

Snowboarding/Skiing Primer

by Admin

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Contents

Choosing a Ski Area/Resort

Learning How to Snowboard

Money-Saving Ski Tips for Families

Should You Take Ski Lessons

Ski Tips for Beginners

Snow Skiing Essentials - Safety and Equipment

Snowboarding Essentials - Safety and Equipment

Snowboarding Styles

The History of Snowboarding

Tips for Beginning Snowboarders

Info Products

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Choosing a Ski Area/Resort

Once you have decided that a ski trip for your family vacation is the right choice for you, you now have to find a ski area and resort that is appropriate for your needs.

Thankfully, you do not have to choose a ski area or resort based on just one criterion. Ski areas and resorts have come a long way in that they have accommodations for every age and every skill level.

If you and your family are at the beginner level, there are plenty of ski areas and resorts from which to choose.

Alta

Alta, located in Utah, is one of the oldest ski resorts known. Alta is well known and loved by families everywhere. There are many great reasons to bring your family to this winter ski destination. As a matter of fact, the majority of Alta's ski runs are for beginner and intermediate skiers. This works perfectly for a family just starting out as skiers.

Alta is also known for having the best snow in North America. You can visit Alta for an extended period from November right through April and have an amazing snow-filled ski vacation.

Smugglers' Notch

Smugglers' Notch located in Vermont is well known and loved by ski enthusiasts everywhere. Smugglers' Notch is surrounded by acres upon acres of

forest and has breathtaking mountain views. However, Smugglers' Notch is not all about its beautiful scenery. It caters to families in every way.

You will find amenities galore, from outdoor activities to indoor activities and varying levels of instruction and ski slopes from beginner all the way to their triple black diamond trail. Packages for families are available in many forms, and Smugglers' Notch goes out of their way to make sure that every family member is happy and satisfied.

Snowshoeing, snowmobiling, arts and crafts, a zip line, indoor pools, and massage are all available at Smugglers' Notch.

Breckenridge

Taking your family to Breckenridge is an experience they will never forget. Breckenridge boasts the highest chairlift in North America. Located in Colorado, Breckenridge boasts optimum skiing with a down-home feel. Breckenridge has a friendly, warm atmosphere which is perfect for families. Activities are in abundance and offer a range for every member of your family. What is unique about Breckenridge is that the surrounding town offers much to do in the way of shopping, eating, and galleries as well.

While there are plenty of ski resorts that offer upscale services, these top three ski area resorts offer something for everyone in the family and are perfect for beginners as well.

Learning How to Snowboard

Snowboarding is a sport in which someone descends a snow-covered mountainside with a board strapped to his or her feet. Some of these individuals may refer to the feeling they acquire as flying, free falling, or floating through the air.

If you are interested in obtaining that freewheeling, high-spirited rush that you will get from boarding down the mountainside and leaping through the air, then you need to learn how to snowboard.

Just like any other new endeavor, you would not just jump off the side of a mountain; you would take the necessary steps to make sure your adventure was as skillful and knowledgeable as possible.

The Basics

Starting any new sport with the basics as a foundation is pure and simple common sense.

* Get acclimated with the board. Before starting, attach the safety leash to your leg so you don't have your snowboard wind up somewhere else down the mountain. It can easily slip and slide away from you.

* Step into the binding with one foot and make sure that your foot is securely inside with the heel snugly in place.

* Fasten your ankle strap and then your toe strap.

* Move your foot up and down in order to acclimate yourself with the feeling of being strapped into the board.

Skating

Now that you have your front foot securely snug in your binding, practice the skating technique.

* With your front foot ahead of you in your snowboard, start pushing your back foot back and forth on the snow in a skating motion.

* Be sure not to push too far forward or too quickly.

* Practice skating in order to get used to having your foot in the board. You will find that you will have necessary times when you have to use this technique when entering a lift or perhaps to get up slope. This technique will come in handy for both practice and for practical use.

Practice Gliding

* Practice gliding before you attempt to fully snowboard. This will give you a general feel for what snowboarding for beginners will feel like.

* With your front foot securely in its binding, place the other foot in between the front binding and the back binding.

