

Tips for Teaching Cross Country Skiers  
For 4-H CANSKI Volunteers  
Clinic Volunteers (Adults and Youth)



Tips for working with kids in general and in xc skiing:

**General** - People need to have *fun*, feel like they *belong here*, *master something* during the workshop (new skill), and feel like *you enjoyed their presence*.

**When we teach xc skiing, we focus on:**

- 1. Relaxation, 2. Balance, 3. Mechanics (order for priorities)
- Work from the ground up (start at their feet and finish at their head in terms of mechanics).
- Work from large muscle movements to small, multi to individual (example: body alignment before hand position).
- Work on classic first, then skate.

**Teaching progression: CLASSIC (beginner):**

Start by introducing yourself and have each of them introduce selves and tell: a. what their level of experience is; and b. what they would most like to learn today.

1. How to get equipment on properly
2. Falling (sideways) and getting up (NOT using poles)
3. Turning : star turns
4. Up and Downhill control: herringbone and snowplow (make a 'v' and a 'pizza wedge')
5. Moving forward: opposite arms to feet, more like skipping than walking, squash grapes under your heel, throw arms down the trail, poles set at 45\* to the ground. Try skiing without, then with poles.
6. Play a game (you each know at least a dozen: try *ball tag* or a silly *relay*)

**Teaching progression: SKATE (beginner):**

Start by introducing yourself and have each of them introduce selves and tell: a. what their level of experience is; and b. what they would most like to learn today.

1. How to get equipment on properly
2. Falling (sideways) and getting up (NOT using poles)
3. Turning : star turns
4. Up and Downhill control: herringbone and snowplow (make a 'v' and a 'pizza wedge')
5. Moving forward: 'confused Norwegian' drill (toe-knee-nose alignment), add arm swing, timing with the V1 (drill it standing with them & add poles), head position (down-over-up). Try skiing without, then with poles. *Make it fun!*
6. Play a game (you each know at least a dozen: try *ball tag* or a silly *relay*)

Don't forget to remind your students: "*If you're not falling, you're not learning!*"