

3-1 GREEN

3-1.2 ADVANCING TO INTERMEDIATE TERRAIN

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Once your skis are parallel, move on



The pole plant



Use hands and underarms for the pole plant

3-1.2 ADVANCING TO INTERMEDIATE TERRAIN

Most skiers can learn to make basic parallel turns on very flat terrain after only a few weeks of skiing. However, there is still a lot to learn if you are an ambitious skier. This chapter deals with how to continue once you ski a basic parallel turn.

We have divided the material into three themes. In practice, you can use the themes in the order that fits you best. You need not to practice the pole plant before you challenge yourself with more difficult terrain.

THE POLE PLANT

As your parallel turns become increasingly dynamic and rhythmic, the pole plant can add an extra dimension to your skiing while improving your balance and stance.

Tip 1: Start working on your pole plant as soon as your parallel turns have become rhythmical!

Using your ski poles is best practiced by simply trying it out. Find easy and manageable terrain and ski a series of linked turns as you normally do. Try planting the ski pole when you initiate the new turn. It is always the inner pole you place in the snow. In the beginning it will probably feel clumsy or even difficult, but eventually you will realize that the ski poles are an important aid to balance in your skiing.

Tip 2: Plant your inside pole just before the start of the new turn!

It is important to remember that the pole plant is merely an aid to balance. It does not mean that you should support yourself on the pole itself. Do not rest your whole weight on the pole; you should only leave a

mark in the snow. Always be careful with your arms when you work with the pole plant. There is no need to make large movements in order to bring the pole forward. All you need is a little flip of the wrist. This ensures a proper stance as your arms remain in front of your body.

Tip 3: Use only your wrist to make the pole plant!

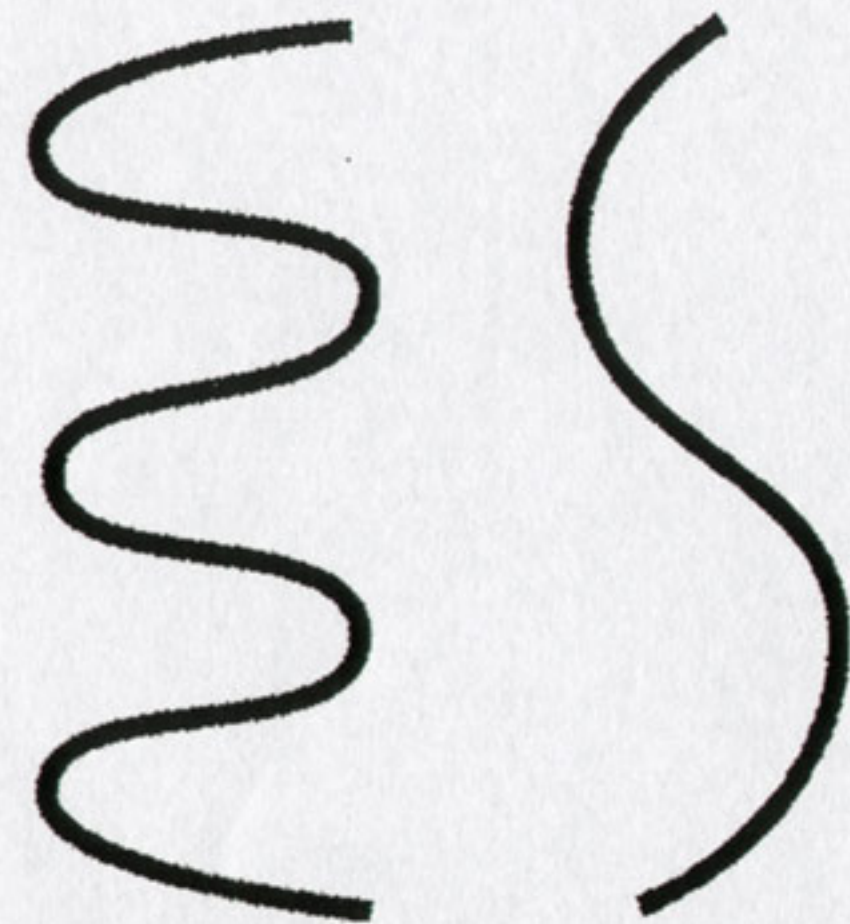
THE ARC OF THE TURN

This theme is important for any skier who wants to improve. Many skiers use a lot of energy when turning their skis, twisting their skis in order to get them around faster and skiing something that resembles a zigzag track down the slope. You need to let the skis do the work for you, so you can save energy and increase your control.