* In a level area, practice your balancing techniques on the board.

* When you are ready, practice gliding on a slight slope by leaning forward to move ahead and leaning back to slow down or stop. Always keep your eyes on what is ahead of you.

These basic techniques are great to get accustomed to your new snowboard; however, the best way to begin snowboarding is to take some good lessons.

Money-Saving Ski Tips for Families

Skiing is fast becoming one of the most popular winter sports for families. Everyone, no matter the age, can enjoy skiing, but skiing as a family can certainly add up to big bucks. There are ways, however, to offset some of those costs if you plan wisely and prepare ahead of time.

Plan Ahead for Your Family Ski Trip

If you wait until the holidays are descending upon you before you realize that the kids will be home from school soon and there will be snow on the ground, you have waited too long.

With any type of saving endeavor, the best thing to do is to plan ahead. As a matter of fact, planning a whole season ahead is a wise choice indeed. Although the last thing we want to think about as we bask on the beach in summer is a pile of snow and some ski equipment, it makes perfect sense to do exactly that.

When you book a ski trip out of season, you will find that you have purchasing power to book the rooms and packages that you want and still have room for negotiation.

Shop Around

When it comes to ski trips, you may not ever think about doing a compare and contrast. Perhaps, you and your family have visited the same resort over and over again and are frequent members.

However, if you combine shopping early with shopping around, you will find that dropping the name of your frequently visited resort will give you some buying power. Resorts love to see families that are potential repeat visitors interested in their facilities.

Tell them straight out that you want them to make you want to visit their facility. Also, mention that you will be first-time guests and ask them what they can do for your family to make you come back time and again.

Buy in Bulk

When families think about buying in bulk, they often associate this with food purchases. However, you can purchase ski lift tickets, lessons, meals, and

rooms with many families or a group in mind.

When purchasing a ski trip with multiple families, you can save hundreds of dollars. Also purchasing multiple days in a row on the lift can save you money on a bulk pass.

Stay Away from the Crowd

When you plan your ski trip around popular holidays, you can be sure that you will pay more than any other time. Plan your ski trip during the middle of the week or with an early day of the week check-in and a midweek check out. Checking in perhaps on a Monday and leaving on a Thursday can save you significant amounts of money. Staying away from the weekends will save you a bundle.

With all these money-saving tips, you can get down to the business at hand – your ski trip with your family.

Should You Take Lessons

Skiing has quickly become one of the fastest growing winter sports and it is no wonder why. There are several benefits in learning how to ski. The ability to maneuver the side of a mountain on a pair of skis has its own reward, while the entire atmosphere of being outdoors in the fresh winter air while being physically active is another. There is also a sense of camaraderie amongst fellow skiers.

Just as you would learn a new skill on the job by proper training, you should also learn how to ski. Skiing is a lot more slippery than learning a new computer program, and your safety and wellbeing are at risk if you do not go into this new endeavor with at least some knowledge.

There are several factors to consider when choosing the appropriate lessons.

Choosing the Proper Ski Instruction According to Your Level

There are different levels of ski instructions according to your ability. You will find that most ski instruction schools will label first-time skiers. You can receive instructions in the form of beginner, intermediate, and advanced.

Choose the Proper Age for Ski Instruction

Not all ski instruction schools are across the board for everyone. Some have groups where ski instructions are available for appropriate ages. Children who are first-time skiers will most definitely benefit from ski instructions with their peers.

You Can Choose Private or Group Instruction

You can choose to take skiing lessons in a group setting. In a group setting, you will gain the benefit of having others who are just as new to the sport as you are and this will give you the confidence you need.

Private lessons are also an option. With private lessons, you will get the one-on-one instruction that is imperative to your safety and overall experience.

There are many good reasons to take ski lessons, in particular:

* Safety is probably the most common-sense reason to take ski lessons. It is better to take lessons before you hit the slopes so that you have at least a basic understanding of safety requirements.

* Skill is another good reason to take ski lessons. Perhaps you are slightly beyond the beginner level and you wish to enhance your area of expertise in the skill department.

