



# Community Coaching Fundamentals

# GAMES

**EXCERPT FROM: Step 4 - Teaching  
classic Technique**



**Reference Material**



# PARTNERS IN COACH EDUCATION

The National Coaching Certification Program is a collaborative program of the Government of Canada, provincial/territorial governments, national/provincial/territorial sport organizations, and the Coaching Association of Canada.



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Patrimoine canadien

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Coaching Tip: If children practice a sport incorrectly, they are unable to change and adapt (later), and then they cannot move on. We must have coaches who can teach youngsters the right techniques from the beginning.

Source: Fennell

### 4.3.9 Games for Teaching Technique

Acquiring balance on skis takes time. Children pick it up more quickly than adults do, but they are usually less motivated for skiing itself and may lose interest quickly. Children simply are not small-scale adults.

Adult recreations, such as tours, are often tiring for children, whether or not they are on skis. Their attention spans are simply too short for them to enjoy doing the same thing for any length of time. So introducing children to skiing skills often requires a special approach keyed to their needs and capabilities through suitably arranged learning situations. One of the best ways to introduce children to skiing skills is through games. Almost any game that can be played on foot can be played on skis.

Teaching Children to Ski

- ❑ **Jaws.** Everyone lines up on one side of the field. Have one person stand in the middle of the field and yell “jaws”. When “jaws” is called, all the skiers attempt to reach the other side of the field without getting caught by Jaws. Skiers who are caught then help Jaws to catch other skiers.
- ❑ **Simon Says.** This is the old game where the one who gets caught becomes Simon and that individual continues by trying to trick someone else. If Simon says “Simon says” first, - e.g., “Simon says: touch your toes” or “Simon says: twist at the waist” - the group should follow the instructions. However, if Simon says simply “clap your hands” without saying “Simon says: clap your hands”, no one should clap their hands. Coaches may or may not allow the use of poles depending on the space available to play the game.
- ❑ **Orienteering For Treasure.** First select a suitable location, such as a city park or ski trails. Divide the children into teams of three or four, with one adult per team. Every team is provided with one map. On the map is a picture of where the next map is hidden (for example, a lamp post, if there are numerous lamp posts in the area). There can also be a drawing of a nearby pond, picnic table or similar landmark. The teams then search until they find the next map, which in turn indicates where another map is hidden. There should be one map per team at each checkpoint – ideally, numbered for each team. All teams have to find the same locations, but each trail is laid out in a different order so the teams are not following each other. Another alternative is to follow the same order but have a staggered start. If this is done at a ski area, the maps must include features that the children are familiar with and recognize. A beautiful viewpoint on the 15 km trail may be recognized by adults but not by the children if they haven’t been there before. Keep words and directions to a minimum. If a large school yard or city park is used, set up 15-20 checkpoints with approximately 150- 250 metres between each one. In a ski area with hilly terrain, keep the check points closer together. Have the “treasure” ready for each team when it arrives at the last checkpoint.
- ❑ **Ski Orienteering.** This game should be simplified for beginners. The level of difficulty can be increased as the participants gain more experience. Obtain maps of the ski area. These maps can be laminated at most schools or libraries. Use an erasable marker (grease pencil) to mark the location of the control points for each team. At each control point, put a letter. The skiers, in pairs, then ski to as many control points as they can and record or remember the letter at each station.

The pairs return when they have been to all of their control points and can make a word from their letters. Stations are chosen so that each group can spell a word. You could also put numbers at each station and each group gives you the total of their numbers. The team completing the course in the shortest amount of time wins. The level of difficulty can be increased by putting the letters near but not exactly at the control point. It can also be increased by using compass directions to lead the groups from control point to control point.

- **Wolf Ring:** A defined area with both perimeter and diameter lines is established for the game. Skiing is permitted around the perimeter and across each of the diameters, but in one direction only. A hunter, “the wolf”, chases the rabbits within the defined area. When the wolf tags a rabbit, that person becomes a wolf as well. The game continues until the last rabbit is tagged. The size of the area can vary according to the age of the participants. The coach may or may not choose to have skiers use poles depending on space available to play the game. See Figure 4.1.

