

# SKI TUITION



### OUTSIDE SKI HOPS

A very simple agility exercise is to try doing short turns (skating in a narrow corridor, about the width of a piste basher) on your outside ski. At first you may only be able to stay on the outside ski through the end of the turn, but with practice you can ride the full arc on the outside ski. Then to truly build your agility, start hopping from one outside ski straight to the other at the transition from one turn to the next.



### COMPRESSION TURNS

Not all agility drills involve jumping and being in the air – some are focused on focusing you to perform different or new movements. Compression turns are a classic drill to challenge timing coordination, as well as being perfect training for moguls on the piste. In an "ordinary" turn on-piste you extend your legs during the first half of the turn, and compress during the second. Compression turns are essentially the opposite – you go down at the start then straighten out your legs. Another way to think about it is that you go down on the edge change, rather than up. Harder than it sounds!



### JUMP TURNS

This involves, as the name would suggest, jumping off the ground on your skis and turning them in the air before landing. The key to jump turns is making strong movements with your legs – starting low at the end of the previous turn, and pushing up hard to jump off the ground. You can start making small jumping and turning movements in medium turns at a slower pace, then build up to turning more in the air during short turns. Try seeing how many jump turns you can make over a set distance – the higher you jump and the more you turn in the air, the more turns you will fit in.



### NORWEGIAN TURNS

A real challenge of agility and coordination is Norwegian turns, sometimes known as the Courmayeur Shuffle of the Texas Two Step (I have no idea how a Slate without ski resorts got involved...). To perform this drill you are effectively skipping on your skis while turning in the air. To make matters complicated, you first lift your outside ski, hop off your inside ski, turn while in the air, land on your inside ski, and then bring your outside ski down to complete the turn. Perhaps this is one to consult with your instructor or take a look at YouTube!



## ALTITUDE KIDS SKI TIPS

So your children have got through their first few lessons and the initial trauma of ski school, and are now firing around the resort on their skis. So what's next? What sort of activities can you do with your children once they're comfortable on their skis – perhaps at the level where they are skiing parallel on hard blues/easy reds? We've previously looked at how children learn more while having fun. Early on the fun is "imported" into the task. However, once children can ski the fun can be found in the task and challenge itself. So here are some ideas for some fun and safe ways to challenge your children on skis. First you can think about the types of slopes

they are skiing on. Once children are comfortable skiing parallel on blues (which can be surprisingly quick) you can start to take them on steeper slopes. The reward that children get from successfully descending that tough black slope can be fantastic. As always, knowing each child's comfort zone is imperative – pushing them too hard too fast can have a detrimental effect on their enjoyment and performance. Still thinking about terrain, children can have fun in other ways. Try some easy moguls or off-piste. Just off the side of a blue piste is ideal, the terrain should be manageable with a quick escape to the piste.

Just descending a moguls or powder run will help improve any skier. Another idea is to start going into the snow-parks and rolling over some of the easier jumps. This can help build confidence, balance and movement. Lastly, you can start to bring in challenges to improve on the pistes you've skied comfortably already. You can try to perform parallel turns in smaller and smaller corridors. Or bring in various fun drills with the poles – can they ski a whole run with no poles? Can they do it with their poles balanced on the back of the hands? Any sort of challenge will be lapped up. As always, stay safe and have fun!

## ALTITUDE

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Jon is one of the few instructors in the world to hold the top qualifications from France, Switzerland and Britain. He can teach on- and off-piste skiing throughout the Alps, and as Ski School Director, Jon helps manage the ski and snowboard school, the instructor training gap programs, the Verbier freeride camps, and the winter and summer kids camps. altitude-verbier.com • +41 277 716 016

**B**eing agile on your skis is great fun. My most enjoyable days in training have been those where we're doing silly drills with our Swiss coach, making fools of ourselves and having fun. All this jumping around has a point though: it improves your skiing. Having to move in new and challenging ways builds strong links between your brain and your muscles, making you more adaptable and quicker to learn and change. Many agility drills rely on good balance and movements.

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