



# Crowsnest Nordic Ski Club

Skills Development Program Coach Reference Guide

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Maintained by: Director of Youth Programs, CNSC

## About this Document

The Crowsnest Nordic Ski Club (CNSC) Skills Development Program Coach Reference Guide ensures continuity of the Skills Development Program from year to year. The Director of Youth Programs is responsible for ensuring this Coach Reference Guide is maintained and is in alignment with current club procedures. It is important to maintain this Resource Guide ensure smooth operations.

## About CNSC Coaches

CNSC coaches follow the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) for Community Coaching Cross-Country Skiing. NCCP reference materials outline the role and responsibilities of community cross-country ski coaches in great detail. This CNSC Coach Resource Manual offers supplementary information and resources to support CNSC coaches with their role and responsibilities as it relates to the specific operations of CNSC Youth Programs. CNSC coaches have the following responsibilities:

- Development of a season plan and individual session plans
- Skills assessment and progress reports
- Tracking attendance
- Communications with families in regard to inclement weather or other changes to sessions
- Responding to and reporting on an emergency response if it were to occur

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## Season Planning and Session Planning

The CNSC Skills Development Program consists of 7 sessions and concludes with participation in the Club's a family friendly fun Loppet, Flight of the Crows.

- Session 1 – First Saturday in January
- Session 2 – Second Saturday in January
- Session 3 – Third Saturday in January
- Session 4 – Fourth Saturday in January
- Session 5 – First Saturday in February
- Session 6 – Second Saturday in February
- Session 7 – Third Saturday in February
- Loppet – Last Saturday in February (Conclusion of the Skills Development Program)

It is the responsibility of the coach to develop a season plan and session plans for each session and to ensure, to the best of their ability, that all the core skills of focus for the level they are teaching are covered.

### Season Planning

Coaches are encouraged to start by planning which skills will be covered in each session for the overall season. CNSC schedules 5 sessions and one Loppet race. Each session is two hours long, allowing time to cover up to 4 skills in each session. Due to inclement weather or lack of snow, we sometimes lose a session, so some repetition is good.

Below is an example of overall season plan. Details on warmups, games etc. can be found in session plans which are covered in the next subsection.

#### Example Season Planning for Jackrabbit Level 1

Session #	Skill							Other	
	Falling and Rising	Diagonal Stride	Side Stepping	Star Turn	Herringbone	Ready Position	Free Glide		Snowplow Braking
1	x	x		x		x			safety, trail etiquette
2	x	x			x			x	safety, trail etiquette
3			x	x	x			x	
4		x			x	x	x		sprint day
5	x		x			x	x		
6			x	x			x	x	race etiquette
Loppet									

## Session Planning

Preparing session plans is part of the minimum expectations for CNSC coaches. The session plans from Section 5 of the Community Coaching manual are designed around a program that has more sessions than offered at CNSC; however, they do provide an excellent basis around which to plan your sessions.

Each session, for all technique levels, should have the following elements:

- Introduction/welcome
- Warm up
- Skill development (technique)
- Balance activity (ski down hill on one ski, ski down a hill and pick something up)
- Speed (sprinting – 8 seconds of effort or less) and agility (games and relay races are great for developing speed and agility)
- Skiing (terrain teaches a great deal)
- Cool down
- Wrap up/conclusion

## Other important skills

Safety, trail etiquette, proper attire, importance of healthy snacks, and race etiquette.

Here is a sample of how a session plan

<b>Task</b>	<b>Time</b>
<b>Introduction and Attendance</b> On the first session, take time to get to know each other through an ice breaker game.	5 min
<b>Warm Up &amp; Stretching</b>	10 min
<b>Skills Development / Game Time</b> Spend about 20 minutes on one skill and then switch to another skill. Try a variety of games and drills to make it interesting. Don't forget how much kids learn just by skiing on trails as well!	40 min
<b>Break/Snack Time</b> Great time to go over dressing for the weather and the importance of healthy snacks.	15 min
<b>Skills Development / Game Time</b> Spend about 20 minutes on one skill and then switch to another skill. Try a variety of games and drills to make it interesting. Don't forget how much kids learn just by skiing on trails as well!	40 min
<b>Cooldown and Wrap Up</b> Remind students to get out and practice skills this week. On the first session, show the students where to track their extra ski practice in their booklet.  On the last session, go over any special instructions for the Loppet including start time and where to register. Remind students it's all about having fun and that they will get their awards after the race!	10 min

## Skills Assessment and Awards

It's best to take time during your sessions, or immediately after your session, to quickly update your attendance sheet with each student's progress. At some point in the season, all skiers in your group (but not bunnies) will do a timed individual sprint to determine their sprint badge. Coaches also need to ask students how many times outside of the Jackrabbit sessions they have skied so that you know which Snow Goal sticker to award each student. Your technique evaluation for each student should be done on the second to last session, the session prior to the Loppet.

After Session 5, coaches finalize the skills and awards checklists and give a copy to the Director of Youth Programs so the correct number and type of award stickers will be available for you to hand out to students at the Loppet. You can retain your copy of the attendance and skills checklist so you can use it to complete Progress Reports for each student. The Progress Reports will also be handed out at the Loppet.

Coaches will wrap up with their group at the Loppet and hand out their progress cards and stickers to students put in their jackrabbit or bunnyrabbit book. Please put each child's progress card and stickers in an envelop: this will minimize children losing their stickers or comparing their progress cards with other skiers.

