

Classic Exercises

Beginning: No Poles

- ◆ Walk, Run – no glide, not even a little bit
- ◆ Glide – emphasize balance, Toe-Knee-Nose, try to glide on one foot instead of two
 - swing arms naturally, relaxed
- ◆ Static Balancing on one ski – try to stand in a balanced glide position, can also try closing eyes for advanced
- ◆ Run, Run, Glide – Pause briefly in the gliding position (posing for the camera, models on a runway – don't forget the hair flick, etc)
 - alternate the gliding foot
- ◆ 2 second gliding – try to extend the glide by counting for two seconds (a very slight downhill is most helpful)
 - emphasize the weight shift to create push
 - can take off a ski and demonstrate the camber of the ski by sliding your fingers under the ski while its resting on the snow, this shows that you have to push down on the ski
 - push down like you're squishing grapes under your feet
 - can extend the length of time to 3 seconds or 4 seconds, etc.
- ◆ Scootering – take off one ski and 'scooter' along by pushing off the foot and gliding on the ski
 - emphasize weight shift by actually taking the weight off the gliding ski while pushing off the foot (can hop on the push foot before gliding or can just lift ski slightly off the ground before pushing off)
 - stand in the outer track so as not to obliterate the track with the push foot
 - have distance markers (a couple of ski poles will do but rubber duckies would be more fun)
 - can do 3 rounds between the markers, the first time is practice, the second time count the number of pushes up and back, and the third time try to subtract one push in each direction
 - change feet and remind students to go slowly for the practice round since the gliding foot is now the push foot and the push foot is now the gliding foot
 - can have a competition to see who can glide the furthest
 - could also try scootering with both skis on but you would need some good snow conditions
- ◆ Imagine having a flashlight in your bellybutton and shine it over each ski tip
- ◆ Move your nose over each ski – if you have a drippy nose then drip on the ski
- ◆ Race for your ski – take off one ski, put all the skis in a pile at one end of an area and have a race to the pile of skis, get a ski on and race back to the finish line
- ◆ Dance in place – static exercise where you keep your feet together, bend your knees (in time with some upbeat tune or other and swing your arms (Tom Jones is a possibility for this one – “It's not unusual to be loved by you....”) and don't add in too much hip swing because that will lead to falling over

Advancing Technique – No Poles (Still)

- ◆ Place some ½ tennis balls in the track and students have to balance and glide on one ski without stepping on any balls (if you stand in a balanced glide position and the tip of the unweighted ski will bounce over the balls in the track without knocking them out of the way

- ◆ Throw your knee through like you were going to knee a soccer ball or close the lower cabinet door
- ◆ Use a bicycle inner tube around the hip bones to tow someone on a flat section – it helps get the hips forward
- ◆ Static demo with a partner – stand in front of a partner, place hands on top of partners hands, and lean forward slightly from the ankle to get the idea of almost falling forward (would without the partner, pole or forward motion)
- ◆ Hold poles behind butt cheeks while skiing like a stickman – helps to bring hips ahead of ankles

Adding in Poles

- ◆ Begin focusing on arm swing and movement – straight forward and straight back, hands not higher than the shoulder, and relaxed swing from the shoulder as opposed to the elbow
- ◆ Imagine two plates of glass on either side of the tracks and underneath the armpits. As you ski along, clean the glass on the outside.
- ◆ Imagine ropes on either side of the trail and pull yourself along
- ◆ Hold poles about mid shaft in a nice relaxed grip, try to hold poles parallel to the ground like you were trying to poke someone ahead of you in the butt with the grips (don't actually do this)
- ◆ Put poles on but don't hold onto them – ski while the poles are dangling by the straps, be sure to have slightly shorter arm swing so as not to stab yourself in the foot
- ◆ Hold the pole between the thumb and index finger ONLY (like you were having tea with the Queen) to give the poles some forward and back guidance, they will still drag on the ground
- ◆ Use the other finger tips to hold the pole and keep from dragging on the ground
- ◆ Stand with both feet together in the tracks and just pole one arm at a time to get the idea of how much forward momentum can be given by the poles

Zen and the Art of Uphill Diagonal Stride

- ◆ The foot climbs up the hill ahead of the knee and the hips stay parallel to the ground as you climb the hill
- ◆ Find a slight hill and try to go up without poles
- ◆ Take skis off and imagine yourself rock hopping in a stream – that idea of the foot reaching out ahead of the body for the next stone and nice relaxed knees to absorb all the impact
- ◆ Emphasize weight transfer and tempo increase

Double Poling

- ◆ 'Dipping Bird' exercise – lock arms in a flexed (90 degree) position and then flex forward with the upper body
- ◆ Relax arms forward and try the double poling technique
- ◆ To get arm extension behind – stand facing a slight uphill, hold hands at hips with poles planted, push with the poles back of the hips and recover only to the hips (basically just pushing behind your butt)

One Step Double Poling

- ◆ 'Marionette' exercise – shadow poling
 - works on the weight shift and the push phase

½ Snowplow

- ◆ Try some star turns so students can get the idea of stepping the tails around
- ◆ Ski with only one ski the tracks and slide the other ski into the snowplow position
- ◆ Static