



Next Step Ski, Mt. Rose Ski Instructors

Goals of Next Step Ski Lesson

- The customer has a good time and enjoys skiing
- The customer's skiing improves
- The customer gets mileage on existing and new skills
- Possible outcomes include:
 - Linked Wedge Turns on Beginner Terrain
 - Wedge-Christie Turns on Beginner Terrain
 - Introduced to parallel skiing concepts
- The customer understands and applies the Responsibility Code
- Excited to continue learning and understand the path to next level

Keys to teaching Next Step

Next Step is where we provide the customer the skills to truly learn to love skiing. It is in this class that they become able to ride up lifts and ski down, and begin to understand the journey that will make them better skiers.

But, it is more than that. We also deliver additional beginner to intermediate level skills in this class. This is also where you, as an instructor, need to be delivering a more professional lesson. Generally, your lesson will go like this:

1. Introduction
2. Assessment
3. Collaborative Goal Setting
4. Presentation
5. Practice
6. Summary
7. Next Steps

Generally, steps 2 through 5 should repeat more than once in a 2 hour or greater lesson. Continuously monitoring your customer's feelings, state and progress enable you to adjust the lesson as needed. Great instructors ensure this for each individual student, even in a group lesson.



Meet and Greet (Initial Assessment)

Activities

- Introduce yourself, establish rapport; make sure that customers are met and greeted as they come to the Next Step lesson area.
- Make sure that a conversation begins the process of sorting them and grouping like skiers
- Ask questions like:
 - Sample questions: Have you ridden a chair lift before? Is this your first time skiing this season? How frequently do you go skiing? What runs do you ski (Green, Blue, Black)? Do you have any goals/desires for today's lesson?
 - Watch them as they walk to you or how are they standing? Do they look comfortable in their boots? How do they carry their skis to the next location?
 - Why are they here today? What are their goals?

Outcomes

- The customer is put into the appropriate group based on their skill level
 - We need to make sure they go towards Show Off or Wizard correctly based on this conversation
 - Show off if they need some practice before going on Wizard
 - Wizard – possibly two+ groups. Chair lift instruction or straight to skiing.

It is possible that there may be some additional sorting. There can be groups that are ready for the lift and then split based on watching them ski.



Level 1s – Low Group (This group may not always exist)

This is the group that isn't ready to ride lifts yet. If they came from a First-Time lesson, then it's possible the best place to start the lesson is Show-Off. The key will be whether you feel they can confidently control their speed and direction (turn both ways) based on a conversation with them. If yes, then they should be in group 2 or higher. If not, they need to start on Show-Off.

As a reminder, some station #4 graduation requirements are here for consideration.

Station #4 activities for Next Steps Level 1 Students

- Students can control speed using wedge turns on showoff
- Students can do chairlift unloads on static chair lift or bench

Once they got this, it's time to take them up the lift. If they already have this, they are ready for Level 2.

Level 2s – 1st time on a chairlift group

This group is going up the chair for the first time. Additionally, this could include the group that states they have never successfully ridden a lift.

Recommended Activities for this Group

After the initial assessment, you will continuously assess, reset goals, present, practice and generally work with your students to ensure they have a great experience. Ideally, they learn a little skiing.

- Teach them how to ride a lift. Practice unload on static chair near Wizard.
- Reinforce turn shape/completion, emphasize speed control by turning
- Teach flexion/extension that can make steering easier
- Teach additional rotary skills if they have pressure OK. This will likely lead to wedge-christie turns
- Remind them of pressure on front of boots (flexed ankles), proper stance for skiing
- Teach rotary with inside leg steering and movement down the hill
- Reinforce Safety
- Reinforce the joy of skiing

Wrapping up the lesson (Summary and Next Steps)

Regardless of how far a student progresses in a lesson, it is crucial to summarize the lesson and tell them their next steps. For example, "today, we spent the first hour making sure we had an athletic balanced stance and could make linked turns for speed control" then, "in the second hour we learned to ride the lift and you saw, even more, how important not being 'back' was". And finally, "As you continue, I recommend that you stay on this green lift (Wizard) and practice until tomorrow and then come back to this same lesson. However, tomorrow make sure you tell the instructor that you are confident in your stance, riding the lift, and linking turns and you think you are ready for some more challenging tasks."