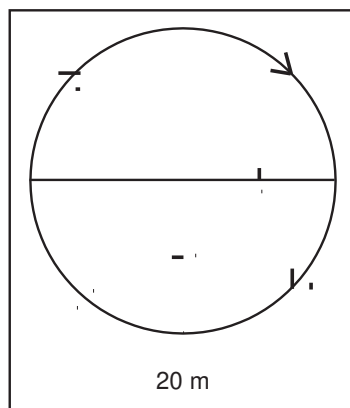


Figure 4.1

- **Follow the Leader.** This game should be adapted to the age of the group in order to provide a challenge that is suitable. Incorporate the movements that correspond with the skills being taught during that activity/practice session. Keep the group small so that even the last skier in line is doing the activity. A variation is to lead the group out, do an exercise, then have the first skier lead that movement while you go back down the line and encourage others to copy them. When the last skier has finished, reverse the line and lead on to begin the next exercise. For older groups, the exercises need to be progressively more difficult.
- **Jump the Clock.** The group spreads out (lots of space is required between each skier). All face a point designated as twelve o'clock. When the leader shouts “three”, everyone tries to jump and turn 90 degrees so that their skis face three o'clock. They jump back to twelve o'clock again and this continues. With some practice, some participants may make a jump turn as far as six o'clock. The coach may or may not choose to have skiers use poles depending on space available to play the game.
- **Schmerltz Rugger.** A Schmerltz is a tube sock with a tennis ball dropped in the toe and a knot tied in the sock. Two goal lines and a field goal ring (about two meters in diameter) are created. A touchdown (six points) is scored by carrying the ball across the opposition's goal line; a field goal (three points) is scored by throwing the Schmerltz into the circle. The idea is to pass the Schmerltz. If a skier is tagged while holding it, the tagging team gets a free throw. Each team should have a goalie to protect the circle. If the Schmerltz is being carried for too long by the skiers, use the three stride rule (three strides and pass). No poles. See Figure 4.2.

