

Teaching Steeps – Level 1

The goal for this session is to show instructors how to teach safely in steep terrain and assess their skills in doing so in order to be ‘signed off’ to teach in the black and double black terrain listed as per the snow school run list progression.

Snow School Run list progression

Whistler	Blackcomb
◆ HARVEY'S	◆ STAIRCASE
◆ ROBERTSON'S	◆ THE BITE
◆ HORSESHOES	▲ CHOCOLATE FACTORY (PATROL TREES)
◆ COCKALORUM	◆ DAVIES' DERVISH
◆ STEFAN'S CHUTE	◆ BLOWHOLE
FLUTE HIKE	◆ PAKALOLO
EASY ROUTE (Symphony)	◆ SAUDAN COULDIR
	◆ QUASAR

Elements of this session:

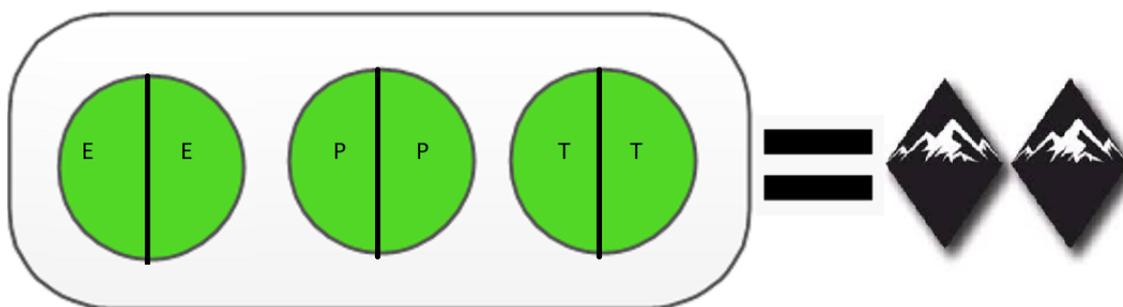
1. Terrain Introduction and progression:
2. Good areas to test student skill level
3. Entries into double black terrain – the “good” route, hazards and escape routes.
4. Skill progression and required skill levels for both students and coaches
5. Class management
6. Decision Making Process

Sign off Criteria

1. Demonstrate Minimum skiing standards.
2. Demonstrate decision making standard.
3. Understand safe class management principles in steep terrain and challenging entrances.

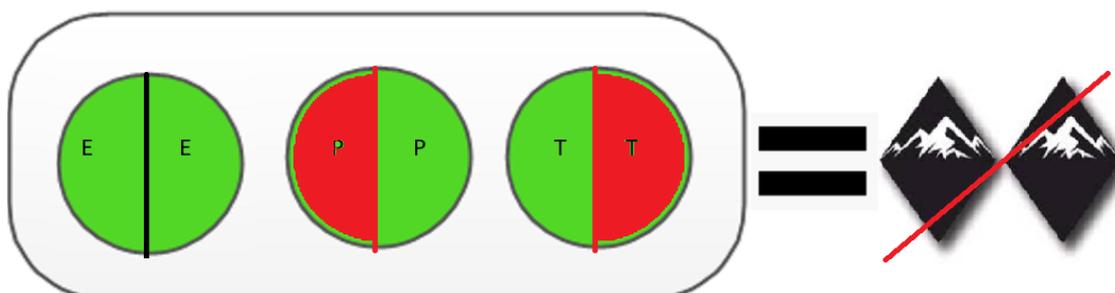
Introduce decision making lights 1hr.

Personal Safety lights, think about your personal safety first!



All greens = New Terrain

	Student Condition	Skills
1. Equipment + Environment	2. Psychological + Physical	3. Tactical + Technical



If any portion of the lights are in red no new steep terrain advised, practice skills and build confidence on simple terrain.

1. Equipment/Environment: Weather, Snow conditions, visibility, wind, Terrain Features/Run layout and knowledge.
 - a. Ensure students have appropriate equipment before skiing steeps. Wider skis preferred 90+mm under foot, well-adjusted bindings DIN Setting and well-tuned.
 - b. Weather, how will it affect the snow conditions?
 - c. Have I inspected this or skied it before?
 - d. Viewed from the bottom? Felt the conditions?
 - e. What is the chance of fall and the consequence if they do?
 - f. What is the worst case scenario if you go down this run?

2. Student Condition: physical and psychological state of students.
 - a. Energy level, activation level, fatigue?
 - b. How physically fit are my students?
 - c. How will my student react in a new situation/challenge?
 - d. How confident are my students/group?
 - e. Group dynamics, do I have a split, is it manageable? Will it still be manageable in the steeps when they are challenged?
 - f. Is this the best time of day to try this? Nothing new after 2.....

