



Short Safety Subject

Short Safety Subjects are provided by the Public Safety Business Center, Fort Bragg, NC. Our intent is to provide safety topics for the purpose of increasing safety awareness and improving safety performance. Additional Short Safety Subjects are available on the PSBC Business Management Web Site at:

www.bragg.army.mil/psbc-bm/PubsAndForms/ShortSafetySubjects.htm

Snow Skiing

Choosing Your Equipment

- When choosing equipment it is wise to buy the best quality your budget can afford. Less expensive equipment may not be durable and could fail at inopportune moments. Good equipment will fit properly thus ensuring comfort and pleasure for a long time.
- When you buy, you will find many types of equipment to choose from. The best way is to take an expert along with you or rely on experienced salespeople in the store. Be sure you buy from a reputable firm.



How to Select Ski Boots

- Boots are your first and most important purchase because they are the link between you and your skis. You must at all times feel you are in complete control of your skis and that they will respond immediately to every body movement. With good boots, you can manage less expensive skis; the reverse is untrue.
- The inner boot is made of pliable lighter weight material designed to conform to the foot and to hold it down firmly against the sole. The outer boot is made of heavy, hard leather or plastic to give your ankles and body the proper support. The sole should be stiff enough to hold a tight cable without "buckling."
- New boots will always feel a bit tight at first. If they are entirely comfortable the first time, they will be loose later on. Good boots should have firm heel cups, additional padding around the ankle tendon, and a heel "hinge" to allow the ankles to bend.

Size of Skis

- Generally, when the tail of a ski is on the floor the tip should come to the wrist when the arm is extended over the head. A lighter person or beginner could use skis about two inches shorter than this. A heavy or accomplished skier could go two inches longer. It is imperative for beginners to use shorter skis until they become more experienced. In any case, consult your professional for proper fit and adjustment.
- When you buy winter sports items, clothing does not have to be the most expensive or fashionable. It is important that it be right for the purpose. The wrong choice can make the difference between pleasure and discomfort.

Choosing Clothing

- A good-looking outfit may be fashionable, but suitability is more important. Your clothes should withstand intense cold, strong winds, and wet snow. And no piece of clothing should be loose or trailing. It might catch, or be caught on something, with sad results. Yet, your clothing must give you freedom of movement at all times.

Hands and Feet

- Looks must take second place to the satisfaction and comfort of warm hands and feet. Make sure they have a warm and water repellent lining and that they fit well. For extremely cold weather, nothing will serve as well as wool. Mittens or gloves should have sturdy palms and elastic at the wrist to keep out the snow. Gloves and socks that are too tight because of size or excessive layering will not provide sufficient warming for your hands and feet.

Headgear

- Be sure your hat, headband, cap is secure to avoid losing it while coming down a hill. When going up a long lift, a parka hood or warm cap will be most welcome.
- Wear a safety helmet when you plan to ski fast – remember what happened to Sonny Bono and Michael Kennedy?

Goggles

- An important part of your equipment, for both comfort and safety. On sunny days or in a blizzard, they protect your eyes so you can clearly see where you are going at all times - which is important. Even on cloudy days when the lighting is "flat" and it is difficult to see bumps, hollows, and ruts, goggles with sufficient UV protection will bring these into sharper focus. Ensure a proper fit as loose goggles will fog easier and tight goggles will cause headaches and restricted blood flow.

Safety Reminder

- Do not wear a flowing scarf or anything else that might wind around a rope tow. The rope twists as it travels up the hill and it can catch a scarf, long hair, or a loose sleeve and trap the wearer.

On the Lift

- You are truly an accident waiting to happen. Eliminate potential mishaps. Do not swing or bounce when riding any lift. Keep skis pointing straight ahead with tips up. Hold your ski poles by the shaft. If pole straps are around your hand, and the pole should catch on something, a sudden jerk could dislocate a shoulder or worse...

Off the Lift

- When you get off the lift, do it smoothly to prevent falls or collisions. Offer tips and encouragement to persons accompanying you, if they are less experienced.

Before You Go Downhill

- Before you start downhill, limber up. Riding ski lifts can take several cold, cramping minutes. Loosen up your muscles before you push off.
- Look up the hill before you start to avoid moving out in front of another skier who has already started down. Give the moving skier above you the right of way.
- If your hill is well-chosen and commensurate with your ability, if you ski under control, and if you are in good condition, your trip down will be PURE PLEASURE!