



Community Coaching Context (Fun.)

Working copies

Step 4

Teaching classic technique

4.2.1 Classic Technique Checklists

To simplify the detection and correction of technique errors when you are out on the snow, a series of checklists has been developed.

Common Checkpoints

- ✓ The following checkpoints are common to all classic techniques (with notable exceptions for Double Pole technique, in which there is no leg push):

□ Overall

- ✓ All techniques originate with the general athletic stance, modified for the specific technique being learned.
- ✓ Weight shifts fully from ski to ski (not applicable in Double Pole).
- ✓ The skier is balanced on the gliding ski, in Diagonal Stride and One-Step Double Pole.
- ✓ Motion of arms and legs is snappy and forceful.

□ Lower Body

- ✓ Good angle is maintained at the ankle to permit forward upper body position and correct alignment of hips over the foot at the critical instant of leg and arm push.
- ✓ Leg push is preceded by a pre-load of the gliding leg before it initiates the push.
- ✓ Leg pushes down, into the snow, and slightly back.
- ✓ Leg push is executed quickly and effectively so that power is transferred quickly to the snow and a resulting glide is created.
- ✓ Hip, knee and ankle joints contribute to the leg push in that order, constituting a sequential but very rapid and explosive movement.
- ✓ Hips should rotate slightly to allow body weight to be balanced over the gliding ski.
- ✓ Hips are high and forward over the glide foot (or feet).

□ Upper Body

- ✓ Poles are planted close to skis.
- ✓ Skier reaches high and forward with bent arms; the amount of elbow bend and the elbow orientation (i.e. tight to the body or pointing slightly outward) vary with the particular classic technique being executed, the phase of the technique and the pitch of the slope being climbed.
- ✓ The shoulders are parallel to the ground.
- ✓ The shoulder, back, core and arm muscles are engaged in poling action.
- ✓ The back is slightly rounded (no hyper-extension).
- ✓ There is a distinct, but not excessive, forward body lean (achieved through flex in ankles).

Diagonal Stride

☐ Most Important

- ✓ The skier commits weight fully to the gliding/supporting ski in the glide phases.
- ✓ The recovery foot is unweighted until placed on the snow ahead of the other foot (with ankle pushed ahead of knee as upward slope increases).
- ✓ The middle of hips is over toes at initiation of leg push, and further ahead as slope of hill increases.
- ✓ Forward body lean comes from a flexed ankle.
- ✓ Hips rotate slightly during leg push, without twisting the upper body.
- ✓ There is a pre-load and explosive leg push (knee and ankle are momentarily straightened and flexed to load the leg, followed by the forceful extension of the leg push).

☐ Very Important

- ✓ There is complete extension of the leg and arm at the end of their respective pushes.
- ✓ There is a straight line through the upper body and leg as the push leg leaves the snow.
- ✓ The gliding/supporting leg straightens (without the knee locking) during the glide phases.
- ✓ The recovery leg is swung forcefully forward in a pendulum motion.
- ✓ The arm action is generally straight forward and back, hinging as a pendulum from the shoulder.
- ✓ Arm push ends shortly after hands pass legs, with natural follow-through continuing.
- ✓ The shoulder reaches forward on pole plant, hands at or below shoulder height.

☐ Important

- ✓ The pole is generally planted opposite the glide foot; as the slope increases, the pole plants a bit farther back.
- ✓ The flex in the elbow joint increases as the poling action commences.
- ✓ At pole release, the skier extends the wrist/hand, with pressure exclusively on the pole strap.

Double Pole

☐ Most Important

- ✓ The hips, upper body and arms are well forward and high to load the poles on pole plant.
- ✓ The forward body position originates in well flexed ankles.
- ✓ The skier “falls forward” and “hangs on poles”.
- ✓ The skier pulls down on the poles, engaging the back, shoulder, core and arm muscles.

☐ Very Important

- ✓ Elbows are moderately flexed on pole plant, with the degree of flex increasing with the amount of force being applied.
- ✓ The elbow flexion increases as the poling action begins.
- ✓ Legs are slightly flexed on pole plant, with flex increasing noticeably – but not excessively – during the poling action.

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- ✓ If the skier rises on the balls of feet, motion should be forward, not up.
- ✓ Arm recovery forward (not up) is aggressive, with shoulders leading.

❑ Important

- ✓ Upper body compression ends before the horizontal position.
- ✓ The upper body stays down until the arms are finished.
- ✓ The poles are planted in front of the bindings (or at the binding when glide speeds are lower or body position not as far forward).
- ✓ At pole plant, the shafts are nearly vertical, with grips slightly ahead of pole tips.

One-Step Double Pole

❑ Most Important

- ✓ The leg push, stride and arm reach forward occur simultaneously, and are all snappy/forceful.
- ✓ As the leg push is initiated, the push leg is fully weighted, with weight shifting dynamically to the striding leg as the push ends.
- ✓ The skier is balanced on one fully weighted gliding ski – weight centred over the forefoot – during the free glide phase and as the poling motion is initiated.
- ✓ The poling action is as for Double Pole in several respects:
 - The upper body and arms are well forward and high to load the poles for pole plant.
 - The hips are high and forward, to the extent possible (though they will not be as far forward as in Double Pole).
 - The skier “falls forward” and “hangs on poles”.
 - The skier pulls down on the poles, engaging the back, shoulder, core and arm muscles.

❑ Very Important

- ✓ There is a pre-load of the push leg before the push.
- ✓ Elbows are moderately flexed on pole plant, with the degree of flex increasing with the amount of force being applied.
- ✓ The elbow flexion increases as the poling action begins.
- ✓ Legs are slightly flexed on pole plant, with flex increasing noticeably – but not excessively – during the poling action.
- ✓ Arm recovery forward (not up) is uninterrupted, with shoulders leading.

