



SPIRAL LEARNING

WHY DO YOU LEARN THE SAME SKIING SKILLS
IN SO MANY LESSONS?

When I was learning to ski, I pondered why I spent so many of my lessons learning skills I had previously 'mastered'. When I spoke to Rick about the concept I envisaged to describe my learning progress, he had a similar concept. So this is the article Rick wrote to describe the way we learn and develop our skiing skills.



Have you ever been skiing a difficult slope, intensely applying all the focus and effort you can muster to make your way down it in one piece, when all of a sudden someone sails on by you looking totally relaxed and in complete control? Don't worry, you're not alone. It's a scenario that most recreational skiers experience many times.

While it's a pleasure to watch these highly skilled skiers display their finely honed abilities, it can also be baffling and frustrating. Imagining ever coming close to skiing that well is hard, and the road to getting there is a mystery to most. Ever attaining that level of skiing is written off by many as an impossibility, due to a lack of the innate athletic skills they assume great skiers must possess.

Well, I have good news. There is a road to that type of skiing which is open for all to travel, and it DOES NOT require rare natural athletic abilities to navigate. As a race coach of 30 years, I've guided 100's of skiers to great skiing, and I can attest that almost every skier has the athletic capabilities necessary to be one of those rare individuals who stand out for their skiing prowess as they descend the slope.



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Skiing is a sport of skills. Becoming an expert skier involves focusing on and developing each of those skills to a high level. At Your Ski Coach we break down and group those skills into the following categories:

- 1) Balance
- 2) Edging
- 3) Flexion/Extension
- 4) Rotation
- 5) Angulation
- 6) Transitions

Within each one of those areas reside a basket of different skills. For skiing to be done well, skills from each basket must be blended together. If any skill area of the 6 I listed above is particularly weak, it will hold back the quality of one's entire skiing package.



Enter the theory of **SPIRAL LEARNING**. In this skier development system, skills in each of the 6 areas are learned in a graduated manner, and in harmony with the other skill areas. Imagine a spiral stair case held up by 6 pillars, each representing one of the 6 skill areas. As you ascend the stairs you circle around, moving

from pillar to pillar, as you continue to incrementally climb higher and higher.



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The same method of ascent happens in spiral learning. The first revolution up the stairs you learn the most basic skills within each skill area, or pillar. With each new ascending revolution you learn slightly more advanced skills at each pillar. In this manner your development remains balanced in all skill areas, and builds a solid

foundation for supporting the learning and adding of even higher level skills. These small steps of improvement keep comfortably building until you eventually find yourself at the top of the stairs, with an entirely new vantage point on the sport.



With this new skill base all forms of skiing become available. Any technique you choose to use is at your fingertips. New skills and techniques are learned and adopted very easily, and any slope can be skied with the confidence of knowing it can be negotiated skilfully in any manner you choose. Broad based skills provide for unlimited options, and these options breed vast confidence and comfort. When you see a great skier glide down the slope with their distinctively calm precision, this skill base is the origin of what you see.