

Teaching Alpine Skiing Skills

On-snow Training

Beginner Skier

The ability level of the beginner skier ranges from an athlete who has no experience with the sport to an athlete who can perform controlled linked turns on a novice course. The beginner skier will start to ski on the flat terrain in a controlled learning environment and progress to the easiest slope on the mountain.

Typically the beginner skier will compete in the:

- 10 Meter Walk
- Glide
- Super Glide



Walk in Ski Boots

Athlete can walk independently in ski boots.

Teaching Points – Walk in Ski Boots

- Coach identifies if an athlete feels comfortable walking independently in ski boots.
- Athlete can stand on one foot while wearing ski boots.
- Athlete can climb stairs while wearing ski boots.
- Athlete can hop while wearing ski boots.
- Athlete can walk on snow in ski boots.
- Athlete can carry skis while walking on snow in ski boots.



Faults & Fixes – Walk in Ski Boots

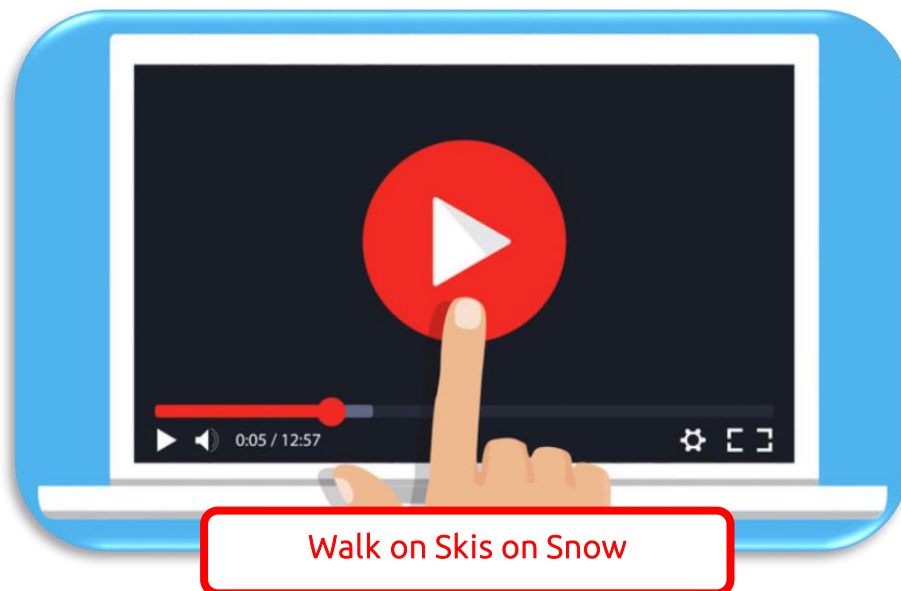
Error	Correction	Drill Reference
Athlete does not feel comfortable walking independently in ski boots.	Check for balanced stance. Provide assistance until the athlete feels more comfortable.	Walk with the athlete until he/she feels comfortable walking in ski boots.
Athlete has difficulty walking on snow in ski boots.	Check for balanced stance. Provide assistance until the athlete feels more comfortable. Identify athlete's hesitation, as it may slow his or her learning progress.	Walk with the athlete until he/she feels comfortable walking in ski boots. Build trust between the coach and the athlete.

Walk on skis on snow

Athlete can walk independently (forward, backward and in a circle) on skis on flat terrain. Once your athlete completes this task, he or she may be able to train and compete in the 10 Meter Walk event for athletes with lower ability levels as outlined in the [Official Special Olympics Rules for Alpine Skiing](#).

Teaching Points – Walk on Skis on Snow

- Athlete can step into the binding, on snow.
- Athlete can walk independently on one ski on flat terrain.
- Athlete can walk independently on one ski, forward, on flat terrain.
- Athlete can walk independently on one ski, backward, on flat terrain.
- Athlete can walk independently on one ski, in a circle, on flat terrain.
- Athlete can walk independently on two skis on flat terrain.
- Athlete can walk independently on two skis, forward, on flat terrain.
- Athlete can walk independently on two skis, backward, on flat terrain.
- Athlete can walk independently on two skis, in a circle, on flat terrain.
- Athlete can train for the 10 Meter Walk event.
- Athlete can compete in the 10 Meter Walk event.