❑ Important

- ✓ Upper body compression ends well before the horizontal position (i.e. there is less compression than in Double Pole).
- ✓ Relative to the Double Pole, the upper body rises more quickly from its compression (to enable the body to be positioned for the pre-load, leg push and stride that occur at the beginning of the next cycle).
- ✓ The poles are planted well in front of the binding of the gliding ski.
- ✓ At pole plant, the shafts are nearly vertical, with grips slightly ahead of pole tips.

6.2 Self-Assessment Sheet

Practice Coaching #2: Skill Progression, Intervention and Communication

Criteria	Yes	No
Skill Progression		
✓ The progression for skill development is appropriate for the age/ability of the participants		
✓ Coach focuses on the appropriate key points for the skill to be developed		
✓ Coach adjusts the activity for more advanced and less advanced abilities within the group		
✓ Comments/suggestions:		
Intervention		
✓ Coach scans the entire group constantly and intervenes with a variety of participants		
✓ Coach looks for input/feedback from the participants		
✓ Correction or reinforcement is clear and a visual is provided		
✓ Correction or reinforcement is brief and participant returns quickly to activity		
✓ Coach focuses on communicating what to do (not what NOT to do)		
✓ Comments/suggestions:		
Communication		
✓ Coach speaks in a calm tone of voice (i.e. does not yell at the participants)		
✓ Coach uses language that the children can easily understand		

Criteria	Yes	No
✓ Coach refrains from the use of foul language		
✓ Words and body language used in the correction or reinforcement are positive *		
✓ When praise is given, it is specific, not general (e.g. "you are doing ___well", not "nice one!")		
✓ Coach acts and speaks with enthusiasm *		
✓ Comments/suggestions:		

* This looks like: smiles; nods in the affirmative.

* This sounds like: cheers; "Sally, you did ____ very well. Way to go!"; or "Johnny, I see that you are improving at _____. Great job!"

* This feels like: high fives; safe pats on the back; a hand shake of congratulations (use these only if the child is clearly comfortable with physical contact from you).

Counting Interventions during the Activity	Number
✓ Duration of the activity in minutes (when participants are practicing, excluding explanation and demonstration)	
✓ Total number of interventions with the entire group	
✓ Total number of interventions with individual participants	
✓ Total number of different participants with whom the coach intervened	

Remember, more is not necessarily better. The total numbers are only to give you an indication of how often you are intervening and whether you are moving among the group or focusing only on certain participants.

Self-Assessment Sheet (working copy #1)

Practice Coaching #2: Skill Progression, Intervention and Communication

Criteria	Yes	No
Skill Progression		
✓ The progression for skill development is appropriate for the age/ability of the participants		
✓ Coach focuses on the appropriate key points for the skill to be developed		
✓ Coach adjusts the activity for more advanced and less advanced abilities within the group		
✓ Comments/suggestions:		
Intervention		
✓ Coach scans the entire group constantly and intervenes with a variety of participants		
✓ Coach looks for input/feedback from the participants		
✓ Correction or reinforcement is clear and a visual is provided		
✓ Correction or reinforcement is brief and participant returns quickly to activity		
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Communication		
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✓ Coach uses language that the children can easily understand		

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✓ Coach refrains from the use of foul language		
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✓ Coach acts and speaks with enthusiasm *		
✓ Comments/suggestions :		

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Counting Interventions during the activity	Number
✓ Duration of the activity in minutes (when participants are practicing, excluding explanation and demonstration)	
✓ Total number of interventions with the entire group	
✓ Total number of interventions with individual participants	
✓ Total number of different participants with whom the coach intervened	

Remember, more is not necessarily better. The total numbers are only to give you an indication of how often you are intervening and whether you are moving among the group or focusing only on certain participants.

Self-Assessment Sheet (working copy #2)

Practice Coaching #2: Skill Progression, Intervention and Communication

Criteria	Yes	No
Skill Progression		
✓ The progression for skill development is appropriate for the age/ability of the participants		
✓ Coach focuses on the appropriate key points for the skill to be developed		
✓ Coach adjusts the activity for more advanced and less advanced abilities within the group		
✓ Comments/suggestions:		
Intervention		
✓ Coach scans the entire group constantly and intervenes with a variety of participants		
✓ Coach looks for input/feedback from the participants		
✓ Correction or reinforcement is clear and a visual is provided		
✓ Correction or reinforcement is brief and participant returns quickly to activity		
✓ Coach focuses on communicating what to do (not what NOT to do)		
✓ Comments/suggestions:		
Communication		
✓ Coach speaks in a calm tone of voice (i.e. does not yell at the participants)		
✓ Coach uses language that the children can easily understand		

Criteria	Yes	No
✓ Coach refrains from the use of foul language		
✓ Words and body language used in the correction or reinforcement are positive *		
✓ When praise is given, it is specific, not general (e.g. "you are doing ___ well", not "nice one!")		
✓ Coach acts and speaks with enthusiasm *		
✓ Comments/suggestions :		

* This looks like: smiles; nods in the affirmative.

* This sounds like: cheers; "Sally, you did ___ very well. Way to go!"; "Johnny, I see that you are improving at ___. Great job!"

* This feels like: high fives; safe pats on the back; a hand shake of congratulations (use only if the child is clearly comfortable with physical contact from you)

Counting Interventions during the activity	Number
✓ Duration of the activity in minutes (when participants are practicing, excluding explanation and demonstration)	
✓ Total number of interventions with the entire group	
✓ Total number of interventions with individual participants	
✓ Total number of different participants with whom the coach intervened	

Remember, more is not necessarily better. The total numbers are only to give you an indication of how often you are intervening and whether you are moving among the group or focusing only on certain participants.