Knowledge about the various aspects of skiing such as safety, skill, and proper equipment is vital when learning how to ski. Although ski lessons may be expensive, the knowledge gained is priceless.

Ski Tips for Beginners

There is so much more to skiing than just learning the skill. The backdrop and atmosphere alone are enough to make skiing something on your list of things to learn. Then, of course, there are the indoor amenities such as sitting by a cozy fire. If all this sounds appealing yet you are intimidated, here are a few ski tips for beginners.

Begin by Getting the Proper Equipment

One of the most important things you can do to get yourself ready to ski as a beginner is to prepare yourself with the proper equipment. You will need to ensure that you have all of the following equipment for outerwear:

- * Thermal underwear and ski socks
- * Snow pants and snow jacket
- * Properly sized and fitted boots
- * A warm beanie hat
- * Waterproof gloves that can withstand the outdoor elements

In addition, for your ski equipment, you will need to have all of the following:

- * Skis for your particular type and range of ski activity
- * A good-fitting helmet – one that is neither too tight nor too loose
- * Ski bindings and, of course, poles
- * A good pair of goggles

These items are just the basics; however, the type of skiing (downhill,

cross-country, free ride) will dictate what type of equipment you will need to buy.

A Little Education

Before beginning any new endeavor, make sure you become familiar with the rules, regulations, and the how to of that sport. Protect yourself by getting at least some type of beginning ski instruction.

You can choose private or group but either way, you should at least educate yourself before hitting the powdery slopes.

A Lot of Planning

Not every ski resort is the same. Each ski resort offers different levels of ski activity; however, there are ski resorts that are geared only to singles and only to families. Some resorts offer off-premise shopping and dining while others are full-service resorts.

Some ski resorts also depend upon Mother Nature to make their snow while others have the capability of making their own. Price points vary along the way, as well. If you are just starting out, it may be a wise choice to begin at the more economical resorts with many beginner slopes and then advance as you go along. You can always try a new resort for a different feel and experience.

It is important to know what your specific needs are before heading out to hit the trails. With a little planning and preparation, your beginning ski adventure will be one you will want to return to year after year.

Snow Skiing Essentials - Safety and Equipment

Nothing prepares you and no words can describe the exhilarating sensation you

receive when skiing down that powdery mountain. The wind in your face and the speed at your back are indescribable feelings. However, in order to reap the rewards of downhill skiing, you need to know the basics first.

Having the right equipment and being safely prepared will ensure the maximum thrill. Walk into any ski store and you will find an abundance of ski equipment from outerwear to equipment.

Outerwear

* Layering – Layering is the best way to keep warm when skiing. Start by choosing thermal insulated undergarments to keep you warm and dry as well.

* Socks – Choose the right ski socks for maximum protection from the elements. Remember, it is very important to keep your feet warm in order to safeguard the rest of your body.

* Fleece – A fleece sweatshirt is a great idea to layer on top of your thermals. Fleece holds in body heat and keeps you warm all over.

* Ski pants – Ski pants that are waterproof are essential. There is a very good chance that you may spend some down time on the snow. If that happens, waterproof ski pants will keep you dry. Ski pants are made of materials that also resist cold, windy conditions from getting to your skin.

* Head covering – A beanie that lies close to your head and covers your ears is best to keep that heat in and close to your head.

Equipment

* Skis – Obviously, you need skis in order to go skiing; however, before purchasing your ski equipment it is important to acclimate yourself with the different variations skiing offers. There is downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, and telemark - just to name a few. If you have gone skiing before using

the ski resort's skis, then you will have a general feel for the sport, but it is still important to decide what you want before purchasing your skis.

* Bindings and boots – Ski bindings connect your skis to your boots. It is imperative that you choose the correct bindings for your needs as this will ensure your safety as well as enhance your performance.

* Boots – Just as you need to decide which style of skis you will purchase in order to accommodate the style of skiing you will be doing, you need to choose your ski boots in this same fashion. Ski boots offer various styles and selections in order to suit your ski preferences and your performance. Ski boots come in styles from front entry to rear entry as well as mid entry. It is important to gain the proper assistance in style, size, and fit when purchasing ski boots.

