



Brightwater Site

Cross Country Ski Lesson

Safety first! Consider the weather, your group's experience and the trail conditions. Always have a leader guiding the group and another adult sweeping behind to help encourage students.

Ask about using walkie talkies or confirm cell phone information in order to stay in communication with the Brightwater Project Leader.

This guide is written as a progression in skills. If students learn the skills, they can experience better fitness and more fun in a great winter sport that can last a lifetime.

Role of Leader: Set trail, ensure all students are experiencing some degree of success, report first aid cases through walkie talkie/cell phone, encourage students, have fun, demonstrate skills.

Role of Sweep skier: Adult brings up the rear, encouraging students, assisting with getting up, keeping in touch through walkie talkie/cell phone.

Skiing is a fun lifetime winter outdoor pursuit that is great fitness. You experience locomotion and velocity (and gravity sometimes). You will also appreciate the environment and see wildlife tracks! (reference: middle years Phys. Ed. Curriculum guide, SK Learning)

Equipment Care

Do

- ☺ski on snow
- ☺store skis after use
- ☺stand up using body strength
- ☺report necessary repairs

Don't

- ☹ski on any gravel, sand, grass, road
- ☹store skis in snow (wrecks laminate)
- ☹use poles to stand up (bends poles)
- ☹neglect equipment

Sizing and putting on your skis

Put your arm up in the air. Your skis should reach to your wrist or shorter if you are beginning. Your poles should be just below your shoulder. Your toe is hooked to the ski so make sure there is no snow stopping a good attachment. If you have three-pin boots then you have to hold down the wire on the boot with a clip. If you have a

metal rod in your boot, a Solomon binding, then you need to push the button at the front of the binding, push your toe down until the metal clicks into the ski.

Remove skis just so you know how to do a quick release.

To put on your poles: Slide your hand in the pole straps so they poles dangle. Then put your hand over the straps holding on to the grip. This will give you better control and stop you from losing your poles.

Facilitator NOTE: it is best to size skis and poles by ski room. Ensure students have the right bindings for their boots as we have 3-pin and Solomon boots and bindings. Make sure poles fit and are in good repair. Carry gear to top of hill and put it on in Sully Field for the first ski session. Once students know how to ski up hills and get up from falling, you can leave from the ski hut during your second session.

First Fall

The first thing to do when you ski is fall down. At some point, gravity will get you and you will be horizontal in the snow. So let's experience it.

Activity: Lie down on the ground, twist up your legs without hitting your neighbor and get yourself untwisted. Pay attention to the location of your poles and skis. 1. Line skis up parallel 2. Face tips forward 3. Shift body over feet 4. Use hands to push you up. Use your body to stand up when horizontal on the ground, not your poles. Poles are meant to help provide forward momentum and some balance. They will bend if you put all your weight on them to help you stand. Poles cost \$25 to replace.



Snowflake Shapes

Students can practice stepping in a full circle to make a star or snowflake. They should not step on skis. This teaches balance, ski control and how to uncross skis. Do this while putting on skis for other students.

Follow the Leader

Students can follow the leader for the following skills before heading out on the trail. This quick teaching session will ensure better success on the trail. It also is a gear/ clothes check.

Gotta Glide

The key to skiing is gliding. It is called diagonal stride.

Action: Get someone to walk in front of the group. Notice how one arm swings as the alternate leg moves forward. Now apply this to skiing. The left pole in front with the right foot in front will help continue the momentum. If you want to glide, you need to have some kind of pressure to help you kick. Now the physics of the ski and the use of wax comes in to play. The ski is not a flat board. It is bent up slightly in the middle. As you stand on the ski, your weight makes contact with the snow helping with the kick to move forward. Applying wax properly helps with the glide but also with the grip needed to move ahead. Wax is available in the ski boot room. Check the right colour to use – related to the temperature outside.

Double Poling

If the track for skiing is set, double poling is lots of fun. The skis remain parallel. Put the poles in front of you and pull yourself to the poles. You can increase the momentum using this technique on flat ground or hills.

Stopping without falling on your face

Stop by putting your skis together (pigeon-toed). A sideways stop like skating does not work very well on cross country skis. Also stopping using your poles may result in injuries. Dragging poles down the hill will also slow you down.

