



Safety for Skiers and Snowboarders

Fact Sheet by the Ski Club of Great Britain

Rules for the Slopes

The FIS (International Ski Federation) has established ten rules for the conduct of skiers and snowboarders. In short, they are:

1. RESPECT. Do not endanger others.
2. CONTROL. Adapt the manner and speed of your skiing to your ability and to the general conditions on the mountain.
3. CHOICE OF ROUTE. The skier/snowboarder in front has priority - leave enough space.
4. OVERTAKING. Leave plenty of space when overtaking a slower skier/snowboarder.
5. ENTERING AND STARTING. Look up and down the mountain each time before starting or entering a marked run.
6. STOPPING. Only stop at the edge of the piste or where you can easily be seen.
7. CLIMBING. When climbing up or down, always keep to the side of the piste.
8. SIGNS. Obey all signs and markings - they are there for your safety.
9. ASSISTANCE. In case of accidents provide help and alert the rescue service.
10. IDENTIFICATION. All those involved in an accident, including witnesses, should exchange names and addresses.

ALL THE ABOVE RULES ARE BINDING IN LAW AND APPLY TO BOTH SKIERS AND SNOWBOARDERS.

Important guidelines for skiers and snowboarders

- ? You ski/board at your own risk.
- ? Pay attention to all signs and markers.
- ? Please ski/board on marked runs - these are protected from unexpected alpine dangers.
- ? The areas outside the marked runs are not patrolled or groomed.
- ? Watch out for piste preparation machines.
- ? Respect nature - take care not to ski in areas where young trees or wildlife will be disturbed and don't drop litter.
- ? Consider taking lessons on a dry slope, and fitness sessions before going on holiday.

THE ABOVE GUIDELINES APPLY TO ALL USERS OF THE MARKED PISTES

Skiing Or Snowboarding Off-Piste

Outside the marked pistes and itineraries are areas which are NOT protected from alpine dangers

- ? Signs around the ski area will warn you when avalanche danger is present (see Avalanches).
- ? Even when there is no warning of avalanches there could be local snow slides.
- ? Unless you know an area well, only ski/board off-piste with a guide (in the USA, skiing/boarding "out of bounds" without a guide can lead to confiscation of your liftpass).

IF IN DOUBT NEVER SKI /SNOWBOARD AWAY FROM THE MARKED SKI RUNS



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Assisting In Case Of An Accident

- ? Secure the accident area.
- ? Protect with crossed skis or planted snowboard above the injure person. If necessary post someone to give warning.
- ? First Aid - asses the general condition of the casualty:
 - Airway - check it is clear
 - Breathing - check for breathing
 - Circulation - check for pulse. Cover any wound and apply firm pressure
 - Provide warmth - give nothing to eat or drink, especially alcohol
- ? Alert the rescue service:
 - Place of accident (piste name and nearest piste marker)
 - Number of people injured
 - Type of injury
- ? Establish the facts of the accident:
 - Names and addresses of people involved and of witnesses.
 - Place, time and circumstances of accident.
 - Terrain, snow conditions and visibility.
 - Markings and signs.
 - Report to the police as soon as possible.

Ski Runs

Pistes are:

- ? Groomed (dependent on snow conditions)
- ? Patrolled
- ? European Piste Classifications:
 - Easiest - green
 - Easy - blue
 - Medium difficulty - red
 - Difficult - black
- ? North American Piste Classifications:
 - Easiest - green
 - More difficult - blue
 - Most difficult - black (shown as single black diamond)
 - Expert - black (shown as double black diamond)

Note: there can be local and national variations in signs, rules and regulations. When you arrive in a resort, you should obtain and study the piste/trail map of the area.

Off piste areas are:

- ? Not groomed
- ? Not patrolled
- ? For experienced skiers only
- ? Normally marked by a yellow or dayglo orange sign (dashed line on piste map)



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Avalanches

In case of avalanche danger the piste and itineraries will be signalled as closed on:

- ? Information Panels - with red closed signs or red signal lights
- ? On the slopes - with prohibition signs, and in addition with marker ropes and flags
- ? Local Danger Spots - will be marked with signs and if necessary, closed with flags and with poles

Safety Equipment

The following equipment is recommended for off piste skiers to carry in a rucksack:

? **Avalanche Transceivers**

Avalanche transceivers are essential for those venturing off piste. They are a piece of safety equipment that may improve your chances of surviving if you are caught in an avalanche. The transceivers are worn close to the body under the ski jacket and transmit a signal. If caught in an avalanche the signal can be picked up by another transceiver switched on to receive mode.

The Ski Club runs a transceiver hire scheme. The cost of hiring one for a week is £10 for members and £20 for non members. Call 0845 45 807 83 for more details.

? **Shovel**

A shovel is another essential piece of equipment to be carried in a rucksack when skiing off piste. If a member of your group is buried in an avalanche, a shovel is vital for helping to dig the person out of the snow. There are a variety of models now available which are light and collapsible and therefore easily fit into a rucksack.

? **Avalanche Probe**

A probe is a long, collapsible stick that can be used in an event of an avalanche to locate a buried person.



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European Scale of Avalanche Risk

Grade of risk:	1. Low
Stability of snow pack:	The Snowpack is generally well stabilised.
Probability of release:	Release of avalanches is only possible on very few and very steep slopes. Only small spontaneous avalanches are to be expected.
Sign:	Green
Grade of risk:	2. Moderate
Stability of snow pack:	The snowpack is only moderately stabilised on some steep slopes* but otherwise generally well stabilised.
Probability of release:	Large additional loads** may release avalanches, especially on steep slopes of the stated altitude and orientation. Larger spontaneous avalanches are not to be expected.
Sign:	Yellow
Grade of risk:	3. Considerable
Stability of snow pack:	The snowpack is only weakly to moderately stabilised on many steep slopes*.
Probability of release:	Release of avalanches are likely by moderate additional load** on the most steep slopes. Occasional spontaneous avalanches are possible.
Sign:	Dark Yellow
Grade of risk:	4. High
Stability of snow pack:	The snowpack is weakly stabilised on the most steep slopes*.
Probability of release:	Release of avalanches are likely from low additional load** on steep slopes. Occasional medium sized, sometimes also large spontaneous avalanches have to be expected.
Sign:	Orange
Grade of risk:	5. Very High
Stability of snow pack:	The Snowpack is generally weakly stabilised and mostly unstable.
Probability of release:	Numerous large spontaneous avalanches have to be expected.
Sign:	Red

* The terrain with avalanche risk is generally more described in more detail in the avalanche forecast (ie. altitude, orientation, terrain forms etc).



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- ** Additional load - large: e.g. group of skiers, track mobile, avalanche blasting.
- moderate: e.g. jumping skiers, pedestrian.
- low: e.g. single skier.



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Special Information for Snowboarders

- ? The front leg must be firmly tethered to the board by a safety strap.
- ? It is essential to look carefully to right and left when changing direction, especially when starting a turn heelside - glance behind.
- ? The ability to ski does not automatically mean you have the ability to snowboard.
- ? Do not attempt the sport without qualified instruction.

We hope that this information will help you when on the slopes and give you a clearer idea of how to stay safe on the slopes.

If you have any questions or would like anymore skiing information then you can call the Ski Club Information Department on 0845 45 807 83.