



## Falling (To be done on a flat surface with soft snow)

Before you begin the on-snow portion, it is important to teach your athletes the proper way to fall. Falls are a natural part of snowboarding, and falling in the correct way can prevent injury. Take some time to talk to your athletes, letting them know that it is OK for a fall to occur. By practicing falling, an athlete will become less apprehensive if a fall does occur. Be sure that the athlete also has all of the proper protective equipment prior to practicing falls.



### Forward Fall

Ninety percent of the injuries in snowboarding are to the wrist and shoulder. Most of these injuries happen when a snowboarder falls forward in the incorrect way. Practice these movements side by side with your athlete.

- Start on your knees and let yourself fall forward onto your forearms.
- Catch your weight with the forearms slightly away from the body, with the elbows bent.
- Allow your forearms to touch the ground first.
- Try to resist reaching out toward the ground or placing the hands out in front.
- As contact is made, absorb the fall with your arms.
- You may want to practice this movement with your athlete until they are completely comfortable with it.

### Rear Fall

The rear fall is generally the most painful because athletes tend to tense up, causing them to land flat. Most injuries during rear falls occur to the head.

- Start in a crouched position with your athlete.
- Gently rock backward until your balance is lost.
- As you fall, curl your body into a ball, making sure to keep the head tucked forward.
- A good visualization is to have the athlete pretend that they are a turtle going into its shell.



- As you fall, remember to bend the knees and bring the board up off the ground. This will prevent the board from catching while sliding downhill and causing a potential flip.

It is important to have the athlete work without a board until falling is comfortable. Once comfortable, have the athlete practice falling while clipped into the board. When this practice is approached the right way, the athlete will become less fearful of falling (and may even find it fun). Reducing fear will help the athlete perform better. Everyone learning a skill will be much more tentative if they are afraid of being hurt.





## Getting Up (To be done on a flat surface with soft snow)

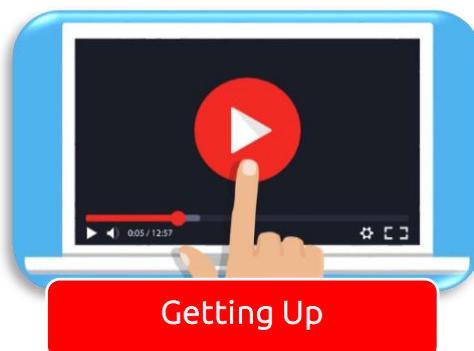
Because falling is common, it is important to teach the athlete how to get up from the snow. Many times this can be more frustrating than the fall itself, especially on an incline.

- The easiest way for a snowboarder to get up is to rise from a kneeling position.
- The kneeling athlete can dig the toe-edge of the board into the snow, support their weight on the hands, and rock the board back until the base is flat on the snow.
- The athlete can then slowly rise to a standing position.

If the fall has been to the back, the athlete will need to do a turtle roll in order to get to the kneeling position.

- A turtle roll begins with the athlete sitting on the snow, then rocking backward while lifting the board off the snow.
- Once the board is off the ground, the athlete can roll to one side, bringing the board around and under the legs.
- From this position, the athlete can stand from the kneeling position as described above.

Even an athlete in good condition may have problems getting up from a fall. It is important to work until the athlete is comfortable before going uphill. During lessons, it is a good idea to have the athlete practice getting up without assistance if they fall. It is also important to make sure that the athlete isn't becoming overtired from having to get up too often. In this case you may want to offer more assistance.





## Teaching Points – Getting Up

1. If athlete falls completely to ground, roll onto side.
2. Position snowboard so that it is across the fall line (not facing downhill).
3. Get up to the hands and knees.
4. Dig toe edge into the snow close to hand placement.
5. Slowly rise to a standing position while maintaining pressure on toe edge.
6. Make sure the athlete is not physically injured.

## Falling and Getting Up Drills

### 1. Circle Drill

Have the athletes stand in a circle. Randomly call out athletes by name, jacket color, etc., and have athletes practice falling when called out.

### 2. Line Drill

Have the athletes stand in a line. Begin by tossing a hat or other object to an athlete, who must then demonstrate a proper fall. The athlete then tosses the object back to the coach, who then throws the object to another athlete in the line. While practicing falling, athletes can help encourage proper form of teammates.