Additional Notes:

- Primary Terrain is Wizard Lift, Easiest Route Down at first
- Increase speed, and alternate routes as appropriate



Level 3s/4s

Generally, this group has successfully been on a chairlift before and may need to be further sorted after watching them ski. It is possible that you may have a mix of levels in your group even after you sort them into different groups. This is where your teaching skills will be put to the test (teaching a split).

Activities for Levels 3, 4,

- Perform a skier analysis for each of your students
- Determine what would benefit the majority of the class and set that as the key path for the lesson
 - But – for each person, you will need to “make it easier” or “make it harder” to suit their needs.
 - Examples include telling a student, “While we go down this hill, you should focus on whether or not your inside foot is twisting independently of your outside foot”, while the rest of the group is simply linking turns. Or having some students work on their wedge turns while others work on wedge-christie turns.
- These levels are almost always about refining the wedge turn and introducing the wedge-christie or parallel turn.

Additional Notes:

- Primary Terrain is Galena Lift, easiest route down at first
- Increase speed, and alternate routes as appropriate

You may need to focus on developing and mastering truly good linked rounded wedge turns before taking them up the Galena lift. If you are able to get 2-4 complete runs in during the 2 hours you have given the students great mileage, many turns, skill development, increased confidence, and they have experienced the enjoyment of the first stages of real skiing. After the lesson they should have an idea of what they can practice when they are skiing on their own.

Appendix – Safety, Progressions, and Drills

The following collection of information, progressions and drills are designed to provide tools for instructors, which are known to work. In some cases, they may not conform to the standard methodology that PSIA exams look for. Therefore, you may want to consult with a trainer before you use this outside of this context.

Safety

This is the current responsibility code. Instructors must know this and teach it to students in every lesson. This is critical to keep people from getting hurt. 1-4 are the ones that are most often breached by new skiers and riders, resulting in accidents and injuries. So, at least make sure you get those!

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY CODE

- 1** Always stay in control. You must be able to stop or avoid people or objects.
- 2** People ahead or downhill of you have the right-of-way. You must avoid them.
- 3** Stop only where you are visible from above and do not restrict traffic.
- 4** Look uphill and avoid others before starting downhill or entering a trail.
- 5** You must prevent runaway equipment.
- 6** Read and obey all signs, warnings and hazard markings.
- 7** Keep off closed trails and out of closed areas.
- 8** You must know how and be able to load, ride and unload lifts safely. If you need assistance, ask the lift attendant.
- 9** Do not use lifts or terrain when impaired by alcohol or drugs.
- 10** If you are involved in a collision or incident, share your contact information with each other and a ski area employee.

**Know and Obey the Code.
It's Your Responsibility.**

If you need help understanding the Code, please ask an employee.



The Fundamentals of Ski Instruction

The PSIA Five Fundamentals of Skiing

- Control the relationship of the center of mass to the base of support to direct pressure along the length of the skis.
- Control pressure from ski to ski and direct pressure toward the outside ski.
- Control edge angles through a combination of inclination and angulation.
- Control the skis rotation (turning, pivoting, steering) with leg rotation, separate from the upper body.
- Regulate the magnitude of pressure created through ski/snow interaction.

The PSIA People Skills Fundamentals

- Develop relationships based on trust.
- Engage in meaningful, two-way communication.
- Identify, understand, and managed your emotions and actions.
- Recognize and influence the behaviors, motivations, and emotions of others.

The PSIA Teaching Skills Fundamentals

- Collaborate on long-term goals and short-term objectives.
- Manage information, activities, terrain selection, and pacing.
- Promote play, experimentation, and exploration
- Facilitate the learner's ability to reflect upon experiences and sensations.
- Managed emotional and physical risk.



Pressure Progressions for Next Step

Shuffling

While standing in a safe location, explain that we are going to do a drill that will help us become more balanced over the center of our skis. Then, have them watch you “shuffle” (left and right foot move forwards and backwards opposing each other). As you explain it and do it, ask them to also do it with you. This is the static, or easy version of the drill.

Next, explain that we are going to try this while we are moving. Demonstrate doing a shuffle while moving down or across the hill a little bit. They should all then follow you and do the same thing.

Next, let’s see if we can do shuffle, shuffle, turn and shuffle, shuffle turn for a while. This would be the complex part of our progression.

