



Région Autonome
Vallée d'Aoste
Regione Autonoma
Valle d'Aosta

SKIING AND SNOWBOARDING ON THE RUNS

THE MOUNTAINS IS
BOTH SATISFYNG . . .

AND SAFE !





SKIING AND SNOWBOARDING ON THE RUNS

Skiing on the runs
is undoubtedly one of the greatest,
most exhilarating thrills
the winter season has to offer - but
it must be tackled
with proper preparation
and an awareness of what it entails.

*This is why we have drawn up
a few rules to help you
enjoy skiing to the full,
so your day
out in the mountains*

IS BOTH SATISFYING...

AND SAFE!



Sometimes, when thermal inversion occurs, or in the event of the advection of cold air from the east, it may be cloudy at the valley bottom (even with some light snow), yet sunny at the top of the mountain. Before deciding not to go skiing you should always take a look at the situation on the runs, which can be seen on the webcam at www.regione.vda.it.

Before setting off, consult the weather report

www.regione.vda.it



SUN'S RAYS

The sun's rays, especially from February onwards, are very strong, and are intensified further because of the reflection on the snow, so make sure you protect yourself with sunglasses and sunscreen.



In the mountains the wind is often very strong, and heightens the sensation of cold even in temperatures that are not particularly low. In such situations, the same air temperature is perceived as much lower than it actually is depending on the intensity of the wind and the speed the skier is travelling at (*wind-chill* effect); so a temperature of -5°C with the wind, or the skier, travelling at 50 km/h will be perceived as -15°C .

When a foehn wind is present, temperatures at the valley bottom can be relatively mild even in the winter; you should remember, however, that in such conditions the temperatures drops by 1°C every 100 m further up you go, and make sure you factor in the temperatures you are likely to meet while skiing.

And of course it snows in the mountains in winter! When strong winds accompany the snow, blizzards can occur, turning snowflakes into needles of ice that blow practically horizontally, and can be very unpleasant! So make sure your face and eyes are adequately protected.



Watch out for fog, which can appear suddenly, making it difficult to navigate even the marked runs. To help you find your way in fog, high-visibility stakes are placed at the side of the runs.



It can also - albeit rarely - rain on the ski runs in the winter, making the snow wet and dangerous. After a fall of rain, the natural fall in temperature causes the snow to freeze.

THE 12 RULES



1 RESPECT FOR OTHERS

Make sure your behaviour does not endanger or cause damage to others: you are responsible not only for your behaviour on the runs, but also for how efficient your equipment is.

2 SPEED AND CONDUCT

Make sure your speed and conduct are in keeping with your abilities, and with the general conditions of the run, the snow, the weather and the number of people on the slope.

3 CHOICE OF DIRECTION

If you are uphill, i.e. in a dominant position, you can

choose your route. Choose a direction that allows you to avoid colliding with skiers moving around at the bottom of the slope. Skiers in front of you always have right of way.

4 OVERTAKING

You can overtake either uphill or downhill, on the right or on the left, but you must always maintain a safety distance to allow for turns and voluntary or involuntary movements on the part of the person you overtake.

5 CROSSING RUNS AND INTERSECTIONS

When you go onto a run you must look up and downhill to ensure you can do so without endangering yourself or others.

Do the same before setting off afresh after every break. At the intersections, give way to skiers coming from the right, or follow the indications on the signs.

6 BREAKS

Unless absolutely necessary, avoid stopping in the middle of a run, especially at points where skiers must necessarily pass through, or where visibility is poor. If you fall, clear the run as quickly as possible and try to move towards the edge.

7 ASCENT

Remember it is forbidden to walk up or down the ski slopes, except in urgent cases. In such cases, those walking down the slope without skis must keep to the side, giving

way if required to mechanical vehicles used for the servicing and maintenance of runs or lift facilities. It is also generally forbidden to go up the slopes on skis; in the event of an emergency, or if authorisation has been given by the ski area management, the skier must proceed with due care and keep to the edge of the slope.

