

# CSIA SKIER PROGRESSION INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE



The Canadian Ski Instructors' Alliance (CSIA) created the Skier Progression Program for snow schools in order to promote a fun and safe environment while learning to ski.

The CSIA has been training and certifying ski instructors across Canada for over 70 years. It is the leader in ski teaching and sets the standard for the profession.

**1 800 811-6427**

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# CSIA SKIER PROGRESSION

The CSIA Skier Progression tracks the development of skiers. With six pre-school levels and nine levels for all other skiers, each stage sets a clear goal and progress is defined by abilities.

This booklet was designed to guide you through the planning of your lessons. Development strategies are included to help you plan your lesson, utilizing the abilities as a direction to reach the goal.

The CSIA Skier Progression clearly describes the prerequisite, goal and abilities for each level.

- Each level begins with a prerequisite that determines the skill of the skier. Ensure that your skier possesses the prerequisite before proceeding at that level.
- The abilities are the road map to reach the goal which will determine what the skier can perform upon completion of the level.
- Speed and turn shape are essential elements in the development strategies and it is important to take these aspects into consideration as the skier progresses.
- The comments section provides you with the opportunity to give a general appreciation of the skier's performance and to suggest areas of improvement.

## **General Instructions:**

- All boxes on the CSIA Skier Progression card must be checked in order to pass the current level and for the skier to graduate to the following level.
- If the skier passes the current level, provide them with the CSIA Skier Progression card and a CSIA Skier Progression pass.
- If the student does not pass the current level, present them with the CSIA Progression card only.

# EXPLORATION 1 - BRONZE

Pre-requisites: None

**Goal: Executes linked rhythmical snowplow turns**

Evaluation terrain: Easiest terrain

## **Overview:**

At the beginner stage, the key element is to build the skier's confidence in order to gradually develop autonomy. To achieve this, they have to develop balance and be able to stop.

Create mobility games on one or two skis that will help develop balance over both skis.

## **Development Strategies:**

On flat terrain, practice a breaking plow followed by a straight run, followed by a breaking plow, and so on. Repeat the exercise for as long as possible without turning. The goal is to develop the pivoting of both skis simultaneously to create the wedge.

Using cones or ski poles set up an easy course. Get students to ski around the cones or poles to develop consistent turning on both sides.

On easy terrain, use a serpentine approach (narrow turns in the fall line).

## EXPLORATION 2 – SILVER

Pre-requisites: Executes linked rhythmical snowplow turns

**Goal: Executes part of the turn with skis in parallel position**

Evaluation Terrain: 

### **Overview:**

Snowplow turns should be used as a teaching tool to develop the skier's confidence in relation to balance. The skier will be able to bring the skis parallel once they have acquired better lateral balance and more stability on the downhill ski.

To develop balance, vary the turns according to the terrain. Remember that mobility is an essential component of balance.

### **Development Strategies:**

Ask students to jump twice between turns using ankles, knees and hips in order to get them to jump as high as they can. This will help develop mobility in all three joints.

Choose a run with varied choice of terrain (flat, steep...). Ask the skiers to follow you and try to keep the same speed while changing the turn shape to adapt to the different terrain. The goal is to make the students aware of the relationship between speed, terrain and turn shape.

At the end of a snowplow turn, while sliding the inside ski parallel to the outside ski, execute a diagonal side slip.

## EXPLORATION 3 - GOLD

Pre-requisites: Executes part of the turn with skis in parallel position on green terrain

**Goal: Executes basic parallel turns (no wedge)**

Evaluation Terrain: 

### Overview:

To achieve this objective, the skier will need to acquire pivoting skills while demonstrating lateral balance and pressure over the outside ski.

In order to do this, the skier has to develop the skill of turning both legs, which will make it easier to initiate the turn with the lower body. Demonstrate this by breaking down simple exercises such as a situational wedge or a single turn. You can also challenge the skier by getting them to turn as many times as possible on easy terrain. The skier has to be able to change direction while keeping the skis parallel as much as possible in a variety of situations. This type of skiing mileage will enable the skier to achieve the goal.