* Poles and helmets – Ski poles serve a purpose for the skier. The poles you select will assist you with your speed as well as your balance while gliding downhill.

* Helmets are imperative while skiing. Gain assistance in choosing a helmet that is neither too tight nor too loose. While style is always nice, make sure you have the proper protection for your head.

Snowboarding Essentials - Safety and Equipment

If snowboarding is a new adventure for you, learning about safety and equipment is important. Just like any other new undertaking, knowledge is power.

Some people describe snowboarding as a freefalling experience similar to flying off a mountain. While flying off a mountain sounds like an exhilarating experience, having the right equipment is a wise choice indeed.

There are several ways to begin your new adventure and the first amongst those is learning about safety and equipment.

Outwear: Being Prepared

As with any other outdoor winter sport, you will be as safe as you are warm. Wearing the appropriate outwear can make a big difference in the level of your enjoyment.

Wear several layers to protect yourself from the extreme outdoor conditions you would expect from being outside on a mountain top in winter.

Remember that if your feet and your head are warm, the rest of your body has more of a chance to stay warmer as well. Wear a warm cap on your head and heavy-duty socks inside your boots.

Waterproof pants and a waterproof jacket are a must-have for any sport and especially for snowboarding. Warm gloves that are waterproof are essential as well.

Safety Equipment

* Goggles - Invest in a good pair of goggles to protect your eyes from the environment such as wind, snow, and sun.

* Boots - Anyone undertaking snowboarding as a beginner should purchase snowboard boots specifically created with the sport of snowboarding in mind.

* Helmet – A helmet to protect you from head injuries is essential. Have a professional assist you with the size and fit of your helmet, as you do not want it too snug or too loose. The level of snowboarding you plan on partaking in will also determine the level helmet that you will need.

Educating Yourself

Just like anything else you do or buy, educating yourself about the basics of snowboarding is definitely a sensible choice. There are several options for educating yourself before heading out to the slopes.

- * Take lessons
- * Read up on the basics of snowboarding
- * Make sure you are aware of all the safety tips you need to know before heading out to the slopes
- * Take a course on injury prevention as well

By educating yourself up front and gathering information, you will have the first step necessary to proceed with your snowboarding adventure.

Snowboarding Styles

Snowboarding has been around since the early 1900s. Just like any other sport, snowboarding has evolved with its many styles and creative aspects. There are different levels of snowboarding and it is even an Olympic sport.

The style of snowboarding an individual chooses will determine what his or her equipment and knowledge needs are.

Here then, are some of the basic snowboarding styles:

Freeriding

Freeriding is simply exploring the mountainside for all its glory. Exploring the various runs, bumps and all the open terrain as you please is what freeriding is all about. In freeriding, you are free to create the experience that you desire in your snowboarding endeavor.

Freestyle

Freestyle varies considerably from freeriding. In freestyle, the snowboarder is more apt to partake in aerial spins and stunts. These stunts are done with the use of manmade equipment such as a jump, rail, or even a term known as boxes.

By using this equipment, the snowboarder can experience snowboarding on a higher level, one where tricks and stunts are performed and perfected.

These tricks or stunts come in many different levels and forms. A snowboarder utilizing freestyle can start by trying this style of snowboarding and then advance to a higher level.

Freecarve

Freecarve is similar to the sport of skiing. Freecarve is a form of snowboarding that takes place in the form of a race very similar to that of traditional skiing. Freecarve focuses on the thrill of speed so if you are a thrill seeker, this form of snowboarding may be just the right one for you.

Skateboard Slalom

Slalom snowboarding is similar to slalom skiing in that it is a downhill competitive race with a series of flagged gates. Technical skill and speed are necessary to compete in snowboard slalom races.

Half-Pipe

The half-pipe is a man-made ramp built so that snowboarders can perform tricks and stunts while going back and forth and while airborne across the pipe.

These are some of the more frequent styles of snowboarding. As you go along

and become more knowledgeable, you will see that the levels and styles of snowboarding can change.

The History of Snowboarding

There are many winter sports such as sledding, snowmobiling, and skiing. Snowboarding is a combination of sledding, skiing, and skateboarding all rolled into one exciting sport.