8 SIGNS

Pay attention to the signs and indications on the ski runs.

9 ACCIDENTS

All skiers have the moral duty to assist others in the event of an accident.

10 IDENTIFICATION

Remember that if you are involved in an accident on the run, or if you witness an accident, you must identify yourself.

11 MINIMUM SPACE AT THE EDGE OF THE RUNS

Do not turn at the edge of the slope; always leave enough room for anyone overtaking you.

12 TRAJECTORIES

Pay particular attention to the trajectories of those present on the run, considering the kind of equipment they are using: snowboarding, telemark, fun carving, etc. all involve very different trajectories.

SKIING WITH CHILDREN

Even young children can ski, thus enjoying a great experience on the snow.

There is no set age to start skiing, so you should talk to your child's paediatrician or another doctor with the relevant experience, to establish whether he or she is ready to take up the sport.

When you are on the runs, remember to make sure children are suitably dressed, and equipped with passive protective gear such as a helmet or back protection.

Remember that the younger the child is, the larger the head is in proportion to the body. This means that the smaller the child, the greater the heat loss through the head in cold environments. It is essential to avoid potentially serious episodes of hypothermia, by using a balaclava under the helmet.

So:

KEEP THE HEAD COVERED
AND PROTECTED

AT ALL TIMES!



It is absolutely reckless to ski with your child in a baby backpack carrier.

Your young passenger runs the risk of hypothermia, and in the event of an accident (however good a skier you are, the unexpected can always happen), children carried on their parents' back are liable to suffer the most serious injuries.

Remember that there are particular lift facilities and equipped areas specially for children who are learning to ski.

Lastly, don't forget that skiing should be fun, and that no-one should be forced into it. Never oblige children to tackle this great sport before they are ready: in so doing, all you will do is put them off.

**LET YOUR CHILD APPROACH SKIING
IN HIS OR HER OWN TIME
THE MOUNTAINS WILL STILL BE THERE NEXT YEAR!**

BEFORE YOU GO SKIING

Do some proper physical training - it'll help cut the risk of accidents, thus allowing you to get the most out of your day on the snow, avoiding the consequences that can derive from excessive fatigue.

This is not a sport that can be improvised, and good skiing technique is essential if you want to stay safe. Keep working on your technical skills, taking lessons from a ski instructor if necessary.

Always check your gear (skis, snowboard, bindings, boots, poles) is in good working order. Careful regulation and maintenance of safety bindings will help you avoid unpleasant accidents, and the better prepared your equipment is (laminates, running surfaces, waxing), the better you'll be able to express your technical skills. For equipment maintenance, purchase or hire, always use specialised shops/workshops.

Wear technical clothing (ski suit, gloves, hat, goggles) that offers adequate protection from severe weather conditions and guarantees plenty of freedom of movement. Don't forget your sunscreen.

Remember that a helmet and back protection can prevent serious injury to particularly delicate parts of the body - the head and the spine - in the event of an accident. Check they are compliant with safety standards, and remember the use of a helmet is compulsory for skiers under 14.

Before embarking on a challenging day's skiing, always have a substantial breakfast: this will help you cope with intense physical activity without suffering too much from fatigue.

Always consult the "downhill skiing snow report" on the website www.regione.vda.it, which contains useful information for planning your day in each one of the region's 26 ski resorts, such as the minimum and maximum height of the snow, the type of snow present and the number of runs open.

Consider taking out personal insurance; rescue operations are not always free of charge. The management of the main lift facilities offers this service directly at the counters where skipasses are sold.

Remember that when you buy a skipass for a particular area, you implicitly agree to abide by its rules and regulations.

The staff at the ticket offices can tell you the closing times of the lift facilities and the number to call should you require the intervention of the ski patrol (often printed on the back of the skipass).

If you're not familiar with the ski area, ask for a map illustrating the lifts and the runs.