*Note: You will notice that the students will discover how edging works without mentioning it.*

### Development Strategies:

While making snowplow turns, ask the skier to gently tap the inside ski. This will help develop lateral balance and naturally help the skis to become parallel throughout the turn.

Choose a safe place on an appropriate terrain. Ask the students to complete each turn as much as they can and finish with the skis pointing uphill. This will help develop pivoting and edging skills for good turn completion and speed control.

Starting in the fall line, execute the last segment of a turn while increasing the edge angle using angulation of the ankles, knees and hips.

# ADVENTURE 1 - BRONZE

Pre-requisites: Executes basic parallel turns (no wedge) on green terrain

**Goal: Executes basic parallel turns (no wedge)**

Evaluation Terrain: 

## Overview:

The main difference between this level and the previous one is that the skier is required to use more efficient edging and develop steering skills. This is where the lack of fore/aft balance might slow down the progression. In order to achieve the goal, ask the skier to increase speed without completing the turns.

## Development Strategies:

On flat terrain (green runs), increase speed and use a serpentine approach (narrow turn in the fall line). This will help develop the ability to turn both skis simultaneously in order to initiate the turn.

On easy terrain, use the thousand steps exercise. Ask the student to step from one ski to the other throughout the turns to develop lateral balance. This tactic will also help keep the skis parallel.

Starting in the fall line, execute the last segment of a turn while increasing the edge angle using angulation of the ankles, knees and hips.

# ADVENTURE 2 - SILVER

Pre-requisites: Executes basic parallel turns on blue terrain

**Goal: Executes rhythmical and linked parallel turns**

Evaluation Terrain: 

## Overview:

Counting, singing, or following the skier ahead of you are all effective tactics to develop rhythm and symmetry from turn to turn.

When it comes to understanding skiing, many people believe they need to edge abruptly to slow down. This belief often leads to misconceptions about the turn and edge release, which interferes with linking turns. Although the main effects will be felt at more advanced levels, this is the best time to show skier how to glide from one turn to the next. Making more complete and rounded turns will slow them down.

Ski on an easy run and have the skier maintain speed while turning. Start by turning in the fall line and gradually increasing the difficulty by completing the turns a little more each time.

## Development Strategies:

Ask the student to ski without poles with their hands on their hips. This exercise will help develop upper/lower body separation as well as the ability to turn their legs properly.

On green terrain, ask the students to roll in the ankle and knee of the outside ski while making snowplow turns, to develop the feeling of balancing on the edges (easy powerplow). Throughout the last part of the turn, the students should roll the joints towards the inside.

On easy terrain, use a serpentine approach (narrow turns in the fall line).

# ADVENTURE 3 - GOLD

Pre-requisites: Executes rhythmical and linked parallel turns on blue terrain

**Goal: Executes linked performance parallel turns**

Evaluation Terrain: 

## Overview:

When describing this objective, the key word is performance. The rest is a review and reinforcement of the previous level.

At this level, performance is synonymous with better edging and steering skills. To achieve this, the skier will need to put pressure on the outside ski before moving the centre of gravity to the inside of the turn (inclination).

Experiment with the limits of lateral balance so the skiers can discover how far they can increase the edge angle. Although hip angulation will be subtle at this level, the skier will need to show some degree of angulation. To develop this essential skill that will allow the skier to increase edge angle and improve pressure control, have them ski in a low stance with feet wide apart. This exercise will help them move the hip to the inside of the turn while keeping the shoulders parallel with the slope. It will also allow the skier to create more movement with the ankles and knees.

## Development Strategies:

In pairs, ask the students follow each other while completing short radius turns and synchronizing their pole plant. Ask the second skier, to plant his pole at the same time as the skier in front. The first skier should try to keep the turn shape as consistent and rhythmical as possible.