Faults & Fixes – Walk on Skis on Snow

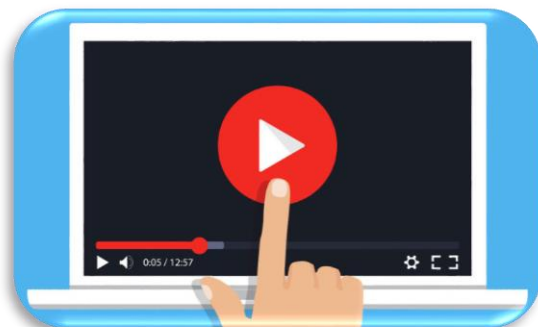
Error	Correction	Drill Reference
Athlete cannot step into the binding on snow.	Provide assistance to athlete as needed. Check for excess snow on the bottom of the ski boot. Check if the binding is positioned to accept the ski boot (released).	Hold onto coach's ski pole, arm, back, etc., for balance Teach the athlete to scuff the bottom of his/her ski boot.
Athlete cannot walk independently in one ski.	Provide assistance to athlete as needed.	Red Light/ Green Light on one ski Tag on one ski Duck, Duck, Goose Follow the leader
Athlete cannot walk independently in two skis.	Provide assistance to athlete as needed. Have the athlete go back to walking independently in one ski.	Red Light/ Green Light on two skis Tag on two skis Duck, Duck, Goose Follow the leader
Athlete loses balance and falls.	Check for balanced stance. Determine why the athlete may have fallen; correct as necessary.	Fall down and get up drill (Yard Sale) Follow the leader
Tips or tails of skis cross.	Check for balanced stance. Provide tip clamp if necessary. Make sure equipment fits properly.	

Side step

Athlete can step sideways with skis perpendicular to the fall line of a hill. Athlete side steps from flat to easiest sloped terrain.

Teaching Points – Side Step

- Athlete can step sideways on a flat terrain.
- Athlete is introduced to skating on skis (edge awareness) on a flat terrain.
- Athlete is introduced to terrain change.
- Coach introduces the athlete to the fall line of a hill.
- Athlete can step sideways up the easiest sloped terrain with skis perpendicular to the fall line of a hill.
- Have the athlete repeat this practice while facing in the opposite direction.



Side Step

Faults & Fixes – Side Step

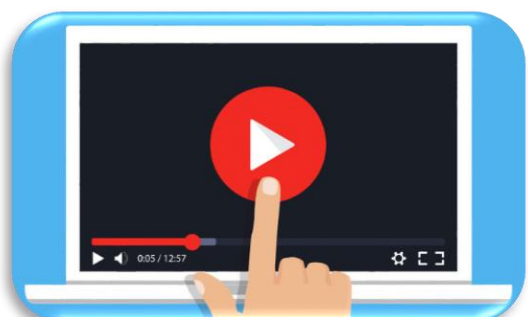
Error	Correction	Drill Reference
Athlete cannot skate on a flat terrain.	Teach the athlete to begin skating on one ski. Teach the athlete how to herringbone.	Follow the leader Tag
Athlete cannot hold an edge while side stepping up a hill.	Teach the athlete how to engage the edge of the ski.	Moving knees and ankles into the hill
Athlete slides forward/backward while side stepping up a hill.	Teach the athlete how to stay perpendicular to the fall line of a hill.	Walk sideways up the "stairs." Demonstration of fall line

Straight run/ Straight wedge

Athlete moves the skis into the fall line and slides down, on skis, the easiest terrain in a balanced, centered stance. Athlete performs the same action in a small wedge (skis are in a converging position in which the tips are closer than the tails). Once your athlete completes this task, he or she may be able to train and compete in the Glide event for athletes with lower ability levels as outlined in the [Official Special Olympics Rules for Alpine Skiing](#).