Step 5

Designing an overall plan for the season

5.1.3 Seasonal Plan Chart

SEASONAL PLAN							
	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH
Active Start (5 years & younger)	REGISTRATION – ALL AGES					4	
						4	
FUNDamentals (6 -7 years)						8	
						8	
						8	
FUNDamentals (8-9 years)		4	8	8	10	10	
Learning to Train (9-11 years)		3	8	8	8	10	3
Learning to Train (11-12 years)		4	10	10	10	11	4

Note: The number of sessions includes special activities, waxing workshops, etc. The time allocated to a session does not include supervised ski play time or the social time scheduled at the end each activity/practice.

4.1.3 Snow Play Goals

It is essential for children to have the opportunity for unstructured play-time on skis in addition to practice sessions if they are going to develop technical competence.

Although exposure to a variety of sports/activities is an important requirement of a child's physical development, coaches should keep in mind that the snow season is short in the context of year-round activity. Therefore, if children are going to develop competence in cross-country skiing, they may have to achieve it in a period as short as 10 to 12 weeks per year. This means that when snow is available, participation in cross-country skiing should be as frequent as four or five times per week, depending on the age of the skier. Generally speaking, children need to ski more than once a week to retain new skills, and four to five times a week if they wish to improve their skill level significantly.

Age	# Practice Sessions	# Play-time on Skis in Addition to Practice Sessions
6 years	16 on snow; 2 per week	minimum of 2x/wk over 3 months = 24
7 years	16 on snow; 2 per week	minimum of 2x/wk over 3 months = 24
8 years	30 on snow; 2 per week	minimum of 3x/wk over 3 months = 30
9 years	30 on snow; 2 per week	minimum of 3x/wk over 3 months = 30

For children six to nine years of age, the preferred setting for play-time on skis is a ski playground or terrain park. In addition to using a kid-friendly setting, coaches can improve the potential benefit from unstructured play-time on snow if they provide their skiers with some direction during the practice sessions. A well-prepared coach will give each child specific suggestions as to which skills to work on between sessions, and then follow up at the next practice.

To ensure play-time on skis is time well spent, the importance of kid-appropriate settings/ activities and quality time on skis should be emphasized to parents, as they will have the most influence on their children's skill development outside of practice sessions. Parents should also be encouraged to coordinate transportation and ski playground supervision with other parents, and to give their children an opportunity to use head lamps if they live in a communities where a lit trail system is not accessible.

Figure 5.1: Special Activities Grid

Level	Pre-Ski Season Sessions	Indoor Sessions	Special Activities	Total # of Practice Sessions	Minimum # of Snow Goals
1	0	1) Ski Preparation (Plan 3) 2) Dressing for Winter (Plan 8)	1) Special Activity (Plan 6) 2) Treasure Hunt (Plan 12) 3) Year-End Activity (Plan 16)	16	5
2	0	1) Ski Preparation (Plan 3)	1) A Club Activity (Plan 7) 2) Sprint Games (Plan 11) 3) Year-End Activity (Plan 16)	16	10
3	11	1) Ski Preparation (Plan 12) 2) Winter Safety (Plan 13)	1) Christmas Activity (Plan 16) 2) Holiday Ski Camp (Plan 20-21) 3) New Year's Activity (Plan 22) 4) Classic Relay (Plan 27) 5) Backwoods Adventure (Plan 30) 6) Modified Ski Tournament (Plan 32) 7) Orienteering Poker Ski (Plan 35) 8) Downhill Games (Plan 36) 9) Sprint Games (Plan 37) 10) Year-End Activity (Plan 40)	40	15
4	11	1) Ski Preparation (Plan 13)	1) Christmas Activity (Plan 16) 2) Holiday Ski Camp (Plan 20-21) 3) New Year's Activity (Plan 22) 4) Ski Tournament (Plan 27) 5) Downhill Games (Plan 29) 6) Backwoods Adventure (Plan 30) 7) Mini-Olympics (Plan 32) 8) Ski Race (Plan 35) 9) Sprint Games (Plan 37) 10) Year-End Activity (Plan 40)	40	20

2.4 CCC Athlete Development Grid

LTAD STAGE	COACH LEVEL	FACILITIES	TECHNIQUE	PHYSIOLOGY	STRENGTH & FLEXIBILITY	MENTAL SKILLS	COMPETITION	OTHER
<p>“FUNdamentals”</p> <p>stage of athlete development. Boys and Girls 6 - 7 (first part of the FUNdamentals stage)</p>	<p>NCCP</p> <p>Community Coach (i.e. completed NCCP Community Coaching (CC) workshop)</p> <p>Minimum 26 hrs. training.</p>	<p>Varied</p> <p>terrain, groomed tracks for skating and classic techniques. Daylodge in stadium area.</p> <p>Continue to make use of ski playgrounds/ terrain parks. Lit ski playground.</p>	<p>Master</p> <p>fundamental movement skills, develop overall motor skills. Acquire basic cross-country ski skills (both classic and skating techniques); equal use of techniques; develop downhill abilities.</p> <p>Focus on balance, agility and rhythm.</p> <p>Use “Snow Goals” to encourage time on snow. Good technique habits are developed through repeated practice.</p>	<p>Window</p> <p>of optimal trainability for speed 1 and flexibility development. Develop general fitness</p> <p>through participation in a variety of sports/ activities on a regular basis, year round. Utilize games to develop technique,</p> <p>speed, skills and fitness.</p>	<p>Introduce</p> <p>basic flexibility exercises. Introduce strength exercises using the child’s own body weight, medicine balls, Swiss balls.</p>	<p>Create</p> <p>awareness of the importance of mental skills. Exposure to positive thinking skills to build confidence and the ability to cope with stress. Integrated mental, cognitive and emotional development.</p>	<p>Ski tournaments, club relays, treasure hunts, year-end activities. 5 - 10 min. (0.5 to 1 km) 4 races/ season. Use</p> <p>varied terrain, include some unconventional settings (e.g. obstacle courses, terrain parks). Introduce competition in a team environment</p> <p>whenever possible.</p>	<p>Ensure</p> <p>appropriate ski equipment including waxable skis. Practice sessions: two per/wk, minimum</p> <p>16 on-snow sessions 60 min. organized activity plus supervised active ski play. Practice sessions should</p> <p>be well-structured and monitored. Time on skis</p> <p>in addition to practice sessions - as many ski playground experiences as possible (several times a week). Basic ski care.</p>

