way down is how you get skier's thumb. Keep your hands in loose fists in front of you, and let go of the poles if you have to. Hips, backside, back and shoulders are far stronger than any arm. Roll onto them.

3. Stay in control. The serious accidents are skiers going fast along the edge of a run, losing it, and flying into the trees. Ski fast in the middle of the run, not the tree line. Look uphill before you merge. If a collision is coming and you're a beginner, don't swerve into something else; fall to your side instead. Don't ski drunk.

On the slope

When you go down, slide out across the slope rather than straight down it. Get your skis below you on the downhill side and dig the edges in to stop sliding, exactly as you do when getting back up. On steep terrain that matters more: feet and elbows into the snow as soon as you're down. Then move out of blind spots before you sit and recover.

On jumps

Land feet first, even if you fall right after. Landing flat on your back from height is how backs get broken, and landing sitting back with your weight behind your boots is how knees go. Get your speed right and land in the actual landing, which is sloped to absorb your speed. The knuckle and the flats are sudden stops. If you wreck, get up and move to the side so nobody lands on you.

On rails

If you feel the fall coming, push off the rail and fall onto the snow beside it, skis away from the metal. The bad rail falls are a ski stuck under the rail or your head hitting it. Helmet on, and detune your edges if you ski a lot of rails.

Watch the four techniques here:

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: Stomp It Tutorials ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Key tips

- Give in early. Fighting a fall to stay upright is how knees get torn
- Get low first so the drop is short, then slide out sideways
- Hands in loose fists in front of you, never straight out behind you
- Let the poles go rather than land on one
- Get your binding release value set by a shop, and leave it there
- Skis downhill of your body once you're down, edges in, then move out of blind spots

Getting Up from a Fall

CHAPTER 1 · BEGINNER

When you fall, this skill helps you get back on your feet safely and efficiently, whether you're on a flat section or a slope.

How to do it

First, bring your skis together so they're parallel. Then, point your skis across the slope, perpendicular to the fall line. Dig your edges into the snow to prevent sliding.

Then you can do one of 3 things:

- **Push off with your hand:** Lean forward over your knees, place one hand on the snow, and push yourself up. Bring your knees under you as you stand.



Source: Ski with Emily ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

- **Sit on your skis:** Sit on the back of your skis, then place both hands on your knees and pull yourself forward and up.



Source: Ski with Emily ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

- **One ski off (last resort):** If the other methods are too difficult, take one ski off by pushing down on the binding with your palm. Get onto your knees, then stand up. You'll need to put the ski back on once you're standing.



Source: Ski with Emily ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Once you're standing, grab your poles. Be ready to ski away smoothly.

Common mistakes

- **Using your poles to push up:** This often puts you in an awkward, backward position that makes it harder to stand. Use your hands on the snow or your knees instead.
- **Skis not across the slope:** If your ski tips point too far down, you'll slide forward. If they point too far up, you'll slide backward. Make sure your skis are perfectly across the slope to stay stable.

Learn more

Watch more here:

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: Ski with Emily ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Straight Run

CHAPTER 1 · BEGINNER



Source: www.yourskicoach.com

Gliding and Going Straight on Skis

Introduction

Gliding straight on skis is one of the first skills beginners learn. It helps you become comfortable with sliding, develop balance, and understand how your skis move on snow.

Before learning to turn or control your speed through more advanced techniques, it is important to feel comfortable gliding down a gentle slope while maintaining a balanced position.

The goal is to stay relaxed, look ahead, and allow your skis to slide naturally.

Getting Into Position



Before starting to glide, make sure you are in a proper athletic stance.

- Keep your feet approximately hip-width apart.
- Keep your skis parallel and pointing straight ahead.
- Bend your knees and ankles slightly.
- Keep your upper body relaxed and facing downhill.
- Hold your hands in front of your body.
- Keep your weight balanced over the middle of your feet.

Avoid leaning backward. Staying centred over your skis will help you maintain control and balance.

Learning to Glide

Find a very gentle slope with plenty of space to glide.

1. Start with your skis parallel and pointing downhill.
2. Make sure you are standing in a balanced athletic position.

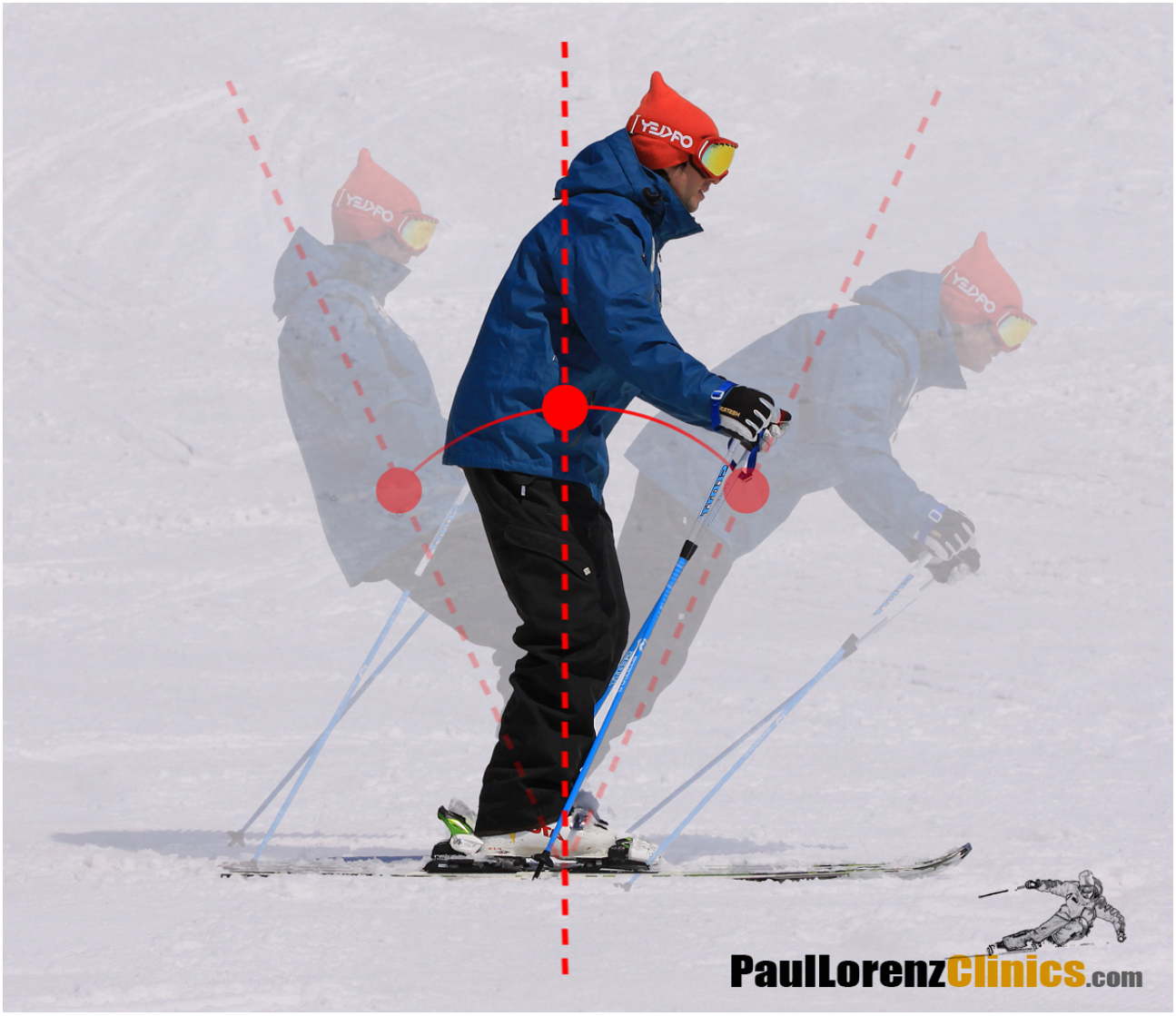
3. Gently allow your skis to slide forward.
4. Keep your eyes looking ahead rather than down at your skis.
5. Stay relaxed and maintain your balance as you glide.