### Award Stickers

#### **Bunny Rabbit Award Sticker**

Bunnies will earn this award when they have accomplished all the skills identified in the Bunny rabbit booklet and are ready to move to the Jackrabbit Program. This sticker should be placed over the shaded circle that says "Bunny rabbit Skill Award".

#### **Jackrabbit Program Award Stickers**

**Technique Awards Stickers (Level 1 -4)** Skiers in the FUNdamentals stage of athlete development can earn a technique sticker for each technique level they master as they move through the program. Stickers are placed over the shaded circle marked "Technique Award"

**Snow Goal Awards:** The purpose of this award is to encourage play/ski time on snow in addition to practice sessions for the purpose of improving the skier's balance, agility, fitness and rhythm. Skiers can earn one Snow Goal sticker per year based on the number of times the ski (a minimum of 1 hour each ski) in addition to their Jackrabbit practice sessions. Each time they ski, they should colour in one square on the Snow Goal Picture in their booklet. Awards are:

- Snow Goal 1, ski at least five times
- Snow Goal 2, ski 10 times
- Snow Goal 3, ski at least 15 times
- Snow Goal 4, ski 20 times
- Snow Goal 5 (the bonus sticker), skiers must ski 40 times in addition to their Jackrabbit Practice Sessions.

**Sprint Stickers (5 Colours):** The purpose of this award is to develop speed. Note that the distances are age specific. The recommended sprint distance to measure skiers' speed is 50 meters. Award standards for each level:

- Green = 30-60 sec
- Blue = 25-29 sec
- Purple = 20-24 sec
- Red = 15-19 sec
- Gold = 10-14 sec

## Bunny Rabbits - Attendance and Skills Checklist



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<b>Attendance</b>													
													Session 1 - Date
													Session 2 - Date
													Session 3 - Date
													Session 4 - Date
													Session 5 - Date
													Session 6 - Date
													Loppet - Date (hand out progress reports and awards)

<b>Skills Checklist</b> (mark "/" for worked on and mark "X" for proficient in the skill)													
													Falling and Rising
													Diagonal Stride
													Side Stepping
													Herringbone
													Star Turn

**General Comments**



## **Bunny Rabbit Skills (without poles)**

### **1. Falling and Rising**

- Falls to the side and back in a sitting motion
- Brings skis together, side by side and under the body
- Moves on to his/her hands and knees
- Stand up (assistance at this stage is often required)

### **2. Side Stepping**

- Arms and hands forward and to the side for balance
- Place weight on one ski, lift the other ski placing it 20-30 cm away from the original position
- Shift weight to second ski and bring the first leg to it to keep the skis parallel.
- Repeat in opposite direction

### **3. Star Turn (flat terrain)**

- Skiers parallel and arms away from body for balance
- Place weight on the left ski, lift the right knee and move tips of ski apart 20-30 cm
- Keep tails together, place right ski back down (forms a “pizza slice”)
- Place weight on right ski, bring left ski parallel to it
- Continue until full circle is complete
- Repeat in opposite direction

### **4. Movement on Skis – Diagonal Stride**

- Walk in place on the snow, alternately lifting their skis off the ground
- Move forward in small steps keeping skis parallel
- Try this skill both in and out of the tracks
- This walking step is the first progression of the Diagonal Stride

### **5. Movement on Skis – Herringbone**

- On a packed area without tracks, move forward lifting first one ski and then the other
- Keep tails of skis close together and the tips apart
- This “duck walk” is the first progression of the Herringbone technique.



## **Jackrabbit Level 1 Skills (without poles)**

### **1. Ready Position (flat terrain)**

- arms and hands slightly forward and to side for balance
- skis are kept parallel
- body is upright but relaxed
- knees and ankles are relaxed and slightly bent

### **2. Falling and Rising (slight hill)**

- skier glides down hill; falls to side and back in a sitting motion
- skis are brought together, side by side across the fall line, on downhill side of body and under body
- skier moves on to his/her hands and knees
- edges skis and stands up with minimal or no assistance

### **3. Side Stepping (gentle hill)**

- arms and hands forward and to the side for balance
- weight on the downhill ski and then lifts the uphill ski placing it 10- 20 cm uphill from the original position
- downhill ski is then placed beside uphill ski, skis parallel
- skier must be able to move 5 steps up & then down slope

### **4. Star Turn (flat terrain)**

- skier start with skis parallel, places weight on left ski
- lifts up right knee and places ski back down with the tips about 20-30 cm apart while tails stay together. The skis form a “pizza” slice.
- left ski is moved parallel to right ski
- repeat motion until a full circle is completed

### **5. Diagonal Stride – Running Step (flat terrain in set tracks)**

- skier slides skis down track, “walking” on the balls of the feet with some ankle and knee bend
- there is some glide onto the forward ski as skier pushes off
- pushing ski momentarily comes off the snow at the end of the push
- arms swing comfortably (in opposite time to the leg stride)

### **6. Herringbone (gentle slope)**

- skier steps up a gentle slope, alternating arms and legs
- maintains the tips quite wide apart (in a “V” shape)
- arms swing comfortably
- completes 5 steps with each leg

### **7. Free Glide (gentle downhill)**

- skier in Ready Position (knees and ankles relaxed & slightly bent)
- hands are kept forward, skis are kept parallel
- skier can glide three metres down slope in Ready Position