LTAD STAGE	COACH LEVEL	FACILITIES	TECHNIQUE	PHYSIOLOGY	STRENGTH & FLEXIBILITY	MENTAL SKILLS	COMPETITION	OTHER
<p>“FUNdamentals” stage of athlete development. Boys and Girls 8 years (girls) and 8-9 years (boys) - second step in the FUNdamentals stage</p>	<p>NCCP Community Coach (i.e. completed NCCP Community Coaching (CC) workshop) Minimum 26 hrs. training.</p>	<p>Varied terrain, groomed tracks for skating and classic techniques. Daylodge in stadium area. Continue to make use of ski playgrounds/ terrain parks. Lit ski playground.</p>	<p>Master fundamental movement skills, develop overall motor skills. Acquire basic cross-country ski skills (both classic and skating techniques); equal use of techniques; develop downhill abilities. Focus on balance, agility and rhythm. Use “Snow Goals” to encourage time on snow. Good technique habits are developed through repeated practice.</p>	<p>Develop linear, lateral and multi-directional speed with the duration of repetitions less than five seconds. Avoid anaerobic (capacity and power) efforts (i.e. 30-90 sec at highest intensity).</p>	<p>Introduce basic flexibility exercises. Introduce strength exercises using the child’s own body weight, medicine balls, Swiss balls.</p>	<p>Create awareness of the importance of mental skills. Exposure to positive thinking skills to build confidence and the ability to cope with stress. Integrated mental, cognitive and emotional development.</p>	<p>Ski tournaments, club relays, treasure hunts, year-end activities. 4-6 races/ season Distance: 0.5 to 1 km (5 - 10 min.) Sprints: 100-200 m (skills race) Introduce competition in a team environment whenever possible. Adapt race distances to time guidelines for the stage of development. No racing below -15°C.</p>	<p>Ensure appropriate ski equipment including waxable skis. Practice sessions: two per/wk, minimum 30 on-snow sessions, 90 min. organized activity plus supervised active ski play, 10 pre-ski season/ classroom sessions. Practice sessions should be well-structured and monitored. Time on skis in addition to practice sessions - as many ski playground experiences as possible (several times a week). Basic ski care. Encourage inter-club social, skill and fitness-oriented ski activities (e.g. camps) during the ski season. Develop a team/ social atmosphere.</p>

5.1.4 Seasonal Plan Worksheet

Sample chart for a Level 3 Jackrabbit Group (children approximately 8 years of age)

	Mid-October/snow	December	January	February	March
Pre-Ski Season Practice Sessions (hiking; games; canoeing)	11 Sessions				
Special Classroom Practice Sessions (ski preparation; winter safety)	Ski Preparation Session Practice Plan 12	Winter Safety Session Practice Plan 13			
Skill Development Camp (on-snow) (see section 7.2 of your CCI-L2T (Dryland) Reference Material)		Christmas Holiday Ski Camp (overnight camp with club athletes - FUNdamentals Level 4 and Learning to Train) Practice Plans 20, 21			
Special On-Snow Activities (Orienteering Poker Ski; Backwoods Adventure; Christmas Activity)		Christmas Activity (classic technique) Practice Plan 16	Backcountry Adventure Practice Plan 30	Downhill Games Sprint Games Modified Ski Tournament Practice Plans 36, 37, 32	

	Mid-October/snow	December	January	February	March
Club Activities	Ski Swap				Year-End Club Wind-Up (with costume races)
Classic Technique Practice Sessions		3 sessions	4 sessions	3 sessions	
Skating Technique Practice Sessions		2 sessions	3 sessions	3 sessions	
Up/Down Technique Practice Sessions			See regular practice sessions	See Downhill Games	
Competitions (see sections 2.4 and 8)			Club Team Relay event using terrain park (classic technique) Regional Cup held at home club venue (interval start: free technique)	Ski Tournament (classic technique; relay, sprint, interval start)	Costume Races (free technique) (refer to club activities)
Others (Year-End Skills Evaluation, etc.)				1 session	4 sessions

Seasonal Plan Worksheet (working copy)

Sample chart for a Level 3 Jackrabbit Group (children approximately 8 years of age)

	Mid-October/snow	December	January	February	March
Pre-Ski Season Practice Sessions (hiking; games; canoeing)					
Special Classroom Practice Sessions (ski preparation; winter safety)					
Skill Development Camp (on-snow) (see section 7.2 of your CCI-L2T (Dryland) Reference Material)					
Special On-Snow Activities (Orienteering Poker Ski; Backwoods Adventure; Christmas Activity)					

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	Mid-October/snow	December	January	February	March
Club Activities					
Classic Technique Practice Sessions					
Skating Technique Practice Sessions					
Up/Down Technique Practice Sessions					
Competitions (see sections 2.4 and 8)					
Others (Year-End Skills Evaluation, etc.)					