3. Skills: Tactics and Technical Development. Refer to minimum skiing standard.
 - a. Can my student control their speed on steeper terrain?
 - b. Strong steering ability. (i.e Balance, Pivoting, Edging)
 - c. These skills must be acquired before entering steep terrain where there can be consequence.
 - d. Manoeuvres, e.g hop turns and side slip.
 - e. Timing, i.e turn the skis in the right place at the right time.



Can we send it?

There are many considerations for skiing steeps, as outlined above. To summarize, if you can answer yes to the 3 questions below, then go for it!

1. Are my students ready for this?
2. Are they prepared?
3. Do they know what to do?

2nd half of morning and afternoon : Work on Guiding and Technical skills.

1. Warm up effectively with daily pre-ride exercises.
2. Ride terrain that progresses in steepness.
3. Explore the various off-piste terrain challenges/features and discuss their class management strategies
4. Demonstrate and have them show the skiing standards and work with other skill progressions for steep terrain.

Minimum Skiing Standards

These skills must be demonstrated by instructors in order to be signed off and by students in order to ski double black terrain.

1. Diagonal side slip on both sides
2. Straight side slip on both sides
3. Bumps traverse both fast and with speed control
4. Parallel skiing at an advanced level on steep black terrain.

Skill progressions for steep terrain

1. Develop speed control and direction change by turning the legs across the body. Ability to side-slip directly in the fall line and also diagonally (both sides, left and right). (Braquage, Hockey stops) *** Avoid side slipping by leaning uphill!
2. Focus on body positioning and stance, upper hand over outside ski, weight over downhill ski – allows for legs to turn against the body
3. Develop the ability for slowing and controlling of speed on varied terrain, slowing down with direction change, (bumps traverse, absorption drills)
4. Develop edge control and finesse i.e Pressure control – not just on and off (frog hops, slip and grip)

**Additional exercises which will help prepare people for steep varied terrain:

Jump turns (spiess) – turn in tight areas and Kick Turns

Class Management in Steep terrain and challenging entrances.

The goal here is to move the group efficiently and safely into a more manageable area

1. Collect group up away from Entrance or Cornice. Do not block entrance.
2. Clear explanation of plan
 - a. What is coming up
 - b. What to expect
 - c. What to do
 - d. Where to wait
3. Instructor positioning – Stand in a place where you can communicate effectively, while protecting your class from the public.
4. Give clear and concise directions.
5. Be in a safe position if something goes wrong, have an out.
6. Pick a safe spot to collect, check for understanding and send trustworthy students first
7. Send students one at a time! Emphasize the importance of this step.
8. Corniced entrance. How to recognize a cornice? Prevalent on north facing slopes – Usually marked with a yellow sign but not always.
9. If you suspect a cornice regroup well away from the edge – before signs
10. Instructor find/scope out the entrance before calling the students over.
11. Point out main hazards on the run if necessary e.g Avalanche debris, Rocks, ice.
12. On more challenging entrance provide a tactic to ski the entrance e.g tranny to the right, then turn left after the rock. Demo by coach is desirable.

Drops

Use the decision making lights to pick suitable terrain for the students you have today.

1. Flat take off vs steep take off. What changes?
2. Look for steep landing with lots of space for run out. Concept of transition
3. Turn drop into a jump – pop don't fall.
4. Commit to the drop, knees up, hands down, extend right before landing.

5. Use a similar approach to the park i.e Pre-ride, Re-ride, Freeride. Scope out you takeoff and landing

Ski steeper terrain with easy exit areas to test students.

WHISTLER

1. Goats gully & Gun Barrels – Good for skiing in tight funneled areas, simulates a chute or couloir.
2. Bagel bowl – good for steep skiing particularly skiers right, easy exit back to Peak to Creek if not going to plan
3. Side of the saddle – particularly skiers left – steep with an easy traverse back to the saddle
4. Skiers left in Kaleidoscope – short and easy to get back to run
5. Low roll – great for ramping up entrances – move up the cornice to make more difficult
6. Very top of little whistler, progressively bigger cornice on the skiers right.
7. Sun Bowl – wind lips
8. Skiers right of Croc Rock
9. Seppo's, in the right conditions you can use the rock rolls at the top to simulate a steep entrance.
10. Whistler Bowl easier entrance and easy way to Surprise.

BLACKCOMB

1. Jersey Bowl – steep and short.
2. Secret Bowl, Secret Chute
3. Very bottom of the couloir (cornice and safe, easy in and out)
4. Heavenly Basin – steep rock roll on skiers left at the top.
5. Staircase, The bite –Lots of short steps sections to practice trannies.
6. Top of 7th to Showcase, Prime Rib.

End of the day

1. Confirm that instructors feel confident skiing and taking groups in these areas.
2. Tell them if they are “signed off” or not and why. Forward this info to Tracey/Tom/Francois
3. Recommend Steps sessions both on a Wednesday (Advanced) and Friday (Intro) to fine tune their skills.