### **8. Snowplow Braking (gentle downhill)**

- skier makes a wedge, by spreading the tails of skis apart
- controls speed by adjusting the size of wedge and edging the skis
- braking pressure on each ski is fairly equal, with minimal turning to one side
- upper body maintains the Ready Position



## Jackrabbit Level 2 Skills (with poles)

1. **Diagonal Stride – Gliding Step (flat terrain)**
  - Some glide occurs with each step
  - Ski lifts off snow at end of “push off”
  - Weight shift occurs about 50% of steps
  - Recovery foot lands beside or ahead of glide foot
  - Can perform 5 successful steps in a row
  - Body is mainly upright
  - Poles are used with opposite leg but not yet used for propulsion
2. **Herringbone (moderate slope)**
  - Uses opposite leg and arm
  - Skis are kept in a wide “V”
  - Inside edge of ski is angled in to prevent slipping
  - Arms are just below shoulder level & swing comfortably
  - Pole tips are planted behind & to the side of feet
  - Good weight transfer from ski to ski
  - Can complete 5 steps with each leg
3. **Double Poling (flat terrain)**
  - Can propel self 5 m. down track using only upper body
  - Reaches hands forward to plant poles
  - Poles are angled back, poles tips are planted behind handles
  - After pole plant, upper body flexes at waist
  - Arms extend behind
4. **Free Glide (moderate slope)**
  - Poles are held down in front of body
  - Poles are angled down and backward, but not dragging
  - Able to glide 5 m. down slope in ready position
5. **Kick Turn (flat terrain)**
  - Starts in ready position
  - Can turn in either direction but may require some assistance
6. **Snowplow Stop (moderate slope)**
  - Reaches back to plant right pole by left ski tail
  - Lifts right ski so ski is perpendicular to ground
  - Turns right leg so that right ski is parallel to left ski (tip to tail)
  - Brings left ski and pole around so both skis face same direction
7. **Half-Snowplow Braking**
  - (easy to moderate slope in tracks)
  - skier glides down in tracks
  - partway down hill, takes one ski out of track
  - puts ski in wedge position, tip close to track and tail farther out
  - rolls ankle inward to apply pressure to inside of angled ski
  - able to significantly reduce speed, places ski back into track
  - can demonstrate with both skis
8. **Snowplow Turn (moderate slope)**
  - Starts in good snowplow position
  - Applies more weight to one ski, rolls ankle inward to turn
  - Skier faces downhill while turning
  - Then weights other ski and turns in new direction
  - Can complete 2 linked turns
  - Can turn in both directions

## Jackrabbits Level 3 - Attendance and Skills Checklist



Attendance												
												Session 1 – Date
												Session 2 – Date
												Session 3 – Date
												Session 4 – Date
												Session 5 – Date
												Session 6 - Date
												Loppet – Date (hand out progress reports and awards)
Skills Checklist (mark "/" for worked on and mark "X" for proficient in the skill)												
												Diagonal Stride (evaluate sprint time for award)
												Double Poling
												One-step Double Pole
												Free Skate
												Downhill Tuck
												Diagonal Skate
												Kick Turn
												Skate Turn
Awards Checklist												
												50m Sprint - record best time in seconds
												Skiing Often - record total # of ski sessions outside of sessions
												Competition – Loppet attendance
												Super Attitude - exhibits a positive mindset, is supportive of others, shows perseverance and builds team spirit
												Adventure - explore off-track skiing, into the woods

## Jackrabbit Level 3 Skills

1. **Diagonal Stride – Long Step**
  - skier shows clear weight transfer & longer glide
  - **Leg Action:** shows slight forward body lean; some knee & ankle bend during push off; rear leg is extended & back of ski lifts off snow; recovery foot lands beside or in front of gliding foot
  - **Pole action:** hands are close to shoulder height & elbow slightly bent during pole plant; pole is angled backwards beside opposite foot; arm extends past hip and releases pole; poles provide some propulsion
2. **Double Poling**
  - leans body forward as arms reach forward to shoulder level
  - elbows slightly bent; poles planted beside feet, angled backwards
  - upper body bends at waist, skier pushes on poles with body weight
  - arms follow through with extension to back, legs relatively straight
  - can propel self down flat track using double poling
3. **One-step Double Poling**
  - pushes off one ski while reaching forward with arms (like a jackknife opening)
  - double poles while swinging rear foot forward (jackknife closing)
  - extends arms behind hips & glides on both skis
  - begins the cycle again, alternating pushing legs
  - able to ski 50m using this technique
4. **Free Skate**
  - aligns shoulder and hip over gliding ski
  - consistently balances and glides on left and right ski
  - shows knee and ankle bend during push off
  - feet come close to each other on each glide
  - swings arms in front and behind
  - poles are held with tips pointing backwards, not touching snow
5. **Diagonal Skate**
  - alternately pushes with arms and legs
  - skier glides up hill, shifting weight equally from ski to ski
  - gliding ski flat on snow, feet come close during each glide
  - arm action similar to diagonal stride, keeps arms close to body
6. **Kick Turn**
  - can kick turn to complete a 180 degree turn on a slope
  - can perform this technique without assistance
7. **Skate Turn**
  - skier double poles
  - as arms and upper body recover forward, the inside ski is unweighted and pointed in new direction
  - skier edges & pushes off outside ski, transfers weight to inside ski
  - skier glides with skis parallel and equally weighted
8. **Downhill Tuck (on medium angle hill)**
  - Low tuck - upper body is bent to horizontal position
  - knees & ankles are bent so thighs are parallel to snow
  - High tuck - legs and ankles are only slightly bent
  - poles are tucked under arms and tight against body