And finally, stop and make sure everyone notices that when we did that, we had to have our bodies in an athletic stance in order to stay balanced. Can we now try to ski with this improved stance, returning to the shuffle occasionally if needed to work on our stance.

Pressure

When students are doing wedge turns, but their body is very static and locked into that beginner look, we need to get them moving (flexion/extension). But, we don’t really want to teach them pressure, pressure, pressure. This drill begins with pressure. But, then it quickly switches to rotary because that is where we really want to be. The pressure is designed to simply get them moving a little bit throughout the turn. Then, we focus on what we really want.

Group up class and draw a picture of a turn in the snow. Divide that turn, by drawing a line in the middle of the turn(apex), into 2 sections: beginning, and end. Explain to the class that we need to be using our legs more and that you are going to explain and demonstrate how to do that.

Now, explain that at the beginning of the turn, we want to get taller and straighten out our legs a little bit(extension). In the second half of the turn, we want to get smaller and shorten our legs using ankles and knees(flexion). Explain that this isn’t doing it all at once. Rather, you want them count, up, 2, 3, 4, then down 2, 3, 4. Do this while you are all standing in place in a group. Everybody should move up and down, doing flexion/extension, while they are just standing on the snow.

Now, do the demo. Walk up above the class. Do 2 wedge turns, 1 above them, 1 below them, and loudly say, “up, up, up, up” in the 1st half of the turn and “down, down, down, down” in the 2nd half of the turn. The goal is for them to see you doing flexion extension during the turn. You will have to exaggerate the movement for them to see it.

Now take them skiing and have them try this. Some will do it backwards. Fix that. You will likely notice that some of them will actually start matching the inside ski to the outside ski on accident as a result of adding this flexion/extension to their wedge turns. Get excited, point that out and tell everybody that this is a great thing. Tell them, “There are 3 turns in skiing, “The Wedge”, “The Wedge-Christie” and “Parallel”. Point out that those students matching their skis at the end of the turn are well on their way to the Wedge-Christie turn and everyone should try that.



Rotary Progressions for Next Step

Rotary

If you have students that have some movement in their legs, or if you just completed the pressure progression above, then you really need to focus on rotary. This is a relatively easy rotary drill, which can be used at fairly low levels and even on students working on their parallel skiing.

This drill moves faster than prior drills. Instead of spending a lot of time in a huddle explaining this one, we're going to keep the class moving much faster. The best place to start this is on the flat part of Galena, below the hill in the big wide area.

Huddle the group and explain, "We going to work on a skill that will help your skiing. Copy me". Lift up one of your legs and rotate it while off the snow. Do the other leg. Make sure everybody does this. It should only take a very short amount of time and does not require drawing anything in the snow.

Next, tell them, "Follow me and try to do what I do – follow the leader – copy me" Proceed across the hill (look for traffic) and as you traverse across the hill, rotate your uphill ski like a wedge change up, but make sure the rotary movement is about the boot, not about the front of the ski. The goal here is that they have more weight on the downhill foot and thus the uphill foot can actually do some rotary. It will take some time for everyone to do this right and on both feet.

After you work this for a while, and it seems like everyone can do it, stop them and tell them, "Did everybody feel that in their legs? Did you notice how your legs could rotate without your whole body moving? This is a key enabler to better skiing. Now, we're going to try adding that to your skiing."

Now demonstrate the rotary as appropriate in their skiing. You can do this at all levels including Wedge, Wedge-Christie and Parallel. Exaggerate it. Tell them to exaggerate it. You're looking to get them twisting their legs. Another variation could be to do wedge changeups in between turns, as they cross the hill, with a focus that their stance does not widen and that both feet are twisting.



Edging Progressions for Next Step

Edging

While this isn't something to work on all that often in Next Step, we need to have some edging tools. Here's one that can work at a variety of levels.

Group: Stand around and show edging statically. Have everyone try it a little bit. Side to side, more/less in a wedge, etc.

On beginner terrain, let's all make a wedge and see if we can vary the braking affect by how much edge we apply. Explain this will be hard to see, but that you can actually have your skis at a set angle (in a wedge) and brake a little more or less based on the "tilt" of the ski. Try this out.

Now, as they go through turns, have them experiment with more/less edge on the outside ski. It should help them to control the radius of the turn a little bit.

Now, let's take this to our regular skiing and see what it's like when we hit the steeper parts, with this new ability to turn a little sharper and hang on to turns a little longer