Teaching Points – Straight run/ Straight wedge

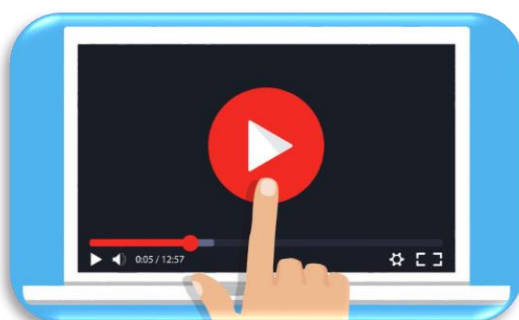
- Athlete side steps 10-15 side steps up the easiest terrain.
- Athlete can move the skis into the fall line from a side step position (perpendicular to the fall line).
- Athlete maintains a balanced, centered stance with hands out and forward, while sliding to a natural run-out.
- Athlete flexes and extends the knees and ankles while sliding.
- Athlete can vary the size of the wedge to control speed while sliding, when appropriate.
- Athlete can move the skis out of the fall line to control speed while sliding, when appropriate.



Straight Run/Wedge 1



Straight Run/Wedge 2



Straight Run/Wedge 3

Faults & Fixes – Straight run/ Straight wedge

Error	Correction	Drill Reference
Athlete cannot control speed of skis.	Start the athlete lower on the easiest terrain, and repeat exercise.	
Athlete cannot move the skis into the fall line.	Coach should stand in front of the athlete to help as he/she moves into the fall line.	
Athlete cannot maintain a wedge while sliding.	Maintain the shin/ boot contact.	Squash the grape/orange
Athlete crosses ski tips while in wedge.	Maintain the shin/ boot contact. Use a tip clamp on the skis.	Squash the grape/orange
Athlete cannot flex or extend the knees and ankles.	Check equipment. Start the athlete lower on the easiest terrain, and repeat exercise. Check to see if the athlete is in an athletic position through the movement.	

Wedge turn to a stop or Flat ski turn to a stop

Athlete develops fundamental skills (balance, rotation, edge and pressure) necessary to change direction out of the fall line while on the easiest, most gentle terrain. Athlete learns to control speed by utilizing turn shape.

Teaching Points – Wedge turn to a stop

- Starting in a shallow traverse, in a wedge position, the athlete will turn up the hill to a stop.
- Starting in a shallow traverse in the other direction, in a wedge position, the athlete will turn up the hill to a stop.
- With success, the athlete will repeat this maneuver while gradually starting closer to the fall line each time.
- Starting in the fall line, with skis in a wedge, the athlete will steer the skis while moving until he/she is across the hill, out of the fall line, in one direction.
- Starting in the fall line, facing the other direction, with skis in a wedge, the athlete will steer the skis while moving until he/she is across the hill, out of the fall line, in that direction.



Wedge Turn to Stop

Teaching Points – Flat ski turn to a stop

- Starting in a shallow traverse, with skis parallel, the athlete will turn up the hill to a stop.
- Starting in a shallow traverse in the other direction, with skis parallel, the athlete will turn up the hill to a stop.
- With success, the athlete will repeat this maneuver while gradually starting closer to the fall line each time.
- Starting in the fall line, the athlete will direct the skis across the hill while moving out of the fall line, in one direction.
- Starting in the fall line, facing the other direction, the athlete will direct the skis across the hill while moving out of the fall line, in that direction.