SKIING

Consult the noticeboard of the ski area you are in for up-to-the-minute info on the snow conditions and the runs.

Make sure you eat properly in order to supply your body with the necessary energy.

Do not over-indulge in alcohol: not only does it do nothing to improve your sports performance; it dulls your reflexes and can cause accidents on the slopes.

Before tackling your first descent, do some exercises to warm up your muscles.

Consider your abilities carefully, and choose the runs best suited to your level of physical fitness and training.

NEVER move off the open, marked runs.

Remember that access to closed runs, or to open runs outwith the set times, is strictly forbidden.

Do not go beyond the barriers that mark the routes reserved for races and training.

Bear in mind the rules for conduct on the ski runs are established by national legislation, and by a regional law that provides for the application of fines for failure to comply.

Finally, remember that leaving rubbish behind on the snow demonstrates a lack of respect for the environment. Take your rubbish downhill and dispose of it in the separate waste collection bins.

Do not leave behind paper, cans, bottles, plastic bags, flat batteries or the remains of poles or any other broken or damaged material: they cause damage to the environment and may also cause accidents.

Alert the staff responsible for the runs or lift facilities if you come across any foreign bodies that might endanger other skiers.

Never throw away cigarette butts: as well as being unpleasant to look at, they take 20 years to decompose, and small animals might choke on them.

IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY

In the event of an accident, call the ski patrol on the number you were given at the ticket office (you'll often find it printed on the back of your ski-pass), or alert staff at the pick-up or drop-off points of the nearest lift facility.

You may also call 118 directly, and the emergency services will contact the ski area you are in; bear in mind, however, that this might delay rescue.

Be prepared to indicate:

your name and phone number;

what has happened;

where you are on which run;

how many people are involved.

If you are assisting someone involved in an accident, mark the scene by planting your skis in an "X" shape in the snow, 15/20 m straight uphill from the injured person, and wait for the rescue services to arrive.

MEDICAL ADVICE

This useful medical advice is largely aimed at preventing potential health problems, both major and minor, that could ruin a day's fun on the slopes.

Skiing on the runs involves a physical effort that must be in line with your abilities and your health. If you are in good physical shape, do not ask more of your body than it is able to give, and if you suffer from any kind of chronic illness, consult your doctor before setting off so he or she can help you set the limits within which you can safely ski.

Never arbitrarily interrupt a course of treatment, and should any such treatment be incompatible with skiing (although this is very rare), it is wiser to think about changing your sports plans rather than putting your health at risk.

The amount of oxygen present in the air we breath progressively decreases as the altitude increases in the mountains. Do not underestimate the significance of this factor, which can bring on specific illnesses (altitude sickness) or worsen existing medical conditions.

If you have any doubts, consult your own doctor before setting off, or contact the staff at the Aosta local health board's Mountain Medicine Clinic.

Remember: prevention is better than cure!

MOUNTAIN MEDICINE CLINIC

The Mountain Medicine Clinic is part of the Valle d'Aosta local public health board, and for the moment is the only facility of its kind in Italy. The aim of the Clinic is to safeguard the health of those who live in or frequent the mountain environment (guides, climbers, workers, tourists, residents in mountain areas).

It is run by a team of hospital doctors specialised in several different areas, and operates in close collaboration with the Alpine Rescue Services of the Valle d'Aosta.

The facility carries out preventive health checks and monitors, guides and advises people who have had health problems in the mountains in the past.

To book an appointment: contact the Valle d'Aosta local health board booking centre (CUP).

For information:

tel.: +39-0165-543319
(Tuesday and Thursday, from 4 pm to 6 pm)

e-mail: MedicinaDiMontagna@ausl.vda.it

website: www.ausl.vda.it

USING THE LIFT FACILITIES

THERE ARE ALSO
A FEW COMMON-SENSE RULES
IT IS VERY USEFUL TO BEAR
IN MIND WHEN USING
THE LIFT FACILITIES.