5.1.1 Seasonal Plan Checklist

Your club's overall Skill Development Program (SDP) plan for the season should include the following:

- ❑ Plan a meeting with the parents prior to the first practice to ensure they have a good understanding of the overall program, the schedule for the season, what is expected of them, what equipment their children require, etc.
- ❑ Enlist parental support to organize the special activities and indoor sessions that you are responsible for.
- ❑ Plan to make maximum use of the snow season. The annual window of opportunity to learn sport-specific technique is short compared to that of most other sports.
- ❑ Plan for the change in seasons. The best time to hold the indoor sessions such as a ski preparation workshop or a winter safety sessions is when winter is approaching and the weather is not suitable for any outdoor activities - dryland or on-snow.
- ❑ Avoid conflicts with school schedules when planning multi-day activities such as ski camps or overnight hiking trips. Make good use of school holidays, especially the Christmas holidays.
- ❑ Include approximately one hour of "game time" for every three hours of skill instruction to ensure a well-balanced skill development program. In this context, game time means special activities that test a skier's skills against those of his/her peers in relays, races, sprints, etc. with an emphasis on team effort.
- ❑ Be prepared to adapt your practice plans based on the abilities of the skiers and the particular characteristics of the ski area.
- ❑ Refer to section 5.1.1 of your Introduction to Community Coaching Reference Material for additional information

5.2 Designing a Practice Plan

This section will help you develop your own comprehensive practice plans, and to coordinate those plans in the context of an overall plan for the season.

Note that the practice plans provided are fully integrated with the FUNdamental Skill Criteria and FUNdamental Skills Checklists outlined in section 4.3. Use these plans as a guideline only. They are sample plans to be used as a starting point for the development of your own plans. If this is your first year coaching you may wish to follow the plans closely, but as you become more experienced you will learn to adapt them to suit your situation. For example, some groups of skiers will progress through the program at a faster or slower pace than others, or your ski area will work better with some games than others. And don't forget that the plan you develop for your group needs to fit in with the overall program plan determined by your SDP Programmer and your club.

Skill development sessions for children in the FUNdamentals stage of development are broken down into four levels (Levels 1 to 4). Level 1 is generally used for children six years of age, Level 2 for children seven years of age, etc.

Points to keep in mind:

- The indoor sessions can be held before the snow season begins, or they can be used to substitute for regular sessions during the winter in the event of cancellation due to lack of snow or weather that is too cold or too wet.
- Ideally, the ski preparation workshop should be held prior to the snow season.
- The ski playground area should be set up before the session begins and prepared for the age and skill level of the skiers using it.
- Each practice session is a specified length of time that is appropriate for the age of the child, followed by 20 minutes of supervised "play time". An additional ten to fifteen minutes should be scheduled for hot chocolate and snacks at the daylodge.
- Skiers should come to the practice session prepared. Time needed to wax skis, put on ski equipment or change clothes is in addition to the time allocated for the lesson.
- Poles will be required when learning some skills, whereas they will not be required for others.
- If you are coordinating a school program and the ski equipment does not belong to the skier, the practice session should not end until the skis are prepared for storing (socks for both tips and tails; proper ties) and have been put away.
- Encourage the education of the skiers. DO NOT do everything for them. Progressively develop their ability to look after themselves.
- Definition: a "Fall Line" is the direction water would flow, or a ball would roll down a hill.

Tips for games:

It is important to include the occasional “co-operative” game or task in the practice sessions. With this type of game there is more than one winner or winning team - everyone can win. Following are some suggestions to make games more cooperative:

- Select activities that encourage team work, or adapt them for that purpose. An example would be to make a “rule” that everyone on the team must touch the ball before the team can score.
- Keep everyone active and involved. It is not necessary to have goalies in a scoring game. Another example would be human musical chairs (with parents and coaches as the chairs), where all the children could continue to play the game as the “chairs” are eliminated. In this case, everyone can try and sit on the last chair together.
- Point totals can be left out of scoring games. Make team scores meaningless by having children change teams after they score; eventually most participants will have played on both teams and there won't be a clear winning team.
- Encourage personal improvement or team improvement. For example, a relay team can be encouraged to beat their own best performance (fewest strides etc.), rather than to beat another team.

Teaching components:

- Skill Introduction:** A new skill is being introduced that is either a completely new skill or a known skill that must be executed at a higher standard.
- Skill Reviewed and Introduced:** New progressions for a skill that has already been introduced. To save space, the key instructional points only refer to the new progression.
- Skill Review:** All progressions for the particular skill have been previously introduced and to save space the key instructional points have not been repeated. The exception is when the previous skill level is being reviewed for the first time.
- Common Errors:** To save space, common errors are only used when referring to new progressions being introduced.

5.2.1 Introducing Pre-Ski Season Activities

Pre-ski season activities should be introduced when a child is eight years of age (Level 3). At this age, the sessions should begin in mid-October.

Benefits of Pre-Ski Season Practice Activity

- It can provide a positive introduction to activities that promote physical fitness.

- It is a team builder.
- It encourages friendships among children with similar lifestyles and interests.
- It makes your recruiting program more competitive with other winter sports that start up early in the fall.

Tips For a Successful Pre-Ski Season Practice Session

- It must be a group activity!
- It must be well planned!
- It must offer variety and challenge!
- It must incorporate learning into games!
- It must bring adventure into fitness development activities!
- It must be considerate of the age and ability of the participant!

Suitable Activities

Sessions will vary considerably according to the age of the participants and the objectives of the program. Activities may include a hike, a road bike tour, a soccer game, or more adventure-based activities such as a day hike to a forestry lookout, a camp-out in a nearby park, canoeing on a lake, learning to use a kayak, or an orienteering session.

5.2.2 Sample Pre-Ski Season Practice Plans

The following pages present three examples of practice plans for the pre-season period:

1. Example 1: A Hike
2. Example 2: Games
3. Example 3: Orienteering for Treasure

Step 6

Preparing for your practice coaching session

10.1 Self-Assessment Sheet

Practice Coaching #2: Skill Progression, Intervention and Communication

Criteria	Yes	No
Skill Progression		
✓ The progression for skill development is appropriate for the age/ability of the participants		
✓ Coach focuses on the appropriate key points for the skill to be developed		
✓ Coach adjusts the activity for more advanced and less advanced abilities within the group		
✓ Comments/suggestions:		
Intervention		
✓ Coach scans the entire group constantly and intervenes with a variety of participants		
✓ Coach looks for input/feedback from the participants		
✓ Correction or reinforcement is clear and a visual is provided		
✓ Correction or reinforcement is brief and participant returns quickly to activity		
✓ Coach focuses on communicating what to do (not what NOT to do)		
✓ Comments/suggestions:		
Communication		
✓ Coach speaks in a calm tone of voice (i.e. does not yell at the participants)		
✓ Coach uses language that the children can easily understand		

Criteria	Yes	No
✓ Coach refrains from the use of foul language		
✓ Words and body language used in the correction or reinforcement are positive *		
✓ When praise is given, it is specific, not general (e.g. "you are doing ___ well", not "nice one!")		
✓ Coach acts and speaks with enthusiasm *		
✓ Comments/suggestions:		

* This looks like: smiles; nods in the affirmative.