## Jackrabbits Level 4 - Attendance and Skills Checklist



Attendance												
												Session 1 - Date
												Session 2 - Date
												Session 3 - Date
												Session 4 - Date
												Session 5 - Date
												Session 6 - Date
												Loppet – Date (hand out progress reports and awards)
Skills Checklist (mark "/" for worked on and mark "X" for proficient in the skill)												
												One-step Double Pole
												Free Skate
												One Skate
												Two Skate
												Step Turn
												Parallel Side Slipping
												Offset
												Diagonal Stride (evaluate sprint time for award)
Awards Checklist												
												50m Sprint - record best time in seconds
												Skiing Often - record total # of ski sessions outside of sessions
												Competition – Loppet attendance
												Super Attitude - exhibits a positive mindset, is supportive of others, shows perseverance and builds team spirit
												Adventure - explore off-track skiing, into the woods



## Jackrabbit Level 4 Skills

- 1. One-step Double Poling**
  - pushes off one ski while reaching forward with arms (like a jackknife opening)
  - double poles while swinging rear foot forward (jackknife closing)
  - extends arms behind hips & glides on both skis
  - begins the cycle again, alternating pushing legs
  - shows consistent fluid action
  - shows good balance both at pole plant & end of pole push phase
- 2. Free Skate**
  - aligns shoulders, hips and knee over gliding ski
  - shows knee and ankle bend during push off
  - feet come close to each other on each glide
  - swings arms in front and behind
  - poles are held with tips pointing backwards, not touching snow
  - consistent glide on left & right ski (complete weight transfer)
- 3. One Skate**
  - Double poles with each leg push
  - Knees and ankles flex before push off
  - Leg pushes to side, not back (tip & tail of ski leave snow at same time)
  - Poling: flexes trunk & finishes with arms extended behind body
  - Consistent and equal glide on left and right ski
  - During glide, feet come close to each other
  - Gliding ski is flat, not edged
- 4. Step Turn (moderate hill)**
  - Starts in & maintains high tuck position
  - Completes several quick steps in one direction
  - Shows complete weight transfer
  - Skis are edged
  - Able to do 3-5 steps in both left and right directions
- 5. 2-Skate**
  - Similar to 1-skate, but poles every second leg push
  - Glides on a flat ski
  - Aligns shoulder, hips and knee over gliding ski
  - Flexes body during double poling & finishes with arms extended behind
  - Glides & poles on one ski, then recovers arms forward while gliding on other ski
  - Can demonstrate skill on left and right side
- 6. Offset**
  - correct timing: plants both poles and one ski at same time
  - skis show wider “V” than in 1-skate
  - shoulder and hips are aligned over each gliding ski, not in the middle
  - pushes to side and steps up hill onto other gliding ski
  - hand position is slightly offset: lead hand is higher
  - weight is transferred quickly, skis are always gliding
  - leans forward into hill
- 7. Parallel Side Slipping**
  - Maintains ready position
  - Skis remain parallel while slipping sideways down hill
  - Demonstrates control by stopping mid-slope
  - Demonstrates skill facing both directions
- 8. Diagonal Stride**
  - Shows equal glide (50+ cm) on each lead ski
  - Rear arm & leg show full extension
  - Arms slightly bent, hands forward & at shoulder height during pole plant
  - Recovery foot usually lands beside or in front of gliding foot
  - Maintains forward body lean, including hips
  - Distinct weight shift, tail of each ski lifts off snow at end of “push off”

## Sample Skills Practice Games

The following sample of skills practice games have been compiled for easy reference and session planning. Further details about these and other practice resources can be found at: <https://nordiqalberta.ca/coaches/coaching-resources/>

### Skill

Game #	Falling and Rising	Diagonal Stride	Side Stepping	Star Turn	Herringbone	Ready Position	Free Glide	Snowplow Braking	Double Poling	Kick Turn	Snowplow Turn	One-step Double Pole	Free Skate	Downhill Tuck	Diagonal Skate	Skate Turn	One Skate	Two Skate	Step Turn	Parallel Side Slipping	Offset
1																			X		
2					X																
3		X	X				X														
4		X																			
5			X																		
6		X	X				X	X													
7																					
8		X	X																		
9			X																		
10				X																	
11		X	X				X														
12					X																
13		X	X				X														
14		X				X	X						X		X	X	X	X			X
15		X	X				X														
16						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X			
17		X				X	X	X	X			X			X		X	X			X
18		X	X			X		X													
19		X				X	X	X					X	X	X						
20		X				X	X														
21			X			X	X	X					X			X					
22		X					X		X			X	X		X		X	X			X
23		X				X	X														
24		X	X				X	X					X								
25									X												
26								X			X										X
27	X	X	X				X	X					X								
28	X	X																			
29									X						X						