Let the skis move naturally. Avoid making sudden movements or stiffening your body.

Important Points to Remember

- **Look ahead:** Focus on where you are going, not on your skis.
- **Stay centred:** Maintain contact between your shins and the boot.
- **Keep your skis parallel:** Avoid allowing the tips or tails to cross.
- **Stay relaxed:** Use your ankles, knees, and hips to absorb small movements.
- **Keep your hands forward:** This helps maintain a balanced position.

Common Mistakes



Beginners often make a few common mistakes when learning to glide:

- **Leaning backward:** Makes it difficult to control your skis and maintain balance.

- **Looking down:** Can affect your posture and balance.
- **Standing too stiffly:** Makes it harder to adapt to changes in the snow.
- **Keeping your feet too close together:** Can make balancing more difficult.
- **Rotating the upper body:** Can create unnecessary movements and affect your direction.

Focus on maintaining a relaxed and centred position.

Practice Exercises

To become more comfortable gliding, try these simple exercises on gentle terrain:

1. **Straight gliding:** Slide straight down a gentle slope while keeping your skis parallel.
2. **Balance position:** Practise maintaining your athletic stance throughout the glide.
3. **Hands forward:** Keep your hands visible in front of you while sliding.
4. **Longer glides:** Gradually increase the distance as your confidence improves.

Always practise on a gentle beginner slope with a clear, safe stopping area. Make sure you already know how to stop before attempting longer glides.

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: We Guide You Sport ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Final Tips

Gliding straight is the foundation of many skiing skills. Developing good balance and feeling comfortable sliding will make learning to stop and turn much easier.

Remember: - Start on gentle terrain. - Keep your skis parallel. - Maintain a balanced athletic stance. - Look ahead. - Stay relaxed and let your skis glide.

Take your time, build your confidence, and enjoy your first slides on skis!

Wedge/Pizza/Snowplow Stop

CHAPTER 1 · BEGINNER

The snowplow, also known as the wedge, is your first way to control speed and stop on skis. You'll use it on gentle slopes to slow down or come to a complete halt.

How to do it

1. Get ready

Start in a balanced athletic stance, shoulders forward, hands up, and look where you want to go. Let yourself glide gently on a very flat slope.

2. Make the wedge

To form the snowplow, point your toes towards each other and push your heels outwards. This creates a V-shape with your skis. Keep your ski tips close, but don't let them cross.

Apply pressure to the inside edges of your skis. The wider your wedge and the more pressure you apply, the slower you'll go.

3. Control and stop

Maintain this wedge position to control your speed. To slow down more or stop, widen your wedge and increase pressure on your inside edges. To speed up slightly, bring your feet a little closer together, reducing the wedge.

Common mistakes

- **Skis too straight:** If your skis are too parallel, you won't create enough resistance to slow down. Make sure your toes are pointing in and your heels are pushed out to form a clear V-shape.
- **Not enough edge pressure:** You need to actively push against the snow with the inside edges of your skis. If you're just gliding without pressure, you'll pick up speed. Feel the resistance from the snow.

Learn more

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: Maison Sport ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Magic Carpet

CHAPTER 1 · BEGINNER

A magic carpet is a moving conveyor belt that takes you up gentle slopes. You'll find them in beginner areas, making it easy to get back up the hill without needing to use your poles or more complex lifts.

How to do it

1. **Getting on** As you approach the carpet, take your pole straps off and hold both poles in one hand. Take small, shuffling steps onto the moving belt, keeping your skis parallel and pointing straight up the slope.
2. **The ride** Once you're fully on the carpet, keep your skis straight and parallel. Stand still, stay balanced, and enjoy the ride up the hill.
3. **Getting off** As you reach the top, lean slightly forward with your knees flexed. The carpet will gently push you off. Once you're clear, move out of the way quickly so others can exit behind you.

Common mistakes

- **Not keeping skis straight**: If your skis turn sideways on the carpet, you might fall or get tangled. Keep them pointing straight up the slope at all times.
- **Lingering at the top**: Don't stop right at the exit point. Move to the side immediately to avoid collisions with people coming off the carpet behind you.

Watch more here:

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: Ski with Emily ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Button Lifts

CHAPTER 1 · BEGINNER

How to use a button lift

1. **Getting on:** Hold both poles in your uphill hand. With your skis on walk towards the loading station, make sure you are standing at least half a meter away from incoming bars from the lift. Position your skis hip-width apart, pointing straight up the hill. Look behind you, reach for the approaching bar, and let it settle gently against your backside. Don't try to sit on it.
2. **Riding up:** Stand tall and relaxed. Look ahead, letting the lift pull you and your skis glide up the slope. Don't try to sit down; the lift won't support your full weight.
3. **Getting off:** Wait until you're on the flat at the top. Pull the bar down and gently let it go. Immediately move forward and out of the way of skiers coming up behind you.

You might also encounter button lift you have to trigger yourself with a button or by walking over a sensor, it will look like this:

■ *Video clip - view it online.*

Source: Maison Sport ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Common mistakes

- **Sitting on a button lift:** The bar is a drag, not a seat. If you try to sit, you'll slide down and fall.
- **Getting off a button lift too early:** Wait until you're on the flat at the top. Getting off too soon can make you slide backward.

Watch more here:

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: SKNG Ski School ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Getting Ready for Skiing

CHAPTER 1 · BEGINNER



Source: Ski with Emily · How to get ready before skiing

This article walks you through getting dressed and packing your essentials so you're comfortable and safe on the mountain. It's all about setting yourself up for a great day of skiing.

Layering up

Start with ski socks and thermal base layers on cold days. Add ski pants, a thermal top, an extra mid-layer, and your ski jacket. A neck gaiter makes a big difference in chilly weather. Adjust your layers based on the temperature and how warm you usually get.

Pull your ski socks all the way up. Make sure your thermal bottoms stay above the top of the boot liner. Any creases inside the boot will cause discomfort.

What to pack

Always carry essentials in your pockets.

- Sunscreen
- A snack bar
- Tissues
- Hand warmers
- Your phone
- Your lift pass (it often has the safety crew's number on it)

Learn more

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: Ski with Emily ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Upper Beginner

CHAPTER 2

10 articles

- Mountain Etiquette and the Responsibility Code
- Reading the trail map
- Side Stepping and Herringbone
- Kick Turn
- Wedge Turns
- Linked Wedge Turns
- The Chairlift
- Side Slip
- Traversing
- Your First Green Run

Mountain Etiquette and the Responsibility Code

CHAPTER 2 · UPPER BEGINNER



Source: Ski California · Mountain Safety Guide Video Series 3: Safety for New Skiers and Riders | From Ski California

These are the basic safety rules you need to know when you're just starting out on the mountain. Every resort posts them as the Responsibility Code, and following them keeps you and everyone else safe, letting you focus on learning and having fun.