* This sounds like: cheers; "Sally, you did ____ very well. Way to go!"; or "Johnny, I see that you are improving at _____. Great job!"

* This feels like: high fives; safe pats on the back; a hand shake of congratulations (use these only if the child is clearly comfortable with physical contact from you).

Counting Interventions during the Activity	Number
✓ Duration of the activity in minutes (when participants are practicing, excluding explanation and demonstration)	
✓ Total number of interventions with the entire group	
✓ Total number of interventions with individual participants	
✓ Total number of different participants with whom the coach intervened	

Remember, more is not necessarily better. The total numbers are only to give you an indication of how often you are intervening and whether you are moving among the group or focusing only on certain participants.

Step 9

Teaching skating technique

9.1.1 Skating Technique Checklists

To simplify the detection and correction of technique errors when you are out on the snow, a series of checklists has been developed.

Keep in mind that there are some aspects of good technique that are not included in these checklists - for example, smooth transitions and switching technique at the appropriate time. Skiers need to be relaxed, but at the same time have dynamic movements. They may have the proper body position and timing when skiing fast but give the overall impression of being stiff or tight – particularly in the shoulders and hips. The timing of the kicks and recovery movements may be correct but they also need to be dynamic. Determining if these factors are correct or not is much more of a judgement call than is commenting on body position, and thus doesn't fit into technique checklists easily.

Common Checkpoints

The following checkpoints are common to all skating techniques:

❑ Overall

- ✓ All techniques originate with the general athletic stance, modified for the specific technique being learned.
- ✓ Weight shifts fully from ski to ski.
- ✓ The skier is balanced on the gliding ski.
- ✓ Power is generated equally from both sides of the body.
- ✓ Motion of arms and legs is snappy and forceful.
- ✓ Hips and upper body stay generally oriented down the track.

❑ Lower Body

- ✓ The skier drives knee and hip forward allowing body to be vertically aligned over ski.
- ✓ The leg pushes to the side and slightly back.
- ✓ The gliding ski is flat for as long as possible before edging for push off.
- ✓ Pushes come from flexed hip, knee and ankle.
- ✓ Hips are forward over the glide foot.

❑ Upper Body

- ✓ Poles are planted close to skis.
- ✓ The skier reaches high and forward with bent arms (elbows down and pointing slightly outwards).
- ✓ Shoulders are parallel to the ground.

- ✓ Compression occurs during the Double Pole-type motion.
- ✓ There is a slight forward body lean from the ankles.

Specific Checkpoints

The following checkpoints list the characteristics that are unique to each skating technique:

□ Offset

- ✓ Timing is keyed by a three-point landing (two poles are planted and new gliding ski touches snow at the same time).
- ✓ There is a Double Pole-type motion on the lead side, with staggered pole placement.
- ✓ The skier “falls” up the hill on the lead side, stepping onto a moving ski.
- ✓ Knee and hip are driven up the hill, and are aligned over the ski on both sides.
- ✓ The centre of gravity is constantly moving; there is no “lingering over glide ski” as in One Skate and Two Skate.
- ✓ The ankle, knee and hip joints are flexed as required by terrain.
- ✓ The skier executes a maximum leg push on each side, as with the other techniques.
- ✓ Leg push off (kick) is from an edged ski.
- ✓ At the completion of the leg push, the ski is raised slightly off the snow. The tip and tail of the ski leave the snow at the same time.
- ✓ Power comes relatively equally from the upper body and the pushing (kicking) leg.
- ✓ The upper body is dynamic, with a relatively shallow compression during the poling action.
- ✓ The follow-through of the arms and hands is short, and generally stops at or just past the hips (depending on slope of trail and skier speed).
- ✓ The upper body remains somewhat flexed forward, with back and upper body slightly rounded.
- ✓ Tempo increases as the slope of the hill increases.
- ✓ The slope of the hill dictates how wide a stance the athlete will take.

□ One Skate

- ✓ The skier executes a shallow Double Pole-type motion with each leg push.
- ✓ Arm and leg movements are the same on both sides of the body. The timing of the arm, body and leg movements is one of the most important features; the skier plants the poles (two points) when the legs are closest and just **before** stepping onto the new gliding ski (one point).
- ✓ The skier assumes a “high” position for the initiation of each Double Pole – hips are high, legs relatively straight, upper body is erect with slight forward lean.
- ✓ The upper body crunch and pole thrust are initiated together.

- ✓ Core muscles are engaged in the form of shallow upper body crunch.
- ✓ The skier begins to move over onto the new glide ski just before the arms reach the level of the hips.
- ✓ The Double Pole action and the skating push are complete as the new gliding ski hits the snow and the skier's weight shift to that ski is completed.
- ✓ While the skier is gliding, the arms and trunk recover to the starting high position to initiate another Double Pole and skate.
- ✓ The Double Poling push initiated by the upper-body is energetic and powerful; the amount of trunk compression depends on terrain.
- ✓ The arm positioning throughout the poling motion is very similar to that in Double Poling in Classic technique.
- ✓ The follow-through of the arms and hands is short and stops just past the hips.
- ✓ Recovery of the arms after the completion of the Double Pole is rapid in order to position the arms forward to key the timing of the next side of the cycle.
- ✓ The recovery ski is raised only slightly off the snow.
- ✓ During the recovery of each leg, the foot passes underneath the hip of that side (feet come fairly close together).
- ✓ When placed on the snow, the gliding ski is pointed forward down the trail as much as the skier's speed and the gradient of the track permit.

