

## All About Ski Instructors

Ever wondered about the women and men who help you slide, turn, stop, or take you to new heights in mastering the mountain? These teachers are trained and skilled to provide you with the best skiing experiences personalized to your skiing goals. Ski instructors can be found at all resorts across the country and many come from all over the world to work here.

The Professional Ski Instructors of America (PSIA) is a non-profit organization that supports the profession of ski instruction. PSIA was founded in 1961 to standardize a system of teaching people how to ski. It was believed that the organization would unify ski instruction across the country. Today the association is divided into 9 major divisions and has a strong membership of 29,000 skiing teachers.

Ski instructors are not only the resorts' ambassadors but very skilled teachers and athletes in their field. These coaches progress through multiple levels of certification that call for understanding the American Teaching System and learning concepts, but also the ability to demonstrate flawless skiing technique. Additionally, your instructor may be certified in Adaptive, Nordic, Snowboarding, Children's, and recently Free Ride instruction. All certifications are rigorous and include a solid understanding of biomechanics and physics in how they relate to skiing. Some ski instructors are also certified in additional areas like Avalanche Safety or speak multiple languages to accommodate guests from around the world.

Many ski instructors receive training at their own ski resorts in addition to attending regional PSIA events. These clinics are held both on and off the snow to prepare them for the certification testing and general improvement in their teaching technique. Many foreign ski instructors hold certifications from their home country, which are recognized by PSIA. Once every four years specially selected instructors from around the world attend an event called Interski, to discuss the various methods used to instruct and convey their knowledge and enthusiasm of skiing.

When the snow melts and our mountains turn green, many instructors head off to Australia, New Zealand, Argentina, and Chile to keep sliding year round. These teachers hold a passion for snow sports and follow the winter into the southern hemisphere. For the instructors that stay in the U.S., summer work is only a diversion until the season arrives again. But for others they balance ski instruction with a variety of other careers that often include their own small businesses.

Enjoy your mountain experience, while you are receiving top notch techniques from your professional ski instructor!

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