On easy terrain, while using medium size turns, ask the students to touch the outside of their boot to create angulation from the fall line. This drill will help develop balance on edges and the feeling of edge grip on the snow.

On easy terrain, use a serpentine approach (narrow turns in the fall line). Ask the students to use a low stance with feet wide apart.

# PERFORMANCE 1 - BRONZE

Pre-requisites: Executes linked performance parallel turns

**Goal: Executes linked performance turns while adapting to varying terrain**

Evaluation Terrain: 

## Overview:

A good skier is not someone that shows perfect technique on only one type of snow condition, but rather someone that can have fun skiing and who can show control on all types of terrain. This is why the goal of this level is to develop the adaptability of the skills learned. The focus is on tactics rather than technique.

Ask the skier to vary turn shape and speed. Position yourself where there is a drop-off on a run and ask them to ski this section while maintaining the same speed to the lower flat section. Gradually vary the rhythm from very fast to slow. Ask them to ski across the fall line. In short, have the skier develop the ability to understand and react to the terrain.

## Development Strategies:

In pairs, ask the students follow each other while the lead skier varies the turn shape and speed in order to try to lose the skier behind him. The second skier will have to match the speed and turn shape in order to try to keep up.

Using easy bumps (blue), ask the students to traverse across the hill and turn on top of a bump. This will help them develop efficient steering and coordination of movements.

When possible, ski the glades which will develop varied direction changes.

## PERFORMANCE 2 - SILVER

Pre-requisites: Executes linked performance turns while adapting to varying terrain

**Goal: Executes rhythmical and linked dynamic turns**

Evaluation Terrain :



### **Overview:**

This is the beginning of the black terrain level. Carved turns and speed will increase force (pressure) dramatically. For this reason, the skier will need more angulation and flexion/extension action in the legs in order to increase edge angle while controlling the pressure efficiently.

The edge angle can be increased by moving the ankles, knees and hips to the inside of the turn, which will create more pressure (resistance) under the skis. By bending the legs at the end of the turn the skier can control the pressure like a shock absorber. If there is too much resistance caused by the lack of flexion in the joints, the skier will be unable to react quickly and control the pressure efficiently.

All of these adjustments enable the skier to maintain dynamic balance.

### **Development Strategies:**

Ask the students to execute small hops throughout the turns using ankles, knees and hips. This exercise will help develop a centered and mobile stance.

Using easy bumps (blue run), ask the students to traverse across the hill and absorb each bump using all joints. This will help the skiers stay centered and also mobile with their base of support.

Using a corridor (3-4 meters – cat track), ask the students to execute short radius turns using the full width of the corridor. This tactic will help develop efficient steering and good rhythm.

# PERFORMANCE 3 - GOLD

Pre-requisites: Executes rhythmical and linked dynamic turns

**Goal: Executes linked dynamic turns while adapting to varying terrain**

Evaluation Terrain:



## **Overview:**

At this level, the performance comes from edging as well as the ability to create and control the rebound of the ski (impulse).

To create rebound, the skier loads the skis like a spring. The skis are put on edge and the bending of the skis combined with the muscular effort of the skier, stores energy which can then be directed. The timing of this loading can be varied for different results. Early in the turn, impulse will help a skier generate speed down the hill. Loading through the middle of the arc will deflect the skier more across the hill. If the load is very late in the turn, it will slow the skier down. The load can also be applied quickly or slowly, depending on the desired outcome. For example, a quick impulse is good to create rhythm and un-weighting in shorter turns, moguls or heavy snow. A longer impulse will be smoother for carved performance turns.

## **Development Strategies:**

Hockey stops on black terrain. Ask the skier to coordinate the arm movement for a pole plant and the turning of the feet. The outside hand should follow the feet turning. This will develop good steering and speed control on steeper terrain.

Using a corridor (3-4 meters – cat track), ask the skier to execute short radius turns using the full width of the corridor. This tactic will help develop efficient steering and good rhythm.

Experiment with varying the width of the stance.



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