Before you go

When you're new to skiing, it's best to take a lesson. Instructors will teach you how to ski safely and responsibly. The next best alternative is to have an experienced skier or snowboarder friend teach you.

Key safety rules

1. **Ski to your ability:** Stick to beginner terrain, usually marked with green circles. Don't push yourself onto harder slopes until you can control your speed and stop reliably.
2. **Control your speed and direction:** Always be able to stop and avoid other people or obstacles. Look ahead to see where you're going and who's in front of you. People below you have the right of way and can't see you coming.
3. **Observe signs and closed areas:** Pay attention to all trail signs and never enter a closed area. They're closed for a reason, often due to hazards or ongoing work.
4. **Stop safely:** If you need to stop, move to the side of the trail where you won't block others. Make sure you're visible from above, so never stop just below a rise or a blind corner.

5. **Yield at merges:** When trails come together, slow down, look uphill, and yield to the skiers and riders already on the merging trail.
6. **Use the lifts properly:** Know how to load, ride and unload before you get in line, and keep your pole straps off your wrists on the lift.

Learn more here:

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: Ski California ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Reading the trail map

A ski trail map (a piste map in Europe) is a drawing of the whole resort: every run, every lift, and the lodges, toilets and ski patrol huts in between. Learning to read one takes ten minutes and saves you from the classic beginner day - riding a lift to the top, finding only black runs down, and side-stepping for an hour.

You can pick up a paper map at the ticket office, rental shop or base lodge, and most resorts print it on boards at the top and bottom of every lift. Nearly every resort also has it in an app, which adds a blue dot for where you are. Carry the paper one anyway; phones die in the cold.

How the map is drawn

Trail maps are paintings, not maps to scale. The artist flattens the mountain so you see it from the valley, with "up" on the page being "up" the hill. Distances are squashed, runs on the far side of a ridge are bent round to fit, and one map often shows several peaks that are really miles apart.

So use the map for *connections*, not distances. The questions it answers well are "which lift gets me to that run", "where does this run end up" and "how do I get back to where I started". It answers "how long will that take" badly.

What the symbols mean

Every run has a colour and shape, and the colour is a rating of that run *relative to the rest of this resort*, not a universal standard. A blue at a steep resort can be harder than a black at a gentle one.

North America uses shapes as well as colours, so they still work in black and white:

- **Green circle** - easiest. Wide, gentle, groomed.
- **Blue square** - intermediate. Steeper, may have rolls and narrower sections.
- **Black diamond** - advanced. Steep, often ungroomed, moguls or trees.
- **Double black diamond** - expert. Very steep, cliffs, chutes, no fall zones.
- **Orange oval** - terrain park. Jumps, rails and boxes.
- A **dashed line** usually means a cat track or a connecting trail - flat, narrow, and not a run you would choose for fun.

Europe uses colours only, and the scale is shifted:

- **Green** - very easy (not every country uses it; France and Spain do).
- **Blue** - easy. Roughly a North American green or easy blue.
- **Red** - intermediate. Roughly a North American blue or easy black.
- **Black** - advanced. Anything from a steep groomer to a mogul field.
- **Yellow or dashed** - an itinerary route. Marked and avalanche-controlled but not groomed or patrolled. Not a piste.

Off-piste (anything not on a marked run) is unmarked on both continents and is your own responsibility. Read off-piste safety before you go anywhere near it.

Lifts have their own symbols too - a line with a little chair, gondola, or a short tick for a button lift or T-bar. The lift type matters when you are new: button lifts and T-bars are harder to ride than a chairlift, and a gondola means you take your skis off.

Reading the lifts

The lifts are the skeleton of the map. Before you choose a run, trace the lift that takes you to its top and check two things:

1. **What runs leave the top of that lift?** If every one of them is black, that lift is not for you yet, no matter how friendly the run you spotted lower down looks.
2. **Where does the bottom of the run put you?** Ideally at the base of the same lift (a "pod" you can lap all day) or at the base area. If it ends at a different lift, check what *that* lift serves.

A trap worth spotting on the map before you get on anything: a green run that ends at a lift which only serves blacks. The map shows it clearly if you look; the mountain does not.

Planning a route down

Pick your run from the top, not from the bottom. Start at the lift you are standing at, find its top on the map, and follow a run down with your finger until it reaches somewhere you recognise. Say the run names (or numbers) out loud - at the junctions on the hill you will see signposts with exactly those names, and matching them is how you stay on route.

For your first days: stick to one pod with a green or blue down and a chairlift back up, and lap it. Exploring across the resort is a day-three activity, once your first blue run feels relaxed.

Check the time and the lift closing times printed on the map. Resorts close the top lifts first, and a long traverse home that was easy at eleven is a dark, icy one at four.

Grooming, conditions and the daily board

The paper map tells you what the mountain *can* be. The board at the base (and the app) tells you what it *is* today: which lifts are open, which runs are groomed overnight, and which are closed for avalanche control or racing. A blue that was not groomed after a thaw and refreeze is an ice run, whatever colour it is on paper.

Also glance at the aspect. Runs drawn on the left of the map face one way, runs on the right face the other. In the afternoon, sun-facing runs go soft and slushy while the shaded side stays firm - the map tells you which is which if you know roughly where south is.

Common mistakes

- **Trusting the colour across resorts.** Re-calibrate on the first run of every new resort.
- **Picking a run without checking the lift it ends at.**

- **Taking a dashed-line connector thinking it is a short cut.** It is usually flat and slow; fine for skiers with poles, miserable for the snowboarder you are with.
- **Leaving the last run home too late.** Check lift closing times before lunch.
- **Phone-only.** Take the paper map or a photo of the board.

Watch more here:

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: Level Nine Sports ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Source: Level Nine Sports ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Side Stepping and Herringbone

CHAPTER 2 · UPPER BEGINNER



Source: tahoetrailguide.com

Side Stepping and Herringbone

Introduction

When learning to ski, you will sometimes need to move uphill without taking your skis off. Side stepping and herringbone are two simple techniques that help you move up a slope safely.

Both techniques are important because they allow you to move around the mountain, get back onto your feet after a fall, and reach areas where you want to practise.

Side Stepping

Side stepping is used to move sideways up a hill. It is one of the easiest ways for beginners to climb a gentle slope.

How to Side Step

1. **Stand across the slope:** Turn your body and skis sideways so that your skis are pointing across the hill, not downhill.
2. **Keep your skis parallel:** Place one ski next to the other.
3. **Use your edges:** Press the uphill edges of your skis into the snow to prevent sliding downhill.
4. **Take a small step:** Lift your uphill ski slightly and place it a little higher on the slope.
5. **Bring the other ski up:** Move your second ski next to the first one.
6. **Repeat:** Continue taking small steps until you reach the desired spot.