Skills Practice Game	Good For				
	Bunny Friendly	Drills	Hills	Flat Areas	Trails
#1 Chase The Rabbit	X			X	
# 2 Cut The Rope	X	X	X		
#3 Easter Egg Hunt	X		X		
#4 Juggling Balls	X			X	X
#5 Jumping the Fence	X	X		X	X
#6 Red Light Green Light	X			X	
#7 Ski Ballet	X		X		
#8 Squirrels and Nuts (cooperative)	X			X	
#9 Supernova Relay				X	X
#10 The Clock	X	X			
#11 The North Wind				X	
#12 Tilling the Field	X			X	
#13 Bulldog				X	
#14 Chase the Tail Relay				X	
#15 Fox & Eggs				X	
#16 Human Slalom			X		X
#17 Hunter Relay					X
#18 Mouse Trap				X	
#19 Moving Bridges			X		X
#20 Snatch the Pole				X	
#21 Space Ball				X	
#22 Speed Zones		X			X
#23 Squirrels & Nuts (Team Relay)				X	
#24 The Fox & the Squirrels				X	
#25 Time Challenge		X			X
#26 Toll Booth			X		
#27 Turtle Tag				X	
#28 What time is it Mr. Wolf?	X			X	
#29 Disappearing Steps		X			X

### #1 Chase the Rabbit

- **Goal:** Chase the skier/s carrying a soccer ball.
- **Equipment:** Flat area marked by four cones, about 50' per size. 1-2 soccer balls per 3-4 skiers.
- **Setup:** One skier carries a soccer ball. Other skiers chase the ball carrier to tag them. The tagged skier gives the ball to the person who tags them first.
- **Rules:** Skiers must stay inside the four corners of the cones, crossing outside relinquishes the ball. The tagged skier may not re-tag the person who tagged them. Add two balls for higher energy.

### # 2 Cut the Rope

- **Goal:** Practice the herringbone technique on flat terrain or a slight incline.
- **Equipment:** 2 long ropes
- **Setup:** lay the ropes down parallel to each other on the ground.
- **Rules:** Skiers start at one end of the rope with their skis diagonal across the ropes. They will step along the ropes, practicing their herringbone technique while pretending to "cut" the rope with their skis.

### #3 Easter Egg Hunt

- **Goal:** Pick up balls and deposit them in baskets while moving.
- **Equipment:** Wide downhill slope, no poles. Six cones, two buckets plus 20 or more tennis balls.
- **Setup:** Place a line of cones at the bottom as a stopping line. Place two baskets on either end of the stop line. Place balls on the ground strewn across the trail randomly.
- **Rules:** All skiers start at the top, send down one or several skiers at a time. Each skier must reach down and pick up two balls skiing down the hill. They then deposit the balls in each basket and ski to the top to repeat. If there is sufficient space, two teams can compete on separate trails.

### #4 Juggling Balls

- **Goal:** Toss a ball to a teammate while skiing from point to point.
- **Equipment:** Flat area or set tracks marked by four cones, about 100'. 1 ball per 2 skiers. No poles.
- **Setup:** Place cones at the start and end of the flat area. One skier carries a ball and tosses it in the air back and forth to another skier as they ski down the course.
- **Rules:** Make up games with teams. The lowest number of ball drops wins.

### #5 Jumping the Fence

- **Goal:** Skiers step or jump across a rope at intervals.
- **Equipment:** Flat area, 6-10 cones, one or two long ropes.
- **Setup:** Place cones in a line spaced apart by approximately 8'. Place a rope parallel with the cones with enough space to allow skiers to jump back and forth. To add difficulty place two ropes parallel to each other spaced apart far enough to challenge skiers in jumping side to side.

- **Rules:** Skiers start in a line, the first skier skis to the first cone and either steps or jumps across the rope to ski on the other side. As they reach each cone, they repeat to switch sides. Skiers follow each other to the end.

### #6 Red Light Green Light

- **Goal:** Capture skiers still moving after calling for them to stop.
- **Equipment:** Flat area marked by four cones, about 50M long, no poles.
- **Setup:** Mark start and end with two cones each. Students begin at starting cones, Coach faces away from students at the end zone.
- **Rules:** Coach calls out “green light”, students start skiing. Coach calls “yellow light” and then turns around quickly at “red light”. If skiers are still moving, they are sent back to start line. Skiers reaching the finish line win.

### #7 Ski Ballet

- **Goal:** Challenge skiers to hold difficult balance positions down a gentle slope
- **Equipment:** Gentle to medium downhill
- **Setup:** Choose one of an endless number of variations to hold down a hill. One ski only, hands on skis, one knee then another knee rotation, flip backwards and forwards, splits, two skier variations.
- **Rules:** Use imagination to challenge balance.

### #8 Squirrels and Nuts (cooperative)

- **Goal:** Pick up tennis balls (or similar) and drop them in a designated circle.
- **Equipment:** Flat terrain. Rope or hula hoop or container. 20 or more colorful tennis balls.
- **Setup:** Spread balls out randomly on one side of the play area, place the nest/rope/hula hoop on the other end.
- **Rules:** Skiers ski as a group from the nest to the balls picking up one per trip back to the nest until all balls are picked up.

### #9 Supernova Relay

- **Goal:** First team to complete a “Star” and “Supernova” around cones wins.
- **Players:** Teams of 3-4 players
- **Equipment:** Flat Terrain, 3 cones per team. Classic or Skate – no poles.
- **Setup:** Place cones in lines of three, one line per team of two skiers.
- **Rules:** First skier starts by skiing to the first cone where they face the cone and circle it by side stepping around it in a complete 360, ski tips must face the cone. They then ski to the second cone with their back facing the cone and sidestep around it in a 360, tails must face the cone. When completed, they ski back and tag their partner who repeats the process.