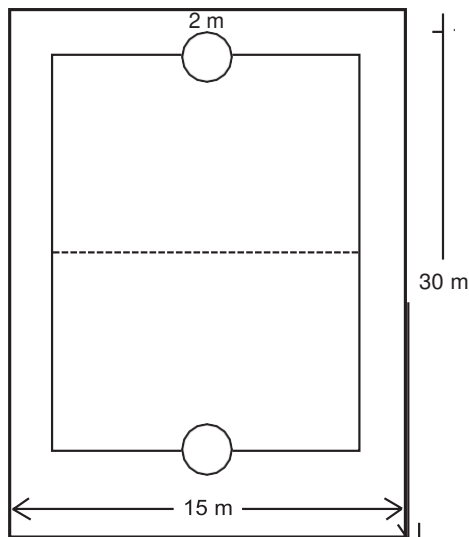


Figure 4.2

- ❑ **Human Slalom.** A long hill is required for this exercise. The first skier goes about ten metres down the hill and stops. The second skier then skis around the first and stops ten metres further down the hill and so on until the whole group reaches the bottom.
- ❑ **Get the Leaders.** Children ski down a gentle slope doing a slalom course. The coaches are watching along the side and each child attempts to grab a handful of snow to throw at each coach they pass, while retaining their balance. The coach may or may not choose to have the skiers use poles depending on space available to play the game.
- ❑ **Colours.** The skiers ski around within a circle six metres in diameter until the coach calls out a colour. They then stop and touch that colour on another skier's clothing. More than one skier can touch the same person. The most fun is selecting a colour that is found only on the socks or gloves of one or two skiers.
- ❑ **Name Tag.** This is a good game for the first session of the year, used by the groups once they have divided up. Start a game of Frozen Tag, but adapt it so the "tagger" has to say a skier's name when he/she tags or frees them. This works well with all age groups. No poles.
- ❑ **Frostbite Tag.** This game is played within a six metre ski pole circle. One person is "It" and another is "Hot Spot". When "It" tags skiers, they must remain frozen with their hand touching the tagged part of their body. They remain frozen until "Hot Spot" touches them on the frozen spot. Change "It" and "Hot Spot" frequently. Also, you can have more than one "It". This works well when the "girls" are on one side and the "boys" are on the other side. No poles.
- ❑ **Hounds and Hares.** Hares have a small flag (flagging tape) tied on their arms and are given two minutes to ski off anywhere within the game area. Vary the range according to the age level of the group. Hounds are then sent out to catch the hares' flags. Hares that lose their flag become hounds. After ten minutes, a whistle is blown and everyone returns. Flags cannot be captured after the whistle. Count the number of flags that the hounds captured and switch roles to see which team does better. Those who lose their flag continue to play by acting as decoys.

- ❑ **Dodge Ball.** For this game you require a soft, air-filled ball (i.e. volleyball). Divide the group into two teams, the “Ins” and the “Outs”. The “Outs” form a large circle within which the “Ins” can move freely. The size of the perimeter of the circle is determined by the throwing ability of the participants. The ball is handed to one of the “Outs” to begin the game. The object is for the “Outs” to knock the “Ins” out of the circle. No hits are allowed above the shoulder. If the ball does not make it back to the outside edge of the circle, an “Out” may enter the circle to retrieve it, but cannot throw until back in position. Each “In” that is hit by the ball has to leave the circle. Once the “Ins” have been removed from the circle, the “Ins” and “Outs” exchange roles. The coach may choose to time each group to see which one can eliminate the other the fastest. No poles.
- ❑ **Streets and Alleys.** This is a fun way to form a teaching grid. The skiers line up in pairs facing the same direction. The second skier in a pair stands about five meters behind the first skier. When the coach shouts “Streets”, the back skier has to try and catch the front skier. When the coach shouts “Alleys”, the skiers turn around. The chaser (the skier behind) becomes the pursued. Use poles if classic skiing.
- ❑ **Swedish Bulldog.** Skiers line up on one side of the field. At a signal from the coach they attempt to cross to the other side of the field without getting tagged by “It”. Anyone tagged also becomes “It”. The game continues until everyone is caught. No poles.
- ❑ **Tattle-Tale Pursuit.** For this game use a loop of the trail which will require 10-15 minutes for the group to ski around (increase the distance as appropriate for the age of the skiers). All skiers except one (the coach or the fastest skier in the group) ski around the loop as quickly as they can. The pursuer waits three or four minutes and then chases the others, tagging each skier they catch. If tagged a skier must turn around and return to the start line. The first skier to escape the pursuer, complete the course and make it back to the start line by skiing the full loop wins the game.
- ❑ **Fish Gobbler.** A square area is marked out as shown with one side designated as “ship” and the other as “shore”. All the fish swim around in the ocean and when “ship” is called, they have to get to the ship, and when “shore” is called they have to get to shore. When “Fish Gobbler” is called, they all link arms within a count of twenty or the “Fish Gobbler” (the coach) will nab them. When “sardines” is called, they all have to cram into a small square in one corner before the count of twenty. This is a good game for young skiers as there is no penalty for being gobbled other than you get caught. No poles. See Figure 4.3.