Flat Ski Turn to a Stop

Faults & Fixes – Wedge turn to a stop or Flat ski turn to a stop

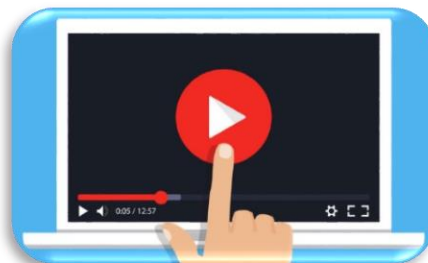
Error	Correction	Drill Reference
Athlete turns too far into the turn and slides backward.	Use cue words to instruct the athlete when to stop the turn.	Use a ski pole for the athlete to ski around.
Athlete gets out of a wedge position.	Use cue words or visual aids to instruct the athlete.	Pizza slice
Athlete cannot stop.	Review straight run procedure and re-introduce wedge to a stop. Move athlete down to a gentler slope.	
Athlete continuously falls over.	Check for balanced, centered stance. Make sure the athlete's feet are at least hip width apart.	Ski with a basketball-size ball between the knees.
Athlete can turn in one direction only.	Start the turn on the weaker side using a shallower traverse.	

Riding a ski lift (ski lift awareness)

There may be a variety of ski lifts offered at ski areas around the world. At this level the athlete will use the ski lift that accesses the easiest terrain



Riding a Ski Lift 1



Riding a Ski Lift 2

Teaching Points – Riding the ski lift (ski lift awareness)

Have your athlete watch other skiers using the ski lift so that he/she becomes more familiar with the process.

Simulate, with your athlete, lift procedures (getting on and getting off of the ski lift) and etiquette.

Communicate with the lift operators that your athlete is a new rider on the ski lift, and allow them to help your athlete.

When possible, the coach should ride with your athlete on the ski lift.

While on the ski lift, reiterate to your athlete the process of getting off of the ski lift.

Faults & Fixes – Riding the ski lift (ski lift awareness)

Error	Correction
Athlete is afraid of heights.	Coach must redirect the focus of the athlete.
Athlete forgets to get off of the lift.	Assist the lift operator, as appropriate.
Athlete falls off the ski lift.	Assess the situation and ensure the safety of the athlete. Review lift procedures with your athlete.

Controlled linked turns on easiest terrain

Athlete can link turns, controlling speed and turn radius, on easiest terrain. Once your athlete completes this task, he/she may be able to train and compete in the Super Glide event for athletes with lower ability levels as outlined in the Official Special Olympics Rules for Alpine Skiing.

Teaching Points – Controlled linked turns on easiest terrain

- Athlete can link a turn in one direction to a turn in the opposite direction with a slight rising motion toward the new turn as both skis are steered into the fall line; when appropriate, allow for a controlled stop.
- Athlete’s hips should remain centered over the ski, while the center of mass moves slightly to the inside of the turn.
- Athlete can link turns with rhythm, flow and control from turn to turn.



Controlled Link Turns (Easy Terrain)

Faults & Fixes – Controlled linked turns on easiest terrain

Error	Correction	Drill Reference
Athlete cannot perform the maneuver consistently on the terrain.	Review and apply previously learned skills throughout progression. Implement fundamentals in your teaching progression. Practice the maneuver on easier terrain.	Add a new twist/ keep the fun in fundamentals.
Athlete turns better in one direction than the other.	Practice turns in the weaker direction. Assess the reason for the weakness on one side.	Garland Drill Strength training on weaker side Modify equipment to compensate for weakness on one side.
Athlete locks edge on one side, which does not allow for smooth turns.	Center of mass must be over center of skis.	Flatten uphill ski – Thumpers Put a beach ball/balloon between the knees and “don’t pop the balloon.”

Novice Skier

The ability level of the novice skier ranges from an athlete who can perform controlled linked turns on a novice course to an athlete who can perform Christie-type linked turns (skidded turns) on an intermediate course.

The novice skier will refine his/her beginner skills on the easiest slope on the mountain.

Can Your Athlete:

- Perform controlled linked turns on a novice course
- Develop necessary fundamental movement patterns through each turn
- Ski the easiest terrain on the mountain in control
- Vary turn shape and size
- Perform Christie-type turn (skidded turn)
- Perform Christie-type turn (skidded turn) on intermediate course