■ *Video clip - view it online.*

Source: SkiTipsApps ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Important Tips

- Keep your skis parallel throughout the movement.
- Take small, controlled steps.
- Keep your knees slightly bent.
- Keep your body facing across the slope.
- Make sure your skis stay on their edges so they don't slide downhill.
- Keep at least 3 point of contact with the snow. (2 poles one skis or two ski 1 pole)

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: SkiTipsApps ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Herringbone

The herringbone technique is used to walk uphill when the slope is too steep to climb with normal walking or side stepping.

Your skis form a V shape, with the tips pointing outward and the tails closer together. This position helps the edges of your skis grip the snow and prevents you from sliding backward.

How to Herringbone

1. **Point your ski tips outward:** Open your skis into a wide V shape. (Reverse wedge)
2. **Keep your tails closer together:** Your skis should look like a bird's footprint.
3. **Press on your inside edges:** This helps your skis grip the snow.
4. **Take a small step uphill:** Lift one ski and place it slightly higher on the slope.
5. **Move the other ski:** Bring the second ski forward while maintaining the V shape.
6. **Continue walking:** Repeat these small steps until you reach the top.

■ *Video clip - view it online.*

Source: SkiTipsApps ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Important Tips

- Keep your ski tips pointing outward.
- Maintain a wide enough V shape to avoid sliding backward.
- Keep your knees slightly bent inward.
- Take small steps rather than trying to walk too quickly.
- Keep your weight balanced between both skis.

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: SkiTipsApps ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

What Is the Difference?

Both techniques help you move uphill, but they are used in different situations.

- **Side stepping:** Used to move sideways up a steeper slope while keeping your skis parallel.
- **Herringbone:** Used to walk directly uphill on a gentle slope with your skis in a V shape.

Practice Exercises

Find a gentle slope with plenty of space and practise the following exercises:

1. **Side stepping:** Practise moving a few steps uphill while keeping your skis parallel.
2. **Changing direction:** Practise side stepping in both directions.
3. **Herringbone:** Practise walking uphill with your ski tips pointing outward.

4. **Controlling your balance:** Try to maintain a steady position without sliding backward.

Take your time and focus on keeping your skis under control.

Final Tips

Side stepping and herringbone are basic but very useful skiing skills. They help you move around the mountain and become more independent on your skis.

Remember:

- Side stepping means moving sideways with parallel skis.
- Herringbone means walking uphill with your skis in a V shape.
- Use your ski edges to grip the snow.
- Take small, controlled steps.
- Keep your knees slightly bent and your body balanced.

Practise both techniques until you feel comfortable. They will make moving around on skis much easier!

Kick Turn

CHAPTER 2 · UPPER BEGINNER



Source: www.explorebigsky.com

Introduction

A kick turn is a useful technique that allows you to change direction without losing elevation or travelling downhill.

It is especially useful in steep or narrow terrain, when you want to avoid an obstacle, or when there isn't enough space to make a regular turn. It can also be used in everyday situations around the ski hill.

How to Perform a Kick Turn

1. **Position your poles:** Place your downhill hand and pole uphill and behind you.
2. **Find your balance:** Use both poles and your uphill ski to support your weight.
3. **Lift your downhill ski:** Move it forward and upward in a sweeping motion until it points in the opposite direction.
4. **Shift your weight:** Transfer your weight onto the ski you just moved and find your balance.
5. **Move your uphill ski:** Lift your remaining ski and bring it around to match the direction of the first ski.
6. **Finish the turn:** Bring your poles around, make sure both skis are stable, and continue skiing.

■ *Video clip - view it online.*

Source: REI ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Important Tips

- Keep your weight balanced using your poles and supporting ski.
- Move one ski at a time.
- Make a smooth, controlled sweeping movement with your downhill ski.
- Take your time, especially on steeper terrain.
- Make sure your balance is secure before moving your second ski.

■ *Video clip - view it online.*

Source: REI ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Practice Exercises

Start practising on flat terrain or a very gentle slope.

1. **Start on flat terrain:** Practise the kick turn while focusing on your balance and moving one ski at a time.
2. **Try a gentle slope:** Once comfortable, practise on a slight incline.
3. **Increase the difficulty:** Gradually move to steeper slopes as your confidence and balance improve.

Start easy and take your time. Focus on mastering the movement before attempting steeper terrain.

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: REI ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Final Tips

Kick turns are useful for changing direction in tight spaces, avoiding obstacles, and navigating steep or technical terrain.

Practise regularly, build your confidence gradually, and remember that mastering the technique on easy terrain will make it much easier to perform on steeper slopes.

Wedge Turns

CHAPTER 2 · UPPER BEGINNER

Wedge turns, also known as pizza turns, are your first step to controlling direction and speed on skis. You'll use them on gentle slopes to steer left and right, linking turns as you descend.

How to do it

1. **Get ready:** Start in a wedge (pizza) shape with your ski tips close but not touching, and your heels pushed out. Keep your body flexed, leaning slightly forward so your shins press firmly against the front of your boots.
2. **Start the turn:** To turn, gently extend one leg. This shifts your weight and causes your skis to arc in the opposite direction. For example, extend your right leg to turn left.
3. **Link them up:** As you complete one turn, smoothly transition into the next by extending your other leg. Keep your posture relaxed and fluid, letting your body move with the skis.

Common mistakes

- **Stiff body:** If you're too rigid or "blocked," you won't be able to move freely and initiate turns. Stay relaxed and let your body flex naturally.
- **Ski tips crossing:** Make sure your ski tips stay close but never touch or cross over each other. This can cause you to fall.

Learn more

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: De Camino a La Cima TV ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Linked Wedge Turns



Source: www.shutterstock.com

Introduction

Linked wedge turns are one of the first ways beginners learn to change direction while skiing. They allow you to make a series of connected turns while controlling your speed.

A wedge turn uses the snowplow (or pizza) position to help you turn left and right. Once you can make individual wedge turns, the next step is to link them together smoothly.

The goal is to control your speed, change direction, and feel comfortable skiing down a gentle slope.

How to Perform Linked Wedge Turns

1. **Start in a wedge:** Point your ski tips toward each other and keep your ski tails apart.
2. **Begin gliding:** Look ahead and let your skis slide down a gentle slope.
3. **Choose a direction:** Look toward the direction you want to turn.

4. **Shift your weight:** Gently move your weight toward your outside ski while pointing your knee slightly inward (the ski opposite the direction of your turn).
5. **Guide your skis:** Allow both skis to turn in the direction you are looking.
6. **Finish the turn:** Continue turning until your skis point across the slope. This helps control your speed.
7. **Start the next turn:** Look in the opposite direction and repeat the movement.

■ *Video clip - view it online.*

Source: Dropinsnow ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Continue alternating between left and right turns to create a smooth series of linked turns.

Important Tips

- Keep your skis in a wedge throughout the turns.
- Look in the direction you want to go.
- Keep your knees slightly bent.
- Maintain a balanced position and avoid leaning backward.
- Apply more pressure to your outside ski during the turn.
- Bend your knee slightly inward to get the ski on edge.
- Finish each turn across the slope to control your speed.
- Keep your upper body relaxed and facing generally downhill.