□ **Two Skate**

- ✓ The skier executes a shallow Double Pole-type motion with each second leg push.
- ✓ Timing is the same as for One Skate, with poles being planted slightly before the recovery ski is placed on the snow.
- ✓ The technique is smooth and very rhythmic – akin to ballroom dancing.
- ✓ The method of propulsion on the poling side is identical to that of One Skate.
- ✓ The skier assumes a “high” position for the initiation of the Double Pole on the poling side – hips are high, legs relatively straight, upper body is erect with slight forward lean.
- ✓ As the Double Pole begins, the leg compresses and the hips are lowered slightly in order to load the leg and permit power to be generated as the leg extends.
- ✓ Core muscles are engaged in the form of shallow upper body crunches as the poling action is executed.
- ✓ Body compression results in a slight lowering of the body by the end of the poling motion.
- ✓ The return to the poling side is accomplished from the lower position with a skating push aided by the momentum of the arms swinging up, forward and over to the poling side.
- ✓ The arm recovery from follow-through to new pole plant is uninterrupted.
- ✓ The arm positioning throughout the Double Pole-type motion is very similar to that in

❑ **Double Poling in skating technique**

- ✓ The follow-through of the arms and hands is longer than in One Skate – past the hips or further, depending on speed, glide length and the skier's tempo.
- ✓ At the completion of the leg push, the left ski is raised slightly off the snow; the tip and tail of the ski leave the snow at the same time (if the binding is mounted in the correct position on the ski).
- ✓ During the recovery of each leg, the foot passes underneath the hip of that side (feet come fairly close together).
- ✓ The glide on the left and right skis is consistent.

❑ **Free Skate**

- ✓ The skier remains low with pronounced flexion at knees and ankles.
- ✓ Upper body remains low similar to the tuck position.
- ✓ The skier maintains good balance and makes a complete weight shift from ski to ski.
- ✓ The arms swing from side to side (or are in front of face depending on speed).

10.1 Self-Assessment Sheet

Practice Coaching #2: Skill Progression, Intervention and Communication

Criteria	Yes	No
Skill Progression		
✓ The progression for skill development is appropriate for the age/ability of the participants		
✓ Coach focuses on the appropriate key points for the skill to be developed		
✓ Coach adjusts the activity for more advanced and less advanced abilities within the group		
✓ Comments/suggestions:		
Intervention		
✓ Coach scans the entire group constantly and intervenes with a variety of participants		
✓ Coach looks for input/feedback from the participants		
✓ Correction or reinforcement is clear and a visual is provided		
✓ Correction or reinforcement is brief and participant returns quickly to activity		
✓ Coach focuses on communicating what to do (not what NOT to do)		
✓ Comments/suggestions:		
Communication		
✓ Coach speaks in a calm tone of voice (i.e. does not yell at the participants)		
✓ Coach uses language that the children can easily understand		

Criteria	Yes	No
✓ Coach refrains from the use of foul language		
✓ Words and body language used in the correction or reinforcement are positive *		
✓ When praise is given, it is specific, not general (e.g. "you are doing ___ well", not "nice one!")		
✓ Coach acts and speaks with enthusiasm *		
✓ Comments/suggestions:		

* This looks like: smiles; nods in the affirmative.

* This sounds like: cheers; "Sally, you did ___ very well. Way to go!"; or "Johnny, I see that you are improving at ____. Great job!"

* This feels like: high fives; safe pats on the back; a hand shake of congratulations (use these only if the child is clearly comfortable with physical contact from you).

Counting Interventions during the Activity	Number
✓ Duration of the activity in minutes (when participants are practicing, excluding explanation and demonstration)	
✓ Total number of interventions with the entire group	
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Step 10

Practice coaching session

10.2 Facility Safety Checklist (working copy)

Facility: _____ Date: _____

Inspected by: _____

Item	Adequate	Inadequate	Corrective Measures*	Observations
Practice Area				
Ski Trails				
Daylodge and Waxing Area				
Equipment				
First Aid Kit & Procedures				
Others				

10.1 Self-Assessment Sheet

Practice Coaching #2: Skill Progression, Intervention and Communication

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Step 11

Workshop wrap-up and evaluation



11.4 NCCP Community Coaching Certification Test

Date of Workshop: _____ Location: _____

Facilitator's Name: _____

Coach's Name: _____

The following is your "Community Coaching Certification Test". Please circle T (true), or F (false), OR the appropriate letter for each of these statements:

- 1) At six years of age children should be developing fundamental movement skills through specialization in one sport, rather than a variety of activities. T F
- 2) Athletes will never reach their optimal or genetic potential if fundamental movement skills and fundamental sport skills are not established before what age? A B C
A. Seven (female) and eight (male) years of age.
B. 11 (female) and 12 (male) years of age.
C. 14 (female) and 16 (male) years of age.
- 3) The first of two windows for optimal development of speed are: A B C
A. Six to eight years (females) and seven to nine (males).
B. Eight to 11 years (females) and nine to 12 years (males).
C. 13 to 15 years (females) and 14 to 16 years (males).
- 4) Basic motor abilities can be developed through games; therefore, during practice sessions for children six and seven years of age most activities should take the form of games. T F
- 5) In summary, the guide to ethical decision making is: T F
✓gather the facts;
✓determine if the situation is legal or ethical;
✓consider what might influence how you see the situation; and
✓use the NCCP Code of Ethics to guide decision-making.
- 6) Studies indicate that coaches who work with young participants in sport have little influence in helping them develop positive self-esteem. T F
- 7) The development of balance on skis is helpful in the development of good ski technique, but not essential, and is commonly over-emphasized. T F
- 8) A ski playground is only useful for teaching technique to children under six years of age. T F