Slow down when approaching the pick-up point of any lift facility.

Keep your skipass well away from the magnetic field of your mobile phone, as it could demagnetise it.

If you are on a ski lift, do not slalom on the way back up the slope and do not release yourself from the facility while it is in motion.

USING THE LIFT FACILITIES

If you are on a chairlift and have little experience of this kind of transport system, alert the staff, who will be happy to help you.

Do not try to recover objects you have dropped while the lift is loading - just tell the staff what has happened. Immediately after departure, lower and lock the safety bar. If you are travelling alone, sit towards the centre of the chair.

Do not keep your rucksack on your back - straps, cords or the like could get trapped on the chairlift. Do not open the safety bar until you are past the sign telling you to do so.

If you are unable to get off at the drop-off point, do not make any risky movements such as jumping off; wait for staff to intervene. When you are on the ramp that leads off the chairlift, pay attention to those around you, and avoid brusque movements that could cause anyone to fall.

If you get blocked on a cableway, do not make any risky movements and do not try to get off by yourself, as this is both forbidden and dangerous. Remember that each type of lift facilities has its own specific evacuation plan, which will be implemented in the event of an emergency.

SIGNS

PAY ATTENTION
TO THE SIGNS YOU FIND
ON THE RUNS.

THEY ARE EASILY RECOGNISABLE,
WITH SET COLOURS AND SHAPES.



SIGNS

30 cm
left side

80 cm
right side

WHEN VISIBILITY IS POOR,
OR IN ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS,
PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO THE LENGTH OF THE

ORANGE FLUORESCENT

MARKING ON THE TOP OF THE STAKES
AT THE EDGE OF THE RUN

OBLIGATION SIGNS



AVALANCHE
RISK
SIGN



AID AND
RESCUE
SIGNS

PROHIBITION SIGNS



SIGNS

Pay particular attention to the signs indicating the difficulty level of the runs. The discs, in various colours, are placed at the edge of the runs about every 200 m, and indicate the name and number of the slope.

RUNS COLOURS: DIFFICULTY INDICATION



BLUE = EASY



RED = MEDIUM



BLACK = DIFFICULT

DIRECTION SIGNS



COLOUR OF SYMBOLS



lifts and runs **open to the public**



lifts and runs **closed to the public**

SIGNS

DANGER SIGNS



colours indicating **danger**

run closed sign



INFORMATION SIGNS

They can rectangular or square; colour of background and print may vary.





PRESIDENZA DELLA REGIONE
DIREZIONE PROTEZIONE CIVILE

ASSESSORATO AGRICOLTURA E RISORSE NATURALI
CORPO FORESTALE DELLA VALLE D'AOSTA



**ASSESSORATO OPERE PUBBLICHE, DIFESA DEL SUOLO
E EDILIZIA RESIDENZIALE PUBBLICA**
CENTRO FUNZIONALE REGIONALE

ASSESSORATO TERRITORIO E AMBIENTE
DIPARTIMENTO TERRITORIO E AMBIENTE



**ASSESSORATO TURISMO, SPORT, COMMERCIO
E TRASPORTI**
DIREZIONE PROMOZIONE E MARKETING

With the contribution of:



**COMANDO GRUPPO
CARABINIERI
DI AOSTA**

**QUESTURA DI AOSTA
POLIZIA DI STATO**



**ESERCITO-CENTRO
ADDESTRAMENTO
ALPINO DI AOSTA**



**GUARDIA DI FINANZA
SOCCORSO ALPINO**

**AZIENDA U.S.L.
VALLE D'AOSTA**



**SOCCORSO ALPINO
VALDOSTANO**

**FONDAZIONE
MONTAGNA SICURA**



**ASSOCIAZIONE
VALDOSTANA
MAESTRI DI SCI**

**ASSOCIAZIONE
VALDOSTANA
IMPIANTI A FUNE**