### #10 The Clock

- **Goal:** Skiers jump with skis to match the time of a clock as called by the coach.
- **Equipment:** Flat area or slight slope for difficulty, no poles.
- **Setup:** Create a large circle of skiers with plenty of room to move. Place the coach in the center of the circle.

- **Rules:** The coach is 12:00 o'clock. Everyone starts by facing the coach. The coach calls out a time on the clock and skiers must jump to match the hands on a clock. Ex 6 o'clock requires a 180 degree turn.

### #11 The North Wind

- **Goal:** Tag to freeze all skiers in crouched position.
- **Equipment:** large Flat area marked by four cones, no poles. Two hula hoops and one flag or cloth.
- **Setup:** Mark the field with four cones, a larger field helps.
- **Rules:** One skier is given the flag, on the start command, they chase and touch other skiers. Touched skiers must crouch down until a skier with a hula hoop places the hoop over the skier. The freed skier must stand up, swing the hoop on their hips at least twice while yelling, "I love Nordic skiing" out loud. That skier now has the hoop and can unfreeze other players.

### #12 Tilling the Field

- **Goal:** Cover a designated area with ski impressions.
- **Players:** Any number based on area and number of available cones. No poles.
- **Equipment:** Large, flat area. 2 cones/person.
- **Setup:** Spread cones evenly across the area on both sides, cones on one end align with the other end.
- **Rules:** Singles or pairs of skiers herringbone down and back until the entire area is covered with tracks looking like a huge tractor tire.

### #13 Bulldog

- **Goal:** Avoid being tagged by a skier.
- **Players:** Approximately 4-10 per group. No poles.
- **Equipment:** Large Area. Six Cones
- **Setup:** Create a large rectangle with six cones. All skiers start on one end in a line, one skier in the middle.
- **Rules:** Skiers must start on one end of the rectangle and ski to the other end. In the middle is a skier or coach who tags skiers while moving toward the other end. Skiers who are tagged must stay and become taggers. Skiers are safe when leaving the other end of the rectangle. Repeat.

### #14 Chase the Tail Relay

- **Goal:** Win by carrying cones from one end of a field to the other end while maintaining equal spacing between cones throughout the game.
- **Players:** 2-3 teams of up to 12/team.
- **Equipment:** 12-15 tall cones/team: open area ~100M long. End zone marker or line.
- **Setup:** works better with skate. No poles. Place the cones in a line for each team, ~1.5 m spacing toward the end zone. Players line up with cones starting 10-20ft away from the first cone.
- **Rules:** The first skier sprints to their line of cones picking up any two cones, then, continues to ski to the end of the row. They place both cones upright and in line while maintaining equal spacing. The first skier returns getting in the back of their team's line. The next skier in line follows the first as soon as the first skier picks up their two

cones. All skiers ski in rotation together to move their cones, and themselves, across the end zone.

### #15 Fox & Eggs

- **Goal:** Steal eggs from your opponent without being tagged by the fox, add to your own team nest.
- **Players:** Two teams. No poles.
- **Equipment:** Large Area. Two ropes or hula hoops. 20 or more colorful tennis balls. Timer.
- **Setup:** Place equal numbers of tennis balls in each rope circle or hula hoop. Skiers start at their own nests.
- **Rules:** Skiers may not make contact or block opposing team's skiers. Start a timer for 5 -10min. Upon go, skiers race from their own nest to the opposing team's nest to grab one ball. They return to their own nest and repeat. A coach or designated Fox randomly tags skiers at which they must return their ball to the opposing team's nest and start over.

### #16 Human Slalom

- **Goal:** Slalom around teammates acting as downhill ski gates.
- **Players:** 5 or more.
- **Equipment:** Downhill slope, wider is better. Classic or skate, no poles.
- **Setup:** All skiers start at top of slope. Teams can race each other if enough space is available.
- **Rules:** Farthest person up slope skis around the group and down the hill, then stops several yards away. The next highest slope skier slalom's around the main group and the first skier stopping in a downhill ski slalom pattern requiring other skiers to slalom around them. Each skier starts as soon as a skier passes the first slalom human gate. Continue down the hill until the team reaches the bottom.

### #17 Hunter Relay

- **Goal:** First team to tag their teammates to the end of a series of cones wins.
- **Players:** Two teams of 3-6 per team.
- **Equipment:** Ski trail. 5 or more cones. Classic or Skate.
- **Setup:** Place cones down the middle of the trail spread out based on skier ability. Two teams line up on either side of the first cone.
- **Rules:** Upon calling "go", the first skier on each team skis to and stops at the first cone. Upon reaching the cone, the second skier skis to and tags the first skier allowing the first skier to ski to the next cone. The second skier stops waiting for the third skier on the same team to ski to them and tag them. The third skier starts when the second skier stops at a cone. All team members continue to tag each other from cone to cone until the team reaches the end.

### #18 Mouse Trap

- **Goal:** Cats turn mice into cats.
- **Players:** 4-12
- **Equipment:** No poles. Maze made of cones, paint or ropes.
- **Setup:** Designate one or 2 skiers as a Cat, all other skiers are mice.