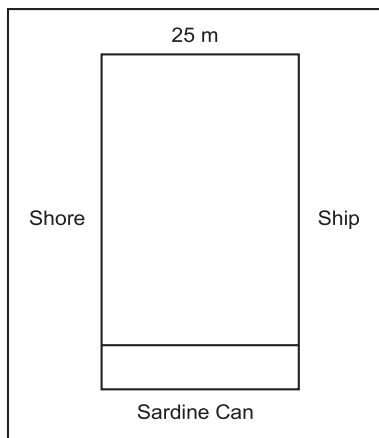


Figure 4.3

- **Mile Game.** For this game you require three or four bicycle tubes (14" to 16" across). Most bike shops will give these away. Tape back the stems on the tubes so they do not protrude outward and cause an injury. Tubes may be painted various colours. Three to four pylons are also required. Space the pylons and tubes on the hill as shown. Skiers Snowplow or Step Turn (depending on the technique the coach has selected) their way around the first pylon and then Snowplow around a turn to pick up a tube, and so on down the hill. This game can be adapted by having only the pylons, changing the grade of the hill, increasing or decreasing the number of pylons and tubes, increasing or decreasing the distance between the pylons/tubes. No poles. See Figure 4.4.

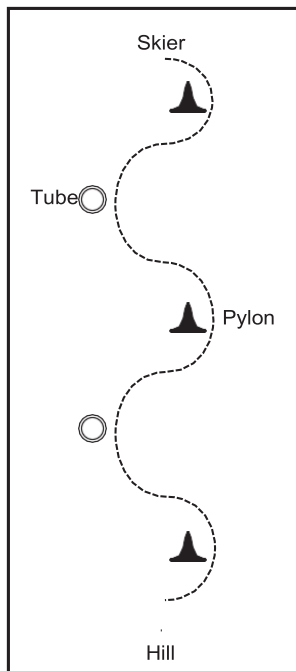


Figure 4.4

- **Team Station Game.** Teams are formed (size is not important). On a two km trail, set up four or five stations (a bean bag toss, a wheelbarrow run, a three legged run, a slalom course, a hat and glove exchange, etc.). Teams can be sent both ways along the trail as long as it is reasonably



flat. The rules are: (1) no team can start an activity until all of the team has arrived at the station; (2) teams cannot start for the next station until all of the team has finished the activity. The winning team is the first team back to the start with all of its members.

- ❑ **Fox and Rabbit Chase.** This game is played within a square. The square should be as big as the skills of the skiers allow. Markers are required to establish the boundaries. One skier is a fox, and one is the “chase” rabbit. The other skiers are also rabbits, but they are hidden in the forest (the forest is made of ski poles set up in an area within the square). If the chase rabbit becomes tired, he/she may at any time tag one of the other rabbits hiding in the trees, and that rabbit will become the chase rabbit. If the fox catches the chase rabbit, the two exchange roles so that the rabbit becomes the fox. If you have enough skiers, you can have two foxes and two chase rabbits. The coach may or may not choose to have the skiers use poles depending on space available to play the game.
- ❑ **Pablo Rabbit.** Working in pairs, the skiers each draw a giant rabbit in the snow using their skis. Then the entire group skis from rabbit to rabbit to decide which pair of skiers will be the Picasso of the future.
- ❑ **Dwarf-Giant Game.** In this game, the skiers switch back and forth between strides, changing from a “dwarf” to a “dragon” by going from a deep crouch to where their body and arms are stretched upward. Once skiers have mastered this imitation, this game can be adapted to a relay.
- ❑ **Double Pole Race.** The group is divided up into two or more teams. The front skier for each team stands behind the “start line”. The skiers on a team stand one behind the other holding the waist of the skier in front. The lead skier double poles, pulling the other skier/skiers to a line that has been determined as the finish line. Variations are: the lead skier pulls one or more depending on terrain; this game is adapted to a relay format, with other skiers waiting at the finish line to do the next leg of the race; or the skiers behind the lead skier snowplow when they are being pulled forward.
- ❑ **Laugh Line.** The skiers form two lines approximately 1.5 metres apart, and turn to face each other. One skier skis between the two lines, from one end to the other. The others try to make the skier laugh as he/she skis down the line. The group can do whatever it wants to make the skier laugh, except touch him/her. If the skier laughs, he/she is out of the game. If the skier manages to complete the trip without laughing, he/she returns to his/her original position. This game can be adapted according to the number of skiers in the group.
- ❑ **Three-Legged Race.** This can be a single start race with all skiers paired, or the pairs can form teams and it can be done as a relay. Each pair of skiers has adjacent legs tied together with a strip of cloth. No poles are used. The skiers ski out to a pylon and back. If it is a relay, they help the next pair get their legs tied. Coordination of strides is the skiers’ goal. The better skier of the pair will often encourage the other to take bigger strides, glide or even use a marathon skate.
- ❑ **Monster Skis Relay.** For this game you need several pairs of monster skis. These consist of six foot long pieces of 1” x 6” board. Pairs of holes are drilled every 16” (four pairs), through which loops of rope are tied for bindings. With four people on each pair, it is a race to the end! This is a very popular game.
- ❑ **Beat the Field.** Two teams are formed, “hitters” and “fielders”. The hitting team lines up in a row facing the fielders. The fielder’s team is scattered. The first skier on the hitting team hits the tennis ball, volleyball, etc., with his/her hand and then proceeds to ski around his/her team. As soon as