Common Beginner Mistakes

- **Making the wedge too narrow:** Keep enough space between your ski tails to maintain speed control.
- **Leaning backward:** Stay centred over your skis.
- **Looking down:** Keep your eyes looking ahead and toward your next turn.
- **Turning too quickly:** Make smooth, gradual movements.
- **Not finishing the turn:** Complete each turn across the slope before starting the next one.
- Keeping the ski flat on the snow. Not generating enough edge to be able to cut instead of slide on the snow.

■ *Video clip - view it online.*

Source: Dropinsnow ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Practice Exercises

Start on flat terrain or a very gentle slope, then gradually progress as your confidence improves.

1. **Wedge gliding:** Practise sliding downhill while maintaining a steady wedge.
2. **Single wedge turns:** Practise making individual turns to the left and right.

3. **Linking turns:** Once comfortable, connect your left and right turns together.
4. **Smooth turns:** Focus on making round, controlled turns without stopping between them.
5. **Progress gradually:** Move to slightly steeper beginner terrain when you can link turns comfortably and control your speed.

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: Dropinsnow ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Final Tips

Linked wedge turns are an important step toward becoming an independent skier. They help you develop balance, coordination, speed control, and the ability to change direction.

Remember:

- Maintain your wedge.
- Look where you want to go.
- Shift your weight toward your outside ski.
- Finish each turn across the slope.
- Keep your movements smooth and controlled.

Take your time and practise on easy terrain. Once you can link your wedge turns comfortably in both directions, you'll be ready to start developing your parallel skiing!

The Chairlift

CHAPTER 2 · UPPER BEGINNER

Chairlifts are how you get up the mountain. You'll ride them to access different runs across the resort, whether on piste or in the park.

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: Ski with Emily ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

How to do it

As you approach the lift line, scan your pass. Take your pole straps off and hold both poles in one hand, freeing up your other hand.

When the gate opens, shuffle forward quickly to the red line, keeping your skis straight and parallel. Don't sit down; let the chair come to you. As it scoops you up, use your free hand to steady yourself. Once seated, pull the safety bar down and put your feet on the footrests.

As you near the top, take your feet off the footrest and push the safety bar up. Shuffle forward slightly if needed, then use your free hand to push off the chair as your skis touch the snow.

Stand up, lean forward, and slide away from the chairlift, keeping your skis parallel. Look ahead and ski clear of the unloading area.



Source: Ski with Emily ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Common mistakes

- **Not moving far enough forward:** If you don't get to the red line, you'll try to sit on the chair instead of letting it scoop you, which can be awkward or cause you to miss it.
- **Stepping on other people's skis:** Keep your skis straight and parallel as you shuffle forward to avoid tripping yourself or others.
- **Not leaning forward enough when getting off:** If you stand too upright, you'll be off-balance. Push forward with your hand and lean into the dismount.
- **Opening a snowplow too early when getting off:** Keep your skis parallel as you slide away to avoid catching edges or colliding with others.

Learn more here:

■ Watch on YouTube

Side Slip

CHAPTER 2 · UPPER BEGINNER

Side slipping lets you move straight down a steep slope without turning your skis downhill. It's a crucial skill for getting out of tricky spots or navigating terrain that feels too steep to turn on.

How to do it

Start with your skis across the slope, perpendicular to the fall line. Get into a flexed position: ankles, knees, and hips bent.

To start slipping, gently push your knees downhill, just below your hips. This flattens your skis slightly on the snow, allowing them to slide sideways. Keep your weight on your downhill ski. A good cue is to bring your downhill shoulder down and face your shoulders slightly downhill.

To slow down or stop, push your knees uphill. This increases the edge angle, digging your edges into the snow and bringing you to a halt. Maintain a centered stance to control your direction.

Common mistakes

- **Locked knees**: If you're too upright, your knees can lock, making it hard to adjust your edge angle. Stay flexed in your ankles, knees, and hips.
- **Leaning uphill**: It's natural to lean away from the steepness, but this puts your weight on your uphill ski, making it hard to control. Dare to lean on your downhill leg; think about bringing your downhill shoulder down.
- **Slipping forwards or backwards**: This happens if your center of gravity is too far forward or back. Keep your weight centered over the middle of your skis to slip straight down.

Learn more

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: Ski with Emily ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Traversing



Source: i.ytimg.com

What Is Traversing?

Traversing means skiing **across a slope instead of straight downhill**. It helps beginners improve balance, edge control, and speed management.

How to Traverse on Skis

Step 1: Get Ready

- Start on a gentle slope with your skis parallel and pointing across the hill.
- Keep your knees slightly bent and hands in front.
- Look uphill to check for other skiers before moving.

Step 2: Find Your Balance

- Gently tilt both skis onto their uphill edges.
- Keep slightly more weight on your downhill ski.
- Stay centered without leaning too far uphill.

■ *Video clip - view it online.*

Source: SkiTipsApps ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Step 3: Start Gliding

- Slightly reduce your edge angle to begin moving.
- Keep your skis parallel and look where you want to go.
- Maintain a relaxed, balanced position.

■ *Video clip - view it online.*

Source: SkiTipsApps ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Step 4: Control Your Speed

- Increase your edge angle to grip the snow and slow down.
- Reduce your edge angle slightly to glide more easily.
- Turn your skis farther across the slope to help stop.

Important Tips

- **Look ahead:** Avoid looking down at your skis.
- **Stay balanced:** Keep your knees and ankles slightly bent.
- **Use your edges:** Make small adjustments to control your grip.
- **Stay relaxed:** Avoid stiff legs or leaning too far uphill.

Common Mistakes

- Leaning too far uphill.
- Standing too straight.
- Looking down instead of ahead.
- Pointing your skis too far downhill.

Practice Exercise

1. Start on a very gentle slope.
2. Traverse a short distance while keeping your skis parallel.
3. Practise adjusting your edges to control your speed.
4. Stop and repeat in the opposite direction.
5. Gradually increase your distance as you gain confidence.

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: SkiTipsApps ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Final Reminder

Traversing helps build **balance, edge control, and confidence**. Practise in both directions on gentle terrain before moving to steeper slopes.

Your First Green Run

CHAPTER 2 · UPPER BEGINNER



Source: swiftmedia.s3.amazonaws.com

Before Your First Green Run

A green run is an easy ski trail for beginners. Before trying one, make sure you're comfortable skiing a little faster while maintaining **good control of your turns, speed, and stopping** on easier slopes.

How to Ski Your First Green Run

Step 1: Get Ready

- Choose a short, easy green run.
- Make sure you can link wedge turns and stop confidently.
- Look downhill and check for other skiers.

Step 2: Choose Your Line

- Plan a safe path down the slope.
- Avoid steep sections, obstacles, and crowded areas.
- Look ahead and plan your next turns.

■ *Video clip - view it online.*

Source: SKNG Ski School ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Step 3: Ski Down

- Start slowly and stay balanced.
- Use smooth, linked wedge turns to control your speed.
- Follow your line and adjust when needed.
- Stop somewhere safe if you need a break.

Important Tips

- **Stay in control:** Never ski faster than you can comfortably stop.
- **Look ahead:** Focus on where you want to go.
- **Use your turns:** Avoid going straight downhill too fast.
- **Take your time:** Confidence and control come before speed.

Practice Exercise

1. Practise turning and stopping at slightly higher speeds on the beginner slope.
2. Choose a short green run and plan your line.
3. Link smooth wedge turns while controlling your speed.
4. Repeat until you feel comfortable.