- **Rules:** Skiers start spread out and must ski within the maze or outside edge of the maze. Cats tag mice turning them into cats. Mice can block other mice to sacrifice them to a cat in a corridor. Game ends when all mice are cats

### #19 Moving Bridges

- **Goal:** Ski through arches made by pairs of skiers without falling.
- **Players:** Pairs of skiers – any group size
- **Equipment:** Slight downhill slope. Pairs of skiers.
- **Setup:** Pairs of skiers form a bridge while facing uphill using their hands and arms as the bridge. The next pair forms the next bridge down the hill from the first and so on. Two skiers start at the top of the hill.
- **Rules:** The first two skiers ski down the hill standing up until they go under a bridge where they crouch down, then stand up and crouch through the next bridge. When both skiers make it to the bottom of the hill, all bridges move up the hill one spot and the top bridge now skis down through the bridges forming the bottom bridge at the bottom of the hill.

### #20 Snatch the Pole

- **Goal:** Snatch the remaining ski pole in a musical chair like race.
- **Players:** 5 – 12
- **Equipment:** Flat area, 4 cones, no poles for skiing, use poles as capture objects.
- **Setup:** Mark two sets of lines, one behind the other using two cones on the outside as markers for each line. Place poles a distance away stuck upright in the snow, one less pole than there are skiers. All skiers line up and start at the first start line.
- **Rules:** A coach calls out “go” and all skiers race down field to grab a pole. One skier is not able to obtain a pole. That skier starts at the next farthest forward toward the pole, all other skiers start back at the first line. Remove one pole each round creating two fewer poles than skiers in the second effort. Skiers may be on the first line or go back to the back line. When one pole is remaining, the first skier to capture that pole wins the round.

### #21 Space Ball

- **Goal:** Throw a ball to each teammate on the team to score a point.
- **Players:** 3-5 per team. Two teams. No poles.
- **Equipment:** Area of 20 meters by 20 meters. Ball.
- **Setup:** Place one cone in each of four corners.
- **Rules:** One team starts with the ball. They must throw it at least 5 times and each member of their team must catch the ball. If the ball falls to the ground, is blocked or is intercepted the other team gets the ball to start their run. NO CONTACT ALLOWED between skiers.

### #22 Speed Zones

- **Goal:** Change techniques and speeds in defined zones marked by cones. Help skiers learn control over acceleration.
- **Players:** Any number
- **Equipment:** Flat area. 10 – 12 sets of cones. Use poles or no poles.



- **Setup:** Place two sets of cones across from each other at the start line. Pair two more sets of cones down field approximately 12 feet. Repeat with a third set and so forth while adding distance between each set of cones.
- **Rules:** Students ski between sets of cones with a specific technique at slow speed. With each set of cones they pass the skier picks up the pace or changes to a new technique appropriate to the speed.

### #23 Squirrels & Nuts (Team Relay)

- **Goal:** Pick up more tennis balls (or similar) than the other team.
- **Players:** Two teams of 5-12 per group. No poles.
- **Equipment:** flat area. Two ropes or hula hoop or containers. 20 or more colorful balls.
- **Setup:** Spread balls out randomly on one side of a flat area, place the nest/rope/hula hoops on the other end separated by six feet approximately.
- **Rules:** Skiers ski one at a time from their nest to the ball field picking up one per trip. Upon arrival the next team member fetches a ball.

### #24 The Fox & the Squirrels

- **Goal:** Tag
- **Players:** 7 or more
- **Equipment:** Large flat area marked by four cones. 10 or more extra cones in pairs to create “trees”.
- **Setup:** In the flat area, randomly set up pairs of cones as “trees” with one fewer tree than there are skiers. Trees are safe zones where the fox cannot capture squirrels.
- **Rules:** Designate one Fox or tagger and start the game. The skier/squirrel without a tree must dodge around other skier’s trees to evade the fox. The free squirrel can gently push skiers out of their tree and take it as a safe zone forcing other skiers to dodge around trees. Tagged skiers become foxes.

### #25 Time Challenge

- **Goal:** Skiers try to surpass their furthest effort in a timed repeat. Double poling is best.
- **Players:** 4 – 10
- **Equipment:** Varied terrain, two start cones and one cone for each skier. A stopwatch.
- **Setup:** Mark start line with two cones. Skiers line up behind the start line.
- **Rules:** Coach starts the stopwatch and calls “go” while calling out the seconds. Skiers ski until coach says “stop” at agreed upon time in which skiers freeze. The coach marks the stopping spot with a cone. The skiers re-start to repeat moving the cone forward or back as their distance changes.

### #26 Toll Booth

- **Goal:** Place tennis balls in containers and V-plow to a stop.
- **Players:** 3 – 20
- **Equipment:** Slope or hill. Two buckets or capture containers. Cones and tennis balls.
- **Setup:** All skiers start at the top of the hill. Place buckets in line down the hill, place cones in a “V” shape down the hill from the buckets.

- **Rules:** Skiers ski downhill and stop at the first bucket to pick up one ball from the bucket. Then ski to the second bucket coming to a stop, deposit the ball in that bucket. Ski down the hill and snow plow or vertical slide slip into the “V” shape of cones and ski out the point of the cone to return to the top for a repeat.

### #27 Turtle Tag

- **Goal:** Tag skiers
- **Equipment:** Large flat area marked by four cones, one for each corner.
- **Setup:** Skiers spread out in the flat area.
- **Rules:** Every skier is “it” and every skier can free any tagged skier. On “go” each skier tries to touch other skiers. Touched skiers must roll over on their back with skis and arms up in the air over their head like a turtle. To free a turtle, any skier must grab the skier’s skis and move them back and forth, the skier is then free to get up and tag others. If two skiers touch each other at the same time, both become turtles. Skiers can tag and free the same skier. Skiers who are liberated can immediately touch the skier who turtled them.

