

Skier Symmetry

All skiers that come on the Freeride Center courses, whether in Level 1 or Level 4, have a problem maintaining symmetry whilst turning. Perfect symmetry is skiing from turn to turn with your hips, knees and feet the same distance apart allowing both skis to be identical in angles. It's common for most skiers to ski with either their knees dropping closer together or their feet splitting wider apart. Both of these create the classic A-Frame stance.

The A-Frame stance makes it difficult to carve, ski powder, moguls, steeps and generally built on your ski technique as your ski edge angles will always be different. On the courses we address this issue and leave you with a strong, symmetrical stance that allows you to build good ski technique on.

Whilst developing your ski symmetry we will work on biomechanical aspects such as switching on certain muscle groups that help maintain the ideal stance, checking your ski boots to make sure they are set up correctly and integrating the O-Frame stance into your skiing. Having skier symmetry is crucial in preventing knee injury, fatigue, accidents whilst skiing and allowing you to reach your true skiing potential.

Ankle Flex

One of the biggest areas of development on the courses is Ankle Flex development. Most skiers join us with a lack of ankle flex. Most skiers flex at the knee more than the ankle and this puts the skiers weight back. Once it's back it makes it hard to steer and almost impossible to ski steeps, moguls and freeride terrain. Your thighs end up being used to help you stand up rather than being used to help you steer the skis.

The reason that most skiers have a lack of ankle flex is that a lot of skiers learn to ski in boots that are too stiff for them to flex so the joint that does all the flexing is the knee. A lot of skiers also suffer from having calf muscles that are too tight to be able to move and flex the ski boot.

With specific ankle flex development exercises you will learn to dominate your ski boots and flex them so as to allow you to be in balance and maintain leverage in the legs to have power to steer. Once you have this flex you automatically have power and in turn confidence. The learning process increases dramatically with this flex and your skiing takes a major step change in its level.

Thigh Steering

Most skiers who attend the courses, even Ski Instructor level, steer their skis by foot steering. Steering the skis by foot steering is usually what you get taught in your first week of ski school tuition. Unfortunately it usually stays with you through your skiing life. Foot steering is weak and although it might get you through your first week of skiing it won't be so efficient for more advanced skiing. Foot steering can also put stress on the knee joint.

Thigh steering is a much more powerful way of steering your skis and allows you to steer with more confidence on steeper slopes, in moguls and in freeride terrain. It also allows you to carve more effectively and move onto skiing higher speeds without losing control.

For thigh steering to switch on, we develop specific exercises that provoke you to use the muscles in the legs that control this movement. Once you find the muscles (usually takes about 15 minutes to switch them on) you will immediately feel stronger on your skiing and more secure. Once we have you doing this, other aspects of skiing we show you during the week are easily absorbed and changes take place in your technique with ease.

Left + Right Turn Differences

All skiers suffer from having a weaker turn direction. At the Freeride Center we are fully aware of the importance for the skier to first feel the difference between left and right turns and then understand why there is a weakness with one side. With the sport of skiing you are only as good as your weakest turn. This is obvious especially in powder, slush, steeps and in moguls.

Skiers generally have a weaker turn due to left and right side differences with the brain, injuries to certain sides of the body, imbalances on the left and right side of the body and equipment that might not be set up correctly.

With the use of video analysis, exercises and biomechanical awareness we make you aware of your weaker direction, show you it on video and then build up with specific exercises that benefit the weaker side of the body. Once you are balanced the sport of skiing will feel different to you and the foundation of your skiing will be strong and secure.

Middle Body Strength

Nearly all skiers that join the Academy courses are never using their middle body strength to its full potential. Many skiers break at the waist when skiing moguls, powder or just carving at higher speeds. The more dynamic skiing becomes the more you need to activate your core whilst skiing to keep the middle body strong and avoid it collapsing. On the course you will learn how to activate your core whilst skiing with simple exercises that are easy to integrate into your normal skiing technique.

4 Wheel Drive for All Terrain

To assist your Moguls, Steeps, Variables and Freeride terrain skiing you'll learn how to develop your pole plant timing and arm positioning. This gives your pole plant more overall strength and it will support your body effectively when initiating your turns in these terrains.

Individual Feedback

Every skier that joins a course has their own individual skiing style. An important part of the Academy course is to offer each skier feedback on their own technique specific to them. This takes places at various times during the week.

Other Course Content

As well as the above content various other aspects are also covered such as Short Radius Turns, Developing Leg Lean, Progressive Steering, Loading the Skis, Skidding and lots more.