Snowboarding began to emerge in the early 1920s as men used planks from barrels and lines of rope to get from one point to another, especially downhill.

Later on in the 1960s, an engineer by the name of Sherman Poppen came up with an idea for a toy for his young daughter. This new toy secured a set of skis together with a rope for steering and guiding downhill. The toy instantly became popular. In fact, it became so popular that the engineer began to license and manufacture it over the next ten years to the tune of approximately one million sales.

Thereafter, he organized competitions using his new invention and attracted the interest of skateboarding and skiing enthusiasts alike. In the late 1970s, the first snowboards were manufactured with the design of foot binding in mind. The first ever "snurfboarding" competition was held in 1979. The term snurfboarding was originated from Sherman Poppen's original invention. At that competition, that race was the beginning of competitive snowboarding.

Snowboarding began to grow in popularity at the speed of light with the first World Cup held in Austria in 1985 and the entrance into the Olympics in 1998.

Although snowboarding was growing in popularity by leaps and bounds, ski resorts were not as quick to jump in on this new sport. As a matter of fact, snowboarding was banned from the slopes early on in its introduction. Skiers

originally looked down upon skateboarders as a lower class of individuals and they were not willing to share terrain. However, with the increase in popularity came the increase of acceptability on behalf of skiers everywhere.

There are now several different levels and styles of snowboarding and it is increasing in popularity as the years go by with areas of expertise that include freeriding, freestyle, half-pipe, and even slalom. The United States of America Snowboarding Association showcases the Alpine, Boardercross, and Freestyle events that are now considered mainstream.

Alpine utilizes slalom style and speed in a race to test agility and skill whereas Boardercross utilizes skills and agility in the area of obstacle courses, speed, and skill for a race to the finish line. Freestyle uses slopes and half-pipes in its competition.

Today, however, snowboarding continues to be a growing trend and is welcome at ski resorts across the country. Magazines, Olympic events, and news broadcasts all incorporate snowboarding. In addition, snowboarding is not just a sport for the young at heart or for only one sex. Men, women, and children alike are all jumping in on the snowboarding bandwagon.

Tips for Beginning Snowboarders

Once you have discovered a new-found interest in snowboarding, meeting with a professional to gear you up and taking some lessons are wise choices indeed. However, on a personal note, having a few tips and pointers along the way to go with your professional gear and instruction is also a great idea.

Here then are a few of those tips and pointers for beginning snowboarders:

* When placing your foot into your binding, start with placing your heel in the heel cup and buckling up at the ankle. Thereafter, you can go forward and

buckle up at the toe section.

* You may wish to consider buckling into your binding from a sitting position as a beginner. This will give you more balance.

* In some ski instructions, skiers learn the art of the graceful fall. You may wish to have instruction on how to fall properly incorporated into your snowboarding lessons. A proper fall can make the difference between a few bumps and bruises and a more serious injury. It is automatic to want to fall back onto your hands, but this will provide the opportunity for a wrist injury or, even worse, a broken wrist.

* Make sure that you have the appropriate equipment for your outdoor wear. Many new snowboarders have so much focus on doing it right that they neglect to remember that they are outdoors doing a winter sport. You need to be equally prepared with your skills as with your gear.

* Gain instruction and knowledge as to the gear you will need as well as instructions on how to snowboard. Goggles, helmet, and gloves are equally important to the safety and wellbeing of a new snowboarder.

* Learn how to skate and glide. While your chosen front foot is in its binding, learn how to push slowly back on the foot that is free of its binding. Try to do so without pushing the back foot forward in front of the front foot. You will need to learn how to skate and glide to get yourself to and fro, from entering ski lifts or perhaps uphill.

* Practice balancing in a safe way at home, perhaps on a thick pile rug. Learning how to balance and feeling your way around your snowboard will get you accustomed to the sport. This is important because you do not want to go out and try snowboarding cold without at least trying your board on at home.

* Some instructors will also recommend regimens of weight training to build upper body strength. This is a personal choice, but perhaps may help in your

snowboarding adventure.

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