First, choose a trail that is not too steep and where you feel comfortable making large rounded turns. Now ski with medium to large radius turns and bring a good amount of pressure on the edges of your skis. The more pressure you put on the edges of the skis, the more the skis will carve their way around the turn by themselves. Later, try turning while skiing only on the outside ski. Be patient and wait for the ski to come completely out of the turn, before initiating the next.

Tip 4: Avoid twisting your skis. Put pressure on the edges and wait for the skis to turn by themselves!

As an alternative exercise, focus on the up and down movements we described in chapter 3.1. Make large or medium radius turns and try to adjust your up and down movements so that they take place throughout the entire turn. You should move slowly up and down. Try for example counting slowly one-two-three whilst you move upward, and backwards three-two-one whilst you move down. You can also slowly inhale while you go up and



Zig-zag turns

Round turns



Round turns, pressure mainly on the outside ski



Exercise balance and control of your outside ski

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Move slowly up and down



Challenge more demanding terrain

slowly exhale while you go down. The goal is to obtain a relaxed skiing style, skiing rounded turns and exploiting the hourglass shape of your skis. In addition, you will save energy and ski with increased control.

Tip 5: Adjust your up and down movements to the whole turn. Slow and gentle movements provide the best results!

TERRAIN

The last but certainly not the least important theme is the terrain. The nicest thing about becoming a better skier is being able to ski new and more demanding terrain.

As with so many other things, the best way to manage new terrain is by simply trying it. This does not mean charging recklessly down the mountain, but learning to read difficult and challenging terrain.

Tip 6: Seek challenges in more difficult terrain!

When you come across a difficult or unmanageable terrain for the first time, allow yourself plenty of time to gauge its difficulty. It can pay to ski right across the trail and turn close to the edge of the trail. This is because you do not pick up so much speed when you ski diagonally across a slope and also because the snow at the edge of the trail often is better than in the centre. For some reason, skiers always prefer to ski down the middle of a trail; therefore it is often in the middle of trails that moguls and icy places are found. Out on the edges of the trail you have a good chance of avoiding both moguls and ice. Do not start your turn before you feel you are in control and have enough space to make the turn.

If you feel nervous, the worst thing you can do in this situation is to attempt small short turns down the fall line. When you turn your skis, the tips will point straight down the fall line a majority of the time, risking that you will not be able to reduce your speed.

Tip 7: Use the traverse to reduce your speed on the steeps!

On difficult trails, where you feel there is too little space to turn - or it is too narrow or icy - you might want to avoid turning altogether. In these situations you can rely on the controlled sideslip. The sideslip is an excellent way of getting safely down a short piece of difficult terrain. Put yourself in a good basic stance and ski slowly forward with your skis placed diagonally across the trail. Reduce the pressure on the edges of the skis and slide downhill sideways. Remember to keep a good dynamic stance facing downwards so that you are prepared for unexpected surprises.

Tip 8: Sideslip down very steep and narrow passages!



Traverse to reduce the speed



Sideslip down steep sections

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Tip 1



Tip 5



Tip 8

SUMMARY: ADVANCING TO INTERMEDIATE TERRAIN

Tip 1: Start working on your pole plant as soon as your parallel turns have become rhythmical!

Tip 2: Plant your inside pole just before the start of the new turn!

Tip 3: Use only your wrist to make the pole plant!

Tip 4: Avoid twisting your skis. Put pressure on the edge and wait for the skis to turn by themselves!

Tip 5: Adjust your up and down movements to the whole turn. Slow and gentle movements will get you the best results!

Tip 6: Seek challenges in more difficult terrain!

Tip 7: Use the traverse to reduce your steep on the steeps!

Tip 8: Sideslip down very steep and narrow passages!