

SKI EQUIPMENT

Alpine skiing is a “gear intensive” sport but does not require you to buy expensive gear all the time. The following should help you in deciding what equipment is important for your youngster for the formative years of their ski development.

We encourage families to buy only one pair of skis per year for the 4 years of Kinder (U12 – 14) racing starting preferably with Slalom skis. With this in mind, each athlete would have 2 pairs of skis (one slalom and one giant slalom) to use each year after their first year U14. These may be new or used but should come from any of the well-known suppliers out there that are supporting ski racing in Canada.

Always look for equipment that was designed for junior racing as opposed to recreation gear. All junior racing products have been designed specifically with junior racing speeds and athlete sizes in mind.

All program participants, competitors and forerunners are obliged to wear a helmet. Helmets used shall be specifically designed and manufactured for the respective discipline and shall bear a CE mark and conform to recognized and appropriate standards such as CEEH, Din 1077 or US 2040, ASTM F2040, SNELL S98 or RS98, etc.

SKI SELECTION

Guidelines for sizing

It is beneficial to go shorter rather than longer when choosing length for the entry-level participants. A shorter ski will facilitate turning, allowing quicker progression of basic skills and definitely increasing the athletes’ enjoyment of skiing. The ski should be between the nose and the top of the forehead for entry-level participants. Longer skis may be appropriate as skill acquisition occurs. Purchasing skis that are too long may impede skill development in the long term.

Unless competing and bound by regulations, the following are guidelines:

Age	Ability Level	Athlete Size	Height	Size SL	Size GS	Size SG
Nancy Greene U10 Ages 6 – 9	All Abilities	< 75 lbs.	<43 in. 43 – 48 in. 48 – 53 in. 53 – 57 in.	100 cm 110 cm 120 cm 130 cm	100 cm 110 cm 120 cm 130 cm	N/A
U12 Ages 10-11	All Abilities	> 75 lbs.	< 48 in. 48 – 53 in. 53 – 57 in. 57 – 61 in.	N/A 124 cm 130 cm 136 cm	128 cm 135 cm 142 cm 149 cm	N/A
U14 Ages 12-13	All Abilities	All Sizes	48 – 53 in. 53 – 57 in. 57 – 61 in. 61 – 65 in.	>=130cm	<=188 17m	N/A
U16 Ages 14-15	Developing skills, Skilled	All Sizes	Men and Women	>=130cm	<=188 17m	>=183 30m
U18 Ages 16 & up	FIS Level Athletes	All Sizes	Women * 1st yr	155 cm	188 cm *-5cm 30m	205 cm *-5cm 40m
			Men *1st yr	165 cm *-10cm	195cm *-5cm 35m	210 cm *-5cm 45m

SKI BOOT SELECTION

General Mechanics

A distinction needs to be made with respect to performance and comfort factors in boot fitting, keeping in mind that there are 2 options in boots for the entry level athlete; rear entry and overlap design.

Overlap design has a cuff that articulates with the lower shell using a hinge at the ankle joint. This design provides performance for the entry-level participant by allowing natural ankle flexion, due to the hinged cuff of the boot.

The overlap design also allows for lateral action of the lower leg, a critical factor in skill development.

Rear entry design is comprised of a single piece of plastic encompassing the foot. This design provides warmth, and is considered to offer a comfortable fit. Rear entry boots are not however recommended for racing.

Boot Flex

For the entry level, a softer boot will be more effective than a stiffer boot, due to strength limitations and skill level.

To determine if a boot is soft enough, you should be able to see the forward boot flexion happening in the upper cuff simultaneously with the lower leg. If the lower leg moves forward and the upper cuff moves very little, then the boot is too stiff.

The boots should not inhibit the natural alignment of the athlete.

Boot Size

Growth of the participants' feet during the season needs to be considered, but similar to skis, buying boots over-sized is counter-productive for both performance and fit.

Boots that are fitted poorly have the potential to cause bone spurs and possible medical problems in the long term.

Foot beds

These are important factors for performance but at the entry level, foot beds do not play an important role due to growth and cost factors. This only becomes a concern at the U14 level.