

## **Ski/Snow Boarding Checklist**

(Beginner and Intermediate)



### **THE TEN ESSENTIALS**

1. **Navigation:** Trail Map (GPS optional)
2. **Hydration:** Hydration Pack
3. **Nutrition:** Extra Food for emergency (extra nutrition bars)
4. **Sun Protection:** Sunscreen, Sunglasses, Hat, Lip Balm
5. **Insulation:** Hat and Gloves, Coat, Snow Pants, Wool Socks, Extra layers
6. **Safety:** Helmet, Goggles, Poles
7. **Illumination:** Headlamp/Flashlight, Extra Batteries
8. **First Aid (for self and gear):** Bandages, Knife, Medicine, etc
9. **Shelter:** *not applicable*
10. **Communication:** Whistle (for emergency signals)

### **CLOTHING**

- ☑ **Ski Boots/Snowboard Boots-** Boots are the most important piece of equipment so make sure they fit correctly. They should be snug enough to hold your heel securely in place, yet allow your toes to brush the edge. Rental store employees will help you to find the right boot size.
- ☑ **Gloves/Mittens-** It is important to have a good, warm pair of gloves or mittens. They should be wind proof and water resistant yet allow your fingers to move and stay warm.
- ☑ **Neck Gaiter-** This will keep your neck warm and your chin from getting wind burn.
- ☑ **Additional Clothing Layers** (long underwear, turtleneck, sweater, fleece)- Layers are key when playing in cold weather. The weather from the top of the mountain to the bottom can vary drastically, as can your body temperature, depending on if you're riding the chairlift or actively making your way downhill.
- ☑ **Ski Socks-** Make sure to wear a warm, thick (wool) sock to keep your feet dry and warm.
- ☑ **Ski Jacket-** There are a lot of coats out there so it's difficult to know what exactly to look for. The most important thing to look for is a coat that is both water resistant and windproof. Make sure the coat fits properly and can be worn with numerous layers.
- ☑ **Ski Pants-** You can purchase pants that are either heavily insulated or thin shells. Either way make sure they are waterproof and allow for flexibility. If you choose pants that are shells make sure to compensate with more layers underneath.

### **GEAR**

- ☑ **Skis/Snowboard-** As a first timer it is best to rent your skis, boots and poles as a package. Skis and snowboards can be quite expensive and you want to make sure this is a sport you plan to continue before purchasing. Packages are often available with lift tickets.
- ☑ **Helmet-** Helmets are an essential part of ski gear. The helmet should be snug and there shouldn't be any space between the goggles and the helmet.
- ☑ **Goggles/Sunglasses-** Make sure your goggles are fog resistant, and if you wear glasses purchase a pair of over-the-glasses goggles.
- ☑ **Ski Poles-** When looking for the right size pole, turn the pole upside down and grab just below the basket. Your elbow should be at a 90 degree angle.

- ☑ **Hand/Foot Warmers-** Always carry a few of these to stick in your gloves or boots.
- ☑ **Sunblock-** Lather up on sunscreen at least 20 minutes before you start skiing. Even on cloudy days the snow can reflect the sun leaving you with an un-attractive raccoon tan.
- ☑ **Lip Balm-** Dry winter conditions often leave dry chapped lips, making this stuff a lifesaver.

## **TIPS FOR BEGINNERS**

**Terrain:** It is important to choose a ski resort with a good beginner's area. The best thing to do is ask ski shops, not the resorts. You want wide, not very steep slopes. And more than just one "bunny hill", so you can work your way up gradually.

**Conditions:** Check ahead for the snow conditions. If they are icy, you'll have a less than pleasant first experience. Ice is hard packed snow that has melted somewhat on top and then refrozen. A high of 25 the day after a snow should produce wonderful skiing conditions. A high of 25 the day after a rain should be avoided.

**Snowplow:** The snowplow is the basic technique taught to beginning skiers. Unfortunately it is easy to do incorrectly. You'll be told to point your skis towards each other. Predictably, the first thing that happens is that the skis move towards each other, and criss-cross each other, then you fall down. What is often not explained very well is to tilt your skis inwards towards each other. To do this, pull your knees together, and continually push your feet apart. If that doesn't make sense, think of the bow of a boat: the sides are angled in towards each other, and they push the water apart. Of course your tilt doesn't need to be this drastic, but without at least some tilt, you won't have any control over your speed or direction. Work with someone who knows what they're doing before you hit the slopes.

**Stopping:** You should also know the reason why you have to snowplow. It controls your speed. As your skis become parallel, you go faster. The more you snowplow (the farther apart the back of your skis are), the more you are pushing your skis sideways across the snow. This makes you slow down. In order to stop, just snowplow widely and with more tilt. How well this works depends on how steep the slope is, how icy, wet, or dry the snow is, and how strong and flexible you are.

**Turning:** Turning is particularly hard to explain, because so many skiers do it intuitively -- you just turn your body. But here's a stab at the basics. First you will always turn with more weight on the outside foot (ie. on a left turn, your weight is on your right foot). Second, turn your body in the direction of the turn. Huh? But how you say?! Try this experiment. Stand up, on one foot, and twist your body. (If on your right foot, turn your body to face left). What you do is lift the heel, and pivot on the ball of the foot. On skis, you should do about the same. Because of the skis, you'll have to do the twisting motion a little more aggressively than when standing on one foot.

**Improvement:** You will ski worse when you're tired. It's important to take things at your own pace, and know that you'll always do worse at the end of the day, so take a rest!