one person on the fielder's team has fielded the ball, the rest of the team lines up behind him/her and the ball is passed, from hand to hand, between the legs until it gets to the last person who yells "Stop!" One point is scored for each complete circuit. The hitter goes to the end of the line and the second person hits. When one side is done, "hitters" and "fielders" switch sides. Keep the teams fairly small (six or less). The coach may or may not choose to use poles. See Figure 4.5

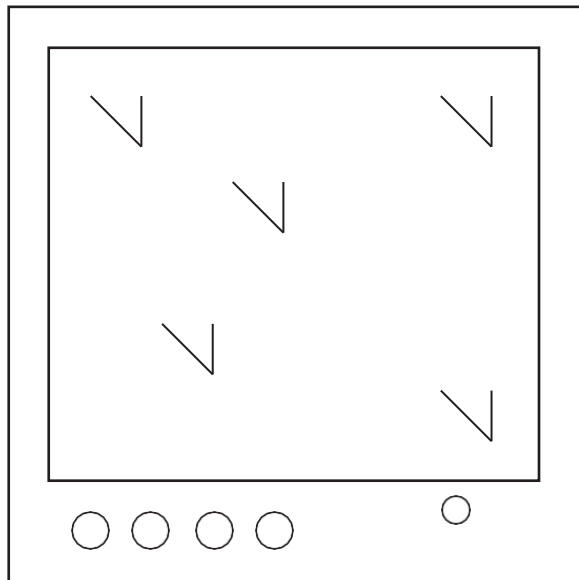


Figure 4.5

- ❑ **Hokey Pokey.** The group stands in a circle and sings “You put your right ski in, you take your right ski out, and shake it all about, you do the Hokey Pokey and you turn yourself around...” to the tune of the Hokey Pokey. Repeat using different parts of the body. Finish the game with all the skiers sliding towards the centre of the circle for one last, rousing round.
- ❑ **Superheroes.** Have the skiers lean forward as if they are going to fly, like Superman or Superwoman. Test how far they are willing to lean from the ankles before they move their feet.
- ❑ **Moving Bridges.** The group is divided up into pairs. One pair of skiers creates a bridge with their arms, which all the other pairs have to duck under. When the second pair of skiers ducks under the bridge, they turn to face each other and create a second bridge. Each pair of skiers builds a bridge at the end of the tunnel when they finish going through it. The group can travel around trees or other areas with their moving bridges. If the skiers are advanced enough to manage it, progress to a gentle slope. No poles.
- ❑ **Musical Poles.** This game is a version of Musical Chairs. The skiers stand about two metres apart in a single line. Some poles are stuck in the snow in a row opposite, about 20-30 metres away. The number of poles should be one less than the number of skiers. At a signal from the coach (the music stops!), all the skiers race to get a pole. The skier who ends up empty handed has the task of setting up the poles for the next round. Remove one additional pole each time.