Getting up the Hill - side stepping

If you have to get up a hill, here is one way. Position yourself sideways along the hill so that you are stepping up it sideways, digging in the edges toward the hill. Take tiny steps up the hill keeping skis parallel and sideways to the hill. Lean up the hill not down!

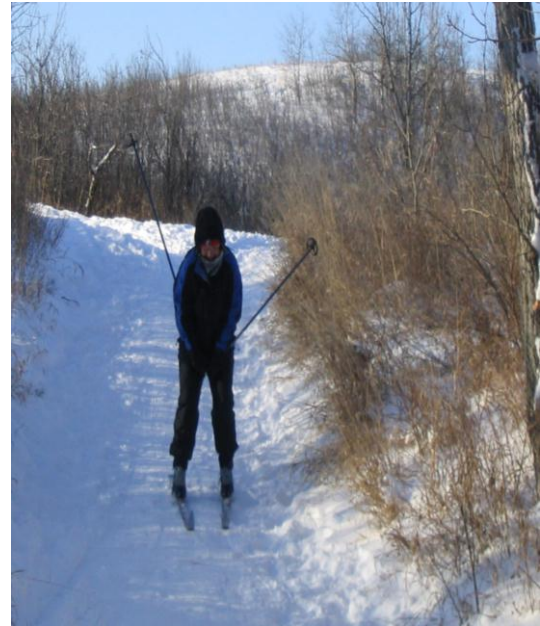
Getting up the Hill - do the herringbone

Getting up a hill on skis is similar to walking up. You need to lean forward, dig in your toes and use your arms to help you out. Bend knees inward and together. Think of digging in the **INSIDE** edge of the ski, putting your toes out like a duck and stepping up the hill. Angle skis more if the hill is steep. Small angle – less slope. Greater angle – steeper slope. The pattern you create with you skis will also resemble fish bones. The poles can help by placing them on the outside edge of the skis and pulling with your arms. Don't walk too close behind your friend or you might end up eating a pole.



Snowplow to get down the hill

Getting down the hill is fun, if you do it in good control. To get down the hill, just as in downhill skiing, you need to keep your body balanced above your feet. To practice, put your toes together; your heels apart, bend your knees, and put your arms out ahead of you. You will be kind of 'pigeon-toed'. Your poles are not breaks but are for balance. Spread out your skis further at the back so that the 'pizza pie' is a little bigger to slow down. The larger the pizza pie, the slower the descent. Look ahead to where you are going or you might hug a tree! It is all about balance, putting weight on the ski to make a bit of a turn and using the ski edge to help change the speed.



Skiing the Trails

Go out for a practice ski in the city. Break a trail in the schoolyard that includes flats and some hills. Once the class goes over the trail, it will be somewhat set. Set trails in the city are well maintained and a lot of fun. The Nordic ski club and city maintain terrific ski courses in the city. To obtain more information, please contact the Saskatoon Nordic Ski Club at 343-0191 and ask for Jan Sedgewick.

Making Tracks

Brightwater Trail: Start at Sully field by Visitor Parking to practice skills of putting on skis, falling, getting up, etc. Then go for a ski. Note the leader, teacher Ken Stirling, is waiting for the students to catch up on this beautiful -30c day!

Short Route: Sully field west to bluff back to archery/ pump house and return along road. Time: about 45 min.



Longer Route: Take the Sully field route then head south downhill to SPS land and across bridge to the larger hill on the road. Students love to tuck glide down this hill! Loops in top prairie not set, but still fun. Time: about 60 min more or less.

SKIER'S RESPONSIBILITY CODE CROSS COUNTRY

- Ski in the indicated direction and observe all signs. Do not ski on closed trails or un-groomed areas.
- Always ski to the right when passing oncoming skiers and when skiing a double track.
- Descending skiers always have the right of way.
- Ski under control and in such a manner as to enable you to stop or avoid obstacles.
- Do not litter. If you pack it in, pack it out!
- Do not obstruct the trail. Move off the trail quickly if you fall and step off the track during breaks.
- Yield the track to faster skiers, or skiers saying "track" by stepping off to the right.
- www.mast.mb.ca/Student_Safety/ski%20safety/refguide.htm#HOW by Manitoba Association of School Trustees