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: SKNG Ski School ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Final Reminder

Your first green run is about putting your skills together. **Plan your line, control your speed, and enjoy the ride!**

Intermediate

CHAPTER 3

8 articles

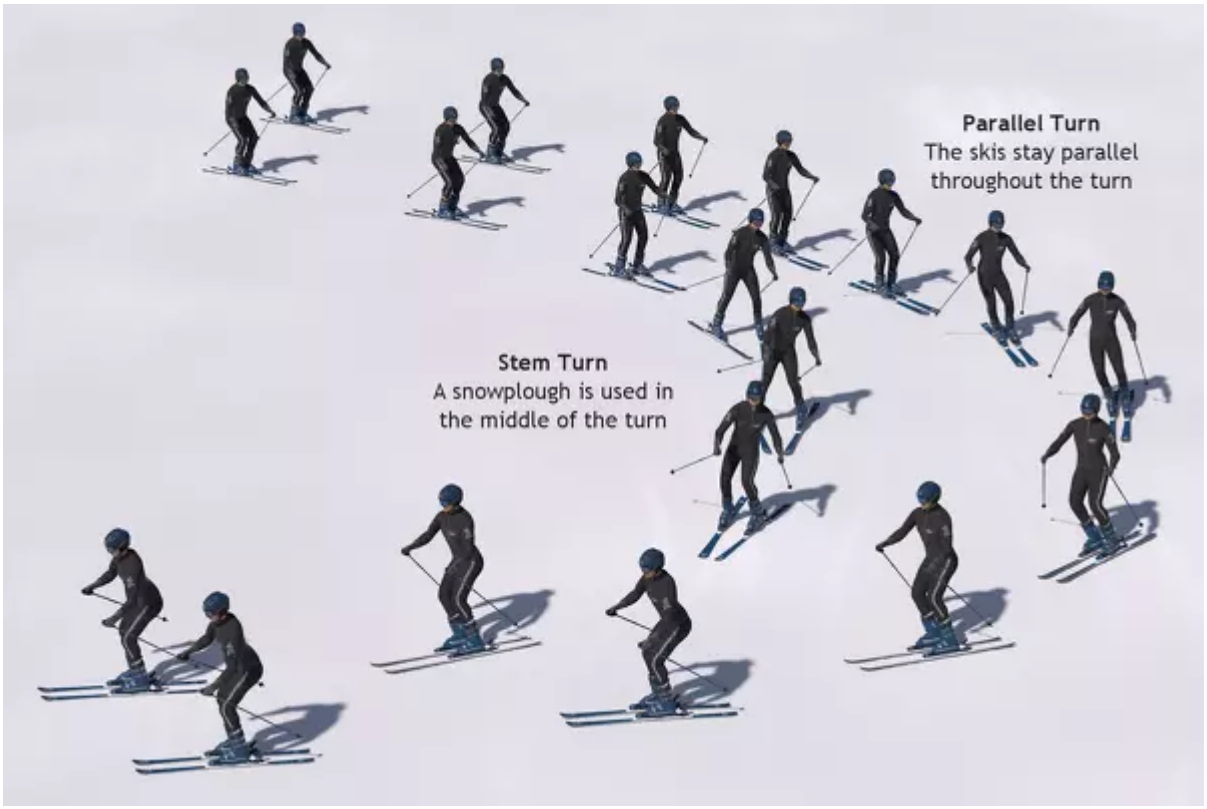
- Turn Shape and Speed Control
- Plough Parallel / Wedge Christie
- Pole Plant
- Hockey Stop
- Balance Drills
- Snow Park Safety
- Side Hits
- Your First Blue Run

Turn Shape and Speed Control

CHAPTER 3 · INTERMEDIATE

Plough Parallel / Wedge Christie

CHAPTER 3 · INTERMEDIATE



Source: www.skinewgen.com

Snow plough parallel

Once you feel like you've mastered your snowplough turns, it's time to learn your snowplough parallel. This is also known as a stem or stem christie turn, snowplough steering or wedge to parallel progression

■ *Video clip - view it online.*

Source: Ski Instructor Academy | SIA Austria ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Why learn this?

- It's the perfect way to explore more terrain
- It's more energy efficient so you can ski for longer with less fatigue

Simply put, what is it?

- Plough parallel is essentially using a slightly smaller snowplough when you are making a turn and keeping your skis parallel and hip width apart when you are skiing across the hill

Useful terms

Downhill ski = ski closest to the bottom of the slope Uphill ski = ski closest to the top of the slope

Fall line = the most direct path downhill/your skis point down the hill/the path a ball would take if rolled down the nountain

Traverse = the act of skiing diagonally across a slope (sideways and down) rather than straight down the fall line * Alpine basic position *= your ankles knees and hips are lightly bent, skis hip width apart, skis are on their edges, you have a little more weight on your downhill

Setting yourself up for success

- You should only move on to plough parallel when you are feeling confident with snowplough turns on varied terrain, wide green and easy blues, even some narrower slopes
- Revise your snowplough turns, it is important to have the right movements happening at the right time, it will mostly stay the same for snowplough parallel turns
- Start on a slope you feel very comfortable on
- Practise completing your turns fully, this means steering your skis totally straight across the hill after a turn, your ski tips want to be pointing directly across the hill in between your turns, if they are point a little bit towards the bottom the mountain you will find you pick up a little bit of speed and will make what you're learning now unnecessarily difficult
- As always, make sure your boots are snug and you are maintaining contact with the tongue and your shin

Here's a video showing what you are aiming for:

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: International Pro Ski Instructors Association ISA ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Getting started

• Practise your snowplough turns with a slightly smaller wedge/snowplough, using only a big wedge when coming to a total stop

• Practise standing still, stand in the alpine basic position with parallel skis and push your uphill ski into a snowplough by moving up and forward

• Practise pushing yourself across the slope (traverse) with your poles, you should be in the alpine basic position with more weight on your downhill ski to get grip as you traverse the slope

• Now practise this again but pushing your uphill ski into a wedge position so you form a snowplough at the end of your traverse

Body movements

As you make your snowplough at the end of the traverse your body is coming up and forward (see the red arrows in the demonstration video)

Using Garlands

https://skierlab.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/fan-progression-transparent-1536x864.png

Simply put, A garland in skiing is a partial-turn exercise where a skier traverses across a slope, steers slightly down toward the fall line (the path a rolling ball would take), and then curves back up toward the side of the hill without completing a full turn

• Start in a snowplough pointing slightly down the hill, keep your weight on downhill ski to simulate the end of a turn

• Bring your uphill ski inwards to match so that both skis are parallel across the slope

• Repeat this by pointing your skis more and more down the hill each time

Putting it all together

Now it is time to try a full turn:

• Start in a traverse as practised before

• Come up and forward to a neutral position (see the red arrows in the video) with weight over both feet and push your uphill ski into a snowplough/wedge position

Here you can see the up and forward movement in the arrows and clearly see the movement you are trying to replicate

■ *Video clip - view it online.*

Source: International Pro Ski Instructors Association ISA ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

• Lightly weight (increase the pressure) your turning ski and your ski tips will drift into the fall line (point down the hill) much like your snowplough turn, hold your weight here until your skis are pointing back across the hill

• As you have turned, your turning ski has become your downhill ski, your other ski should have far less weight on it