There are many games that can be used to develop balance, coordination and ski technique skills. Often these games allow the skiers to learn a skill naturally by diverting their attention away from the mechanics of completing the action.

- **Chain Tag.** The skiers play this game within a marked circle. One skier is “It”. When “It” tags another skier they hold hands, and try to tag other skiers. Each skier that is tagged joins the chain by holding hands with the skier at the end of the chain. The game continues until every skier is part of the chain. A variation is to have two “Its” forming chains, and the chain with the most skiers at the end is the winner. No poles.
- **Relays.** A relay can be as simple as lining up in teams and using the technique of the day to ski around a pole and back. The following are examples of more complex relays. These relays can be run with one group just for fun, or with several groups in competition. Unless otherwise indicated, you can use them to practice any ski technique that you wish, although with the “rougher” relays, it is strongly suggested that poles should not be used. The distance that skiers ski for their leg of the relay should be kept relatively short. It is better to do several short relays than one long one.
  - ✓ **Long Eared Memory Relay.** The teams line up one behind the other. The first person skis ahead about ten metres. He/she is given a card with a saying on it to memorize (this can vary in difficulty according to the age group), e.g. “The rain in Spain falls mostly on the plain”. At the signal, the skier skis his/her leg of the relay then returns to the transfer point to which the second skier has moved up and passes the saying on verbally. This continues through the line to the final skier. The winning team is the one which comes closest to repeating the original saying to the coach.
  - ✓ **Snowball Relay.** Skiers ski to the end point, as shown, where they make a snowball and throw it at a target, trying to score as many points as possible. The team with the most points wins.
  - ✓ **Scooter Relay.** This is a good game for emphasizing glide. Skiers simply remove one ski and scoot their lap of the relay. Have the skiers do this with both legs, as balance is often much worse on one leg than the other.
  - ✓ **Number Relay.** Teams of four are formed and each team member is numbered from one to four. For this relay you can have a turn-around pole for each team (or have only one turn around pole for all the teams to use). The coach then calls out a number (or numbers) and the skiers with that number race around their pole and return to their team. The first skiers back earn a point for their team. Keep the distance to the pole short so that the skiers stay active.
  - ✓ **Bell Relay.** Form two teams. Blindfold the first person in each line. The coach stands some distance away and rings a bell. The skiers try to ski around the bell and back to their line blindfolded. A paper bag makes a very effective blindfold for older skiers; younger ones can use a scarf which allows them to “cheat” a little. The rest of the team should shout directions and encouragement to the blind skier on their team.

- ✓ **Soccer Relay.** Each team has a balloon and a turn-around pole. The skier must kick his/ her balloon to the pole, around it and back. The first team finished is the winner. Keep the distance short. Make sure you have many extra balloons.
- ✓ **Newspaper Relay.** Pile an equal number of sheets of newspaper (for each team) at the turn-around point. Skiers in turn ski to their pile, take one sheet of paper and return to the start of the line where they crumple it up and put it in their garbage bag. First team to fill their bag wins.
- ✓ **Hula Hoop Relay.** In turn, skiers ski to a turn-around point where their team has a hula hoop. They must drop it over their heads so it sits on their skis, remove it, and return to their team.
- ✓ **Ball Relay.** Skiers hold a ball in front of them and ski to a turn-around point. They return holding the ball behind their backs and tag the next team member. Keep the distances short and the teams small so that skiers are not inactive for very long periods of time.
- ✓ **Obstacle Course Relay.** For each team, create an identical course. Slalom around poles, ski under a rope, over a rope, and whatever your imagination and the terrain allow.
- ✓ **Who Can?** Each of the following questions can be used for a relay theme:
  - ✓ \_\_\_\_\_ Who can glide the farthest on their skis?
  - ✓ \_\_\_\_\_ Who can take the fewest strides between two points?

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