- 9) In Diagonal Stride, a skier is on one weighted foot at a time. T F
- 10) The “scooter drill” is a good game to use to improve weight shift, but only if it is done correctly. T F
- 11) In Diagonal Stride, when the push foot returns forward, it touches the snow: A B C
A. Behind the heel of the glide foot.
B. Off to the side of the pole.
C. Beside or slightly in front of the glide foot.
- 12) In Double Poling, when you start to plant your poles, your hips should be aligned: A B C
A. Over the ball of the foot.
B. Over the heel.
C. Behind the heel.
- 13) In Offset technique, the skiers weight shifts quickly from ski to ski. T F
- 14) In Skating Technique, the kick leg: A B C
A. Pushes out to the front of the body.
B. Pushes out to the side of the body.
C. Pushes out to the back of the body.
- 15) In Skating Technique, the size of the “V” made by the skis should be as wide as possible. T F
- 16) In One-Skate Technique, a double pole plant occurs with each leg push. T F
- 17) In Two-Skate Technique, there is/are: A B C
A. One arm push for each leg push.
B. One arm push for every two leg pushes.
C. Two arm pushes for every leg push.
- 18) Skiing without poles is a good way to develop balance and weight transfer. T F
- 19) Six to eight sessions a season are sufficient to keep a nine year old child interested in the sport and provide him/her with a good foundation of sport specific skills. T F

Jan 22, 2016

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 20) Children under ten do not need “special activities” incorporated into a program in order to keep them interested in the sport. | T | F |
| 21) Practice sessions held during the fall can provide a positive team-building experience for the skiers in your program. | T | F |
| 22) When praising a skier on a technical skill, the praise should be general, not specific. | T | F |
| 23) When giving feedback on a skill, a coach should emphasize what not to do. | T | F |
| 24) When teaching a skill it is important to emphasize all aspects of the skill before letting the skier practice it. | T | F |
| 25) An athlete-centred sport environment means that the coach does everything for the skier, i.e. waxes their skis for them all the time. | T | F |
| 26) The camber is the surface texture/finish that allows a ski to glide better on the snow surface. | T | F |
| 27) When selecting classic skis it is common to pick skis that are too soft. It is best to err on the side of skis that are slightly too stiff than skis that are slightly too soft. | T | F |
| 28) The quality in the running surface in the ski base deteriorates with use and from time to time the ski should be re-scraped or re-ground. | T | F |
| 29) Formal skill instruction sessions are not enough to keep a child involved in sport – they require an appropriate ratio of “game-time” (age-appropriate FUNDamental competitive activities) to challenge themselves against their peers. | T | F |
| 30) As a general principle, children should get their first exposure to competitive activities in the context of games during practice sessions. When they learn the skills to manage one level of competitive activity they are ready to graduate to the next one. | T | F |

Please submit this test to the Facilitator when it has been completed.



11.5 Evaluation Form

Community Coaching Workshop

Date of Workshop: _____ Location: _____

Facilitator's Name: _____

Please fill in this form and hand it in to the Facilitator before you leave. Your comments are important to the ongoing development of the National Coaching Certification Program.

The workshop gave me a better understanding of why sport experiences are important for children.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

The workshop provided me with a better understanding of the growth and development characteristics of children and the implications for coaching different age groups.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

Having completed the workshop I can more effectively respond to an ethical situation in a way that is consistent with the NCCP values and philosophy.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

I developed a better understanding of the key teaching points and progressions for classic techniques.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

I developed a better understanding of the key teaching points and progressions for skating techniques.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

I understand how to design an overall plan for a season for children in the FUNdamentals stage of development.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

I understand how to design, modify and teach a practice session.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

I understand the basic elements of equipment selection and ski preparation.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

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The workshop prepared me to introduce children to competition the “rightway”.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

I have a better understanding of how to improve and continue to improve my skills as a coach.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

During this workshop I had several opportunities to exchange with and learn from other community coaches.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

I found the Workbook and Reference Material to be relevant to my coaching needs.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

The workshop prepared me to lead a practice for children in the FUNdamentals stage of development.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

I would recommend this workshop to other coaches I know.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

Please answer the following questions:

What sections of the workshop did you find particularly useful?

Would there be anything you would like to see added to this workshop? If so, what would it be?

Are there any additional comments or suggestions you wish to add?

Thank you for your feedback, and best wishes in your coaching.



NCCP Community Coaching Experience Form

NCCP CC #: _____ Last Name: _____

First Name: _____ Street: _____

City: _____ Prov.: _____

Postal Code: _____ Tel: _____ Email: _____

Date of Birth (d/m/y): _____ Male or Female (circle one) English or French (circle one)

1. Complete one season of coaching experience. Prepare for, assist with and /or lead a **minimum** of six activity/practice sessions including one "special activity". **Minimum** of 20 hours of coaching including preparation time.

Beginning date: _____ Ending date: _____

Age range: _____ Name of Ski Club: _____

Receive a satisfactory evaluation from a club leader (i.e. Club Head Coach, SDP Programmer) who has gathered comments from skiers and parents involved with the program).

2. Assist/lead a group of skiers at a Season Wind-up, Ski Tournament or some other age-appropriate "special activity".

Date, name and location of "Special Activity": _____

Receive a satisfactory evaluation from a club leader (i.e. Club Head Coach, SDP Programmer) who has gathered comments from the skiers and parents involved in the activity.

Please sign the following statement and have it verified by a leader from your ski club (Head Coach, SDP Programmer, Club Executive):

I, _____ have completed the NCCP Community Coaching experience requirements for cross-country skiing.

Date

Signature of Applicant

I verify that _____ has completed the NCCP Community Coaching experience requirements for cross-country skiing.

DATE

Signature of Club Official

Please forward to your Division Office