• It is here that you bring that uphill ski to match your downhill ski, making your skis parallel

TIP Start by trying one turn then stopping fully before trying a turn in the other direction Once this feels comfortable, start linking your turns

Trouble shooting - As you are traversing the slope, your weight should be slightly more on your downhill ski and balanced on your edges so you have grip as you go straight across

- Come up and forward to transfer your weight to your turning ski
- If you do not come up and forward it will be hard to turn as your weight will be too evenly spread over both feet
- You should always finish your turn with your weight on your downhill ski, this will enable you to have grip and bring in your uphill ski to match in parallel

Great video for fixing any problems you might be having:

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: Alpine Tutorials with George ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

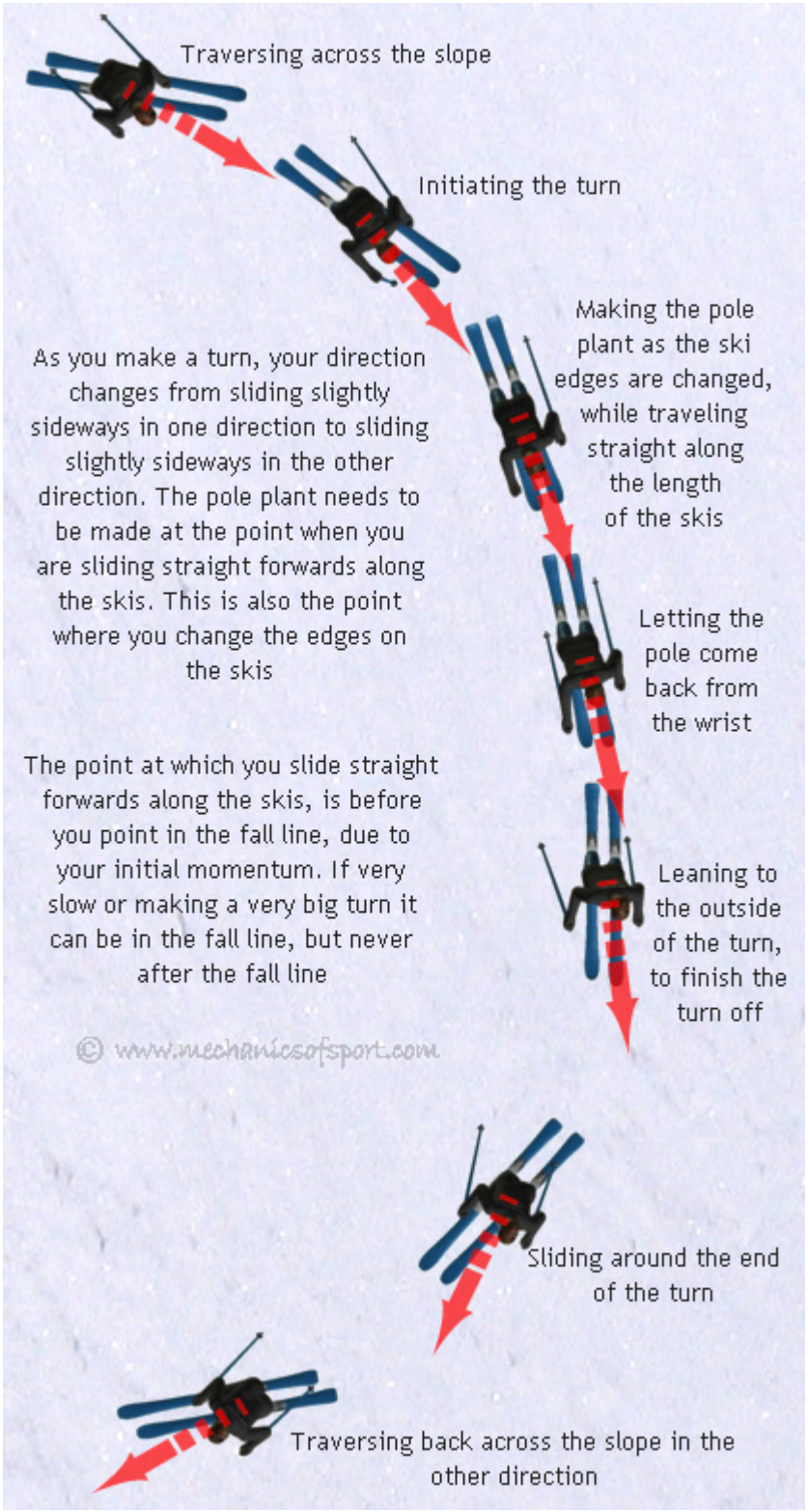
Pole Plant

CHAPTER 3 · INTERMEDIATE



Source: toptierskiing.com

POLE PLANT



Once you've been skiing for a little while, you might start looking at the people around you and how they ski. You'll notice beginner skiers may look like Bridget Jones with their poles tucked under their arms very awkwardly, they might have their poles so close to their knees they look like a right angle. This is how you will see upper intermediate to expert skiers' ski at all.

Before you learn the pole plant

- You should be used to skiing with your arms forward and to the side in front of you

- Try skiing like you’re hugging a giant beach ball, it might feel funny at first but it will open space between your body and your arms
- Revisit our page on your body position if you are struggling

■ *Video clip - view it online.*

Source: alex orfa ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

What is a pole plant?

- A pole plant is the act of touching your pole to the snow on the inside of your turn Why do we do it?
- It helps generate flow and rhythm
- It maintains balance
- It assists in releasing the skis during the turn

What does it look like?

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: Inspirational Skiing ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

- It is a flick of the wrist and elbow, you don’t want to heavily stick your pole in the snow but lightly touch it, this is why you might also hear it called a pole touch
- The pole is planted between the ski binding and the tip of the uphill/inside ski (inside of your turn)

How to become pro

- Practice the placement when you are standing still on the snow
- Try it in your traverse (see the previous article)
- Try it in your traverse with your upward and forward motion you have already practiced, you plant the pole as you come up and forward then move downwards to start your turn

Link it all together

- Try a pole plant to initiate your first turn
- Try turning in the other direction with a pole plant
- Try linking your turns with your pole plant

Hockey Stop

CHAPTER 3 · INTERMEDIATE

Balance Drills

CHAPTER 3 · INTERMEDIATE

Snow Park Safety

CHAPTER 3 · INTERMEDIATE



Source: www.klappen.se

The park has a few unwritten rules that keep everyone out of hospital. None of them are hard. Learn them before your first lap and you'll fit right in - and you won't be that person standing on a landing.

Dropping in

The park runs on a simple system: one person at a time on a feature, and everyone else waits. To take your turn, shout "dropping" or put a hand up. Then still look around - a raised hand doesn't give you the right of way, it just announces you. If you ski a line without stopping, nobody should cut in on you. The moment you stop between features you've given up your turn, and you drop in again from scratch.

Where to stand

Never stop on a takeoff, on a landing, or on top of a roller. What looks like an empty patch of snow to you might be the landing for a bigger jump you can't see the point of. Give every feature a 15-meter bubble and stop well outside it, somewhere you can be seen from above. On a narrow line, don't stop at all - ski the whole thing through.

Side hits count too. If a natural bump has tracks over it, someone's jumping it. Treat it like a park feature.

