



# THE SEASON STARTER PROGRAM

WARM-UP SKI DRILLS TO GET YOUR SKI SEASON OFF TO A GREAT START

I love the arrival of fall. The hardwood trees present a magnificent display of color as they prepare to shed their leaves and sleep, our furry forest friends scurry about in a hurried quest to build shelters and store fat for the coming cold months, and the air takes on an invigorating chill that ignites anticipation of the first flakes of snow that will soon be here.



It's those seasonal sensations that have traditionally launched my thoughts of the coming ski season. As the air continues to chill, my hunger for that first day on the slopes continues to grow. Skis get waxed, lift passes get bought, winter wardrobes get moved to the front of the closet, and my attention turns to following weather forecasts, and resort reports

of opening day. It's a ritual of passage I go through every year, and I relish it.



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Eventually, the long desired day arrives. My car gets packed, and I'm off to the mountain to enjoy the first turns of the season. It's at that point a strange annual happening takes place, perhaps you'll relate to it. As I ride up the lift for the first run of the year, weird yet familiar questions creep into my mind. Can I still do this as well as before? Will my skills have slipped during the months of summer?



It's really quite ridiculous. I've been skiing for close to half a century now, and I learned long ago that skiing is like riding a bike, that you don't forget, but I still get that nagging sense of wonder at the start of each new season. I suppose it's because after months of not skiing the sensations become more vague in the memory, and they need to be refreshed. Over the years I've developed a surefire way to facilitate that refreshment process quickly, and get back up to speed on my skis in no time. I've used it myself, I've used it with my students, and I now would like to share it with you. I call it "THE SEASON STARTER PROGRAM". It's a series of drills designed to quickly refresh your proficiency at the foundation skills you already know, and rapidly get you comfortable on your skis again. Do these drills on your first couple days back on snow, and you'll quickly be back in the saddle, skiing as well or better than you were the last time out, those many months ago.



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## STANCE:

### 1) SKIING SHORT:

Make a series of turns, skiing in a very low stance, extremely flexed at the ankles, knees and hips. Notice how tiring skiing like this is.

### 2) SKIING TALL:

Make a series of turns while skiing in a very tall stance, fully extended at the ankles, knees and hips. Notice how relaxing skiing like this is.

### 3) KNEE BENDS:

Make a series of long radius turns, repeatedly flexing and extending back and forth from a low stance to a high stance, as you go through each turn.



**Skiing Short**



**Skiing Tall**



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## FORE/AFT BALANCE:

### 1) FORE DRILL:

Make a series of turns, keeping all your weight on the balls of your feet. No weight should be felt on your heels. Begin on gentle terrain, and vary your turn shapes.

### 2) AFT DRILL:

Make a series of turns, keeping all your weight on your heels. No weight should be felt on the balls of your feet. Begin on gentle terrain, and vary your turn shapes.

### 3) CENTERED DRILL:

Make a series of turns, keeping your weight distributed equally across the balls and heels of your feet. Begin on gentle terrain, and vary your turn shapes.

### 4) TURNS DRILL:

Make a series of 3 turns fore balanced, followed by 3 turns center balanced, followed by 3 turns aft balanced. Keep repeating that sequence for an entire run.

### 5) FORE TO AFT DRILL:

Make a series of long radius turns, starting each turn fore balanced, and finishing it aft balanced. Begin on gentle terrain.



**Skiing Fore**



**Skiing Aft**



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## LATERAL BALANCE

### 1) WALKING:

Make a series of long radius turns, repeatedly lifting your left then right foot as you turn, as though you're walking.

### 2) INSIDE LIFT DRILLS:

Make a series of long radius turns, repeatedly lifting and tapping your inside ski to the snow throughout each turn. Advance by progressively holding your inside ski longer off the snow before tapping, until you're making entire turns with your inside ski never touching the snow.

### 3) OUTSIDE LIFT DRILLS:

Make a series of long radius turns, repeatedly lifting and tapping your outside ski to the snow throughout each turn. Advance by progressively holding your outside ski longer off the snow before tapping, until you're making entire turns with your outside ski never touching the snow.



**Inside Lift**



**Outside Lift**



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## LATERAL - FORE/AFT BALANCE

1) **INSIDE TAIL LIFT:**  
Make a series of turns, lifting and holding the tail of your inside ski off the snow, through the duration of each turn.

2) **INSIDE TIP LIFT:**  
Make a series of turns, lifting and holding the tip of your inside ski off the snow, through the duration of each turn.



**Inside Tail Lift**

3) **INSIDE TAIL/TIP LIFT:**  
Make a series of turns, starting each turn with the tail of your inside ski lifted, and finishing with the tip lifted.

4) **OUTSIDE LIFTS:**  
Repeat drills 1-3, but this time lifting the tip and tail of your outside ski.



**Inside Tip Lift**



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## EDGING

### 1) ENGAGE & RELEASE SIDESLIPS:

While sideslipping, repeatedly engage your edges to bring yourself to a stop, then release your edges to resume sideslipping. Do facing in both directions.

### 2) ENGAGE & RELEASE TRAVERSES:

While traversing, repeatedly release your edges to begin sideslipping, then reengage your edges to resume traversing. Do traversing in both directions.

### 3) FALLING LEAF:

While sideslipping, repeatedly move your weight to the balls of your feet so you slide forward, then move your weight to your heels so you slide back. Your path of travel as you sideslip will be back and forth, similar to a leaf falling from a tree to the ground.

### 4) NARROW TRACK STEERING:

Make a series of turns with only a slight amount of skid in the track you leave in the snow. Vary your turn shapes as you do the drill, by varying both the radius and degree of your turns.

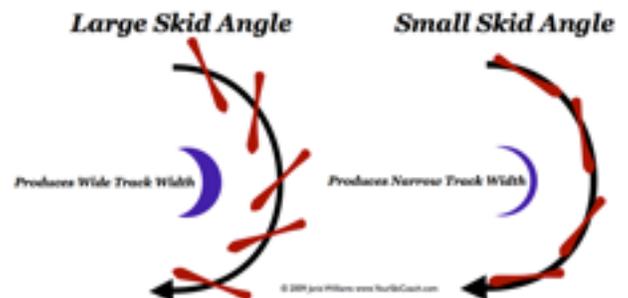
### 5) WIDE TRACK STEERING

Make a series of turns with a large amount of skid in the track you leave in the snow. Vary your turn shapes as you do the drill, by varying both the radius and degree of your turns.



Side Slips

## SKID ANGLE





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## 6) SKID VARIANCE:

Make a series of turns in which you change from narrow track to wide track steering from turn to turn, and also within the course of a single turn.

## 7) RAIL TURNS:

Move from traverses, to single turns, to a series of turns, all executed with absolutely no skidding. The track you leave in the snow should be 2 thin lines. Be especially careful to do no skidding/pivoting during the transitions between your turns. Vary your turn shapes.



**Clean Transition - No Skidding**

## CONCLUSION:

There you have it, a set of time proven drills that are guaranteed to start you off skiing as well, or more than likely even better, than the level you ended at the year before.

For a more detailed explanation of each of the drills presented here, and accompanying video demonstrations, along with a complete learning program you can use to take your skiing to the highest level, have a look at our **BUILDING BLOCKS INSTRUCTIONAL SERIES**, which can be found at our website: [www.YourSkiCoach.com](http://www.YourSkiCoach.com)

Finally, if any of the terminology found in this article seemed foreign to you, definitions can be found in our multi-media Ski Glossary at the same website. Thanks for reading, and have a fantastic new season on the slopes!