### #28 What time is it Mr. Wolf?

- **Goal:** Turn skiers into wolves.
- **Equipment:** Flat area marked by four cones, about 50M long, no poles.
- **Setup:** Mark start and end with two cones each. One wolf (coach) faces away from the students who line up at the start line facing the wolf. The game begins when students call out, “what time is it Mr. Wolf”. The wolf responds with a number from 1 – 12. The time is equal to the number of steps students may take which they say out loud (classic or skate). If the wolf responds, “its dinner time” instead of a number, the students race back to the start while the wolf chases them. Tagging skiers converts them to wolves, the process repeats.
- **Rules:** At the end of the steps, the skiers must stop immediately, the wolf can capture them if they continue to glide. The wolf can turn at any point and skiers must stop. If a skier is tagged, they must join the wolf pack.

### #29 Disappearing Steps

- **Goal:** Fewest number of glides or pole strokes between cones.
- **Players:** Any number with fewer allowing less standing around.
- **Equipment:** Flat area, marked by 8 cones, 60 – 100 meters long. Classic tracks and skate lane.
- **Setup:** Choose a technique, double pole or vertical glide no poles for example. Two skiers start at the first set of cones and gain speed to the second set of cones. Starting at the second cone, the skier counts their turnover cycles to the last cone.
- **Rules:** Skiers repeat to reduce turnovers.

## Communications

### Communicating with your group

CNSC Coaches are responsible for communicating with their group throughout the season. Please use email and phone communications to organize and update your group. The Director of Youth Programs will provide coaches with a participant list, including email addresses. To help protect the privacy of our members, unless 'reply all' responses would be effective, please use 'bcc' regularly. Parents are also encouraged to visit the [skicrowsnest.ca](http://skicrowsnest.ca) website to find information about lessons and the SDP Parent Handbook.

### Absences from Coaching

Coaches are responsible for finding another coach to take their place if they cannot attend a session. If you know that you will be absent in advance, we encourage you to make arrangements with a coach in another session to cover for you. Please ensure anyone affected by an absence is notified. You will also receive a list of all current coaches and contacts for fill-ins if they are available.

### Inclement Weather Policy

Skills Development Programs will be cancelled at temperatures below -15C as measured/estimated at or noon on Friday before sessions and/or the night before or early morning on Saturday at the CNSC weather station. We will exercise some discretion if necessary to account for wind speed or cooling/warming trends.

The CNSC Director of Youth Programs is responsible for determining if the sessions need to be cancelled and for informing coaches of the decision. Coaches are responsible for informing families via email if the session has been cancelled. CSNC coaches should consider the following safety measures when skiing with young children during cold days (temperatures below -10C).

- If children are inappropriately dressed they should be excused from the session and their parent should be notified.
- Inform skiers and parents that a hat should be worn at all times. Ensure ears are covered to avoid frostbite.
- Bring children inside the warming hut when they say they are cold.
- Choose areas that are protected from the wind and avoid activities in open areas.
- Keep the young children close to the Warming Hut in the event that someone does get cold.
- Allow additional time to warm-up; it takes longer to get the body warmed-up for sport activity in cold weather.
- If in doubt cut the session short.

## Safe Sport

Like many Nordic ski clubs in Canada, CNSC has adopted the Nordiq Alberta Safe Sport policy suite. Coaches are required to review and be familiar with the CNSC Safe Sport policies and are responsible for completing a Criminal Record Check when first starting in a volunteer coaching role and then every 5 years after that.

## Emergency Management Plan

The CNSC emergency response plan outlines responsibilities of contractors and volunteers acting on behalf of the Club. Related to preparing for and responding to emergency incidents.

### Emergency Preparedness

Prior to the beginning of each session, coaches must review the following items to ensure that they are prepared to respond in the event of an emergency incident:

- First Aid Kit is readily accessible and stocked
- Person in charge is identified (lead coach(es))
- Person with a fully charged cell phone is identified
- Accurate directions to the site are available
- Phone numbers of all leaders is complete
- List of participants is up to date
- Attendance is completed at the start of each session
- Emergency contact list for participants is complete, up to date, and accessible

### Emergency Response

In the event of an incident:

- Clear and secure the scene of any further risk
- Shelter the injured participant from the elements
- Designate person with the phone to call 911
- Protect yourself from harm – gloves, mask etc.
- Assess the ABC's (check Airway for breathing, check pulse and check for major bleeding)
- Wait with the injured participant until first responders arrive

#### Person with the phone should:

- Call for emergency help
- Provide all necessary information to dispatch (location, nature of the injury and what first aid is being administered)
- Wait and direct emergency vehicles when they arrive
- Call the emergency contact person for the participant

### Post Incident Actions

Following the immediate response of the incident the person representing CNSC who was in charge of responding to the incident will:

- Complete an Incident Report Form
- Send the completed Incident Report Form to the CNSC Director of Youth Programs

- Discuss and debrief the event with the Director of Youth Programs.
- Discuss and debrief the event with all persons involved in the incident including but not limited to event or activity personnel, participants, volunteers, bystanders (this action may also be completed by the Director of Youth Programs).

## Supplementary Resources

- National Coaching Certification Program for Community Coaching Cross-Country Skiing Reference Manual
- Season Planning Template
- Session Planning Template
- Attendance and Skills Tracking Template
- Progress Report Template
- Incident Report Form
- Coach Resource Kit