If you crash

Ask yourself one thing: am I seriously hurt? If yes, stay put. If no, get up, grab your skis, poles and anything you dropped, and get off the landing fast. Someone can be coming in behind you at full speed, possibly switch, and they can't see you until it's too late.

If you see someone go down hard:

1. Cross your arms above your head in a big X and shout so the people above you stop dropping.
2. Get someone to stand on the takeoff or block it with their gear.
3. Go to the skier, ask how they're doing, and call ski patrol. Save the resort's SOS number in your phone before your first day.
4. Tell patrol where you are, who's hurt, and what's hurt.

Respect the X when you see it from the top, even if you can't tell which feature it's for.

Hitting a feature for the first time

- Look at it first, from a spot that's out of everyone's way.
- Ask the skiers at the top how the jump is riding today, or ask to follow one of them in. Park regulars are friendlier than they look.
- Check for gaps. Some boxes and rails have a gap between the lip and the feature, and skiing straight at one puts your tips into the metal. Look from the side to see how steep the lip is and where the rail sits.
- Not sure about speed? Pop next to the feature first and see where you'd have landed.
- Start at 10-20% of what you can do. Straight airs, a 50-50, a small 180. Build up from there.

Learn more here:

■ Watch on YouTube

Source: Stomp It Tutorials ·

■ *Watch on YouTube*

Key tips

- Shout "dropping" or raise a hand, then look before you go
- Stopping between features means you've lost your turn
- Never stand on a takeoff, landing or roller - stay 15 meters clear
- Crashed and fine? Get up and clear the landing immediately
- Big X over your head means "don't drop", so stop dropping when you see it
- Look at every feature before you hit it and start small

Side Hits

CHAPTER 3 · INTERMEDIATE

Your First Blue Run

CHAPTER 3 · INTERMEDIATE

Upper Intermediate

CHAPTER 4

9 articles

Parallel Turns
Edging and Angulation
Short Turns
Ice and Hard Pack
Skiing Switch
Straight Air
Shifty
Switch Straight Air
Riding Boxes

Parallel Turns

CHAPTER 4 · UPPER INTERMEDIATE

Edging and Angulation

Short Turns

Ice and Hard Pack

Skiing Switch

CHAPTER 4 · UPPER INTERMEDIATE

Straight Air

CHAPTER 4 · UPPER INTERMEDIATE

Shifty

CHAPTER 4 · UPPER INTERMEDIATE

Switch Straight Air

Riding Boxes

Advanced

CHAPTER 5

11 articles

- Carving
- Skiing Steeper Terrain
- Moguls
- Powder
- Small Drops
- Flat Light and Whiteout
- Safety Grab
- 180
- Switch 180
- Tail Grab
- Your First Black Run

Carving

CHAPTER 5 · ADVANCED

Skiing Steeper Terrain

CHAPTER 5 · ADVANCED

Moguls

CHAPTER 5 · ADVANCED

Powder

CHAPTER 5 · ADVANCED

Small Drops

CHAPTER 5 · ADVANCED

Flat Light and Whiteout

CHAPTER 5 · ADVANCED

Safety Grab

CHAPTER 5 · ADVANCED

180

Switch 180

Tail Grab

CHAPTER 5 · ADVANCED

Your First Black Run

CHAPTER 5 · ADVANCED

Expert

CHAPTER 6

11 articles

Tree Skiing
Crud, Slush and Variable Snow
Off-Piste Safety
Avalanche Rescue Basics
Steeps and Chutes
Jump Turns
360
Mute Grab
50-50 on a Rail
Rail Slide
540

Tree Skiing

CHAPTER 6 · EXPERT

Crud, Slush and Variable Snow

CHAPTER 6 · EXPERT

Off-Piste Safety

CHAPTER 6 · EXPERT

Avalanche Rescue Basics

CHAPTER 6 · EXPERT

Steeps and Chutes

CHAPTER 6 · EXPERT

Jump Turns

CHAPTER 6 · EXPERT

360

Mute Grab

CHAPTER 6 · EXPERT

50-50 on a Rail

CHAPTER 6 · EXPERT

Rail Slide

CHAPTER 6 · EXPERT

540

Appendix

About this book

This book was compiled from Progresspedia, an open learning platform where anyone can contribute. Every article here was written, edited, and voted on by the community - the content lives as open markdown, free to read, share, and improve. Spotted a mistake or want to add something? Open the course online and suggest an edit.

by the Progresspedia community

Index of articles

1. Introduction
2. Putting On and Taking Off Skis - put on and take off skis and boots comfortably and efficiently
3. Basic Skiing Stance - maintain a balanced and centered body position on skis
4. Moving on the Flat - propel yourself forward on flat terrain using your legs and poles
5. How to Fall - know how to reduce the risk of injury when you crash
6. Getting Up from a Fall - get back on your feet after falling on any terrain
7. Straight Run - glide straight down a gentle slope
8. Wedge/Pizza/Snowplow Stop - control speed and stop on skis using the wedge position
9. Magic Carpet - use a magic carpet to get up the slope
10. Button Lifts - use button lifts safely and confidently
11. Getting Ready for Skiing - prepare yourself and your gear for a day on the slopes
12. Mountain Etiquette and the Responsibility Code - follow essential safety rules on the slopes
13. Reading the trail map - navigate a ski resort using a trail map and understand terrain difficulty
14. Side Stepping and Herringbone - side-step and herringbone up a gentle slope
15. Kick Turn - Turn around on a slope while standing still
16. Wedge Turns - control speed and direction on gentle slopes
17. Linked Wedge Turns - Link wedge turns down a green run
18. The Chairlift - ride a chairlift safely and efficiently
19. Side Slip - descend steep slopes safely without having to turn
20. Traversing - Traverse from one side to the other without losing elevation
21. Your First Green Run
22. Turn Shape and Speed Control
23. Plough Parallel / Wedge Christie
24. Pole Plant
25. Hockey Stop
26. Balance Drills - use javelin turns, one-ski skiing and hop turns to sharpen your balance
27. Snow Park Safety - ski the park without putting yourself or anyone else in danger

28. Side Hits
29. Your First Blue Run
30. Parallel Turns
31. Edging and Angulation
32. Short Turns
33. Ice and Hard Pack
34. Skiing Switch
35. Straight Air
36. Shifty - twist your skis sideways in the air and bring them back for the landing
37. Switch Straight Air - hit a jump riding switch and land clean
38. Riding Boxes
39. Carving
40. Skiing Steeper Terrain
41. Moguls
42. Powder
43. Small Drops - ski off a small drop and land in balance
44. Flat Light and Whiteout - ski safely when you can't read the terrain
45. Safety Grab
46. 180
47. Switch 180 - take off switch, spin 180 and land forward
48. Tail Grab - grab the tail of a ski in the air
49. Your First Black Run
50. Tree Skiing
51. Crud, Slush and Variable Snow
52. Off-Piste Safety
53. Avalanche Rescue Basics - carry and use a transceiver, shovel and probe
54. Steeps and Chutes
55. Jump Turns - hop both skis around to turn on steep or narrow terrain
56. 360
57. Mute Grab
58. 50-50 on a Rail
59. Rail Slide - slide a rail sideways with your skis across it
60. 540 - spin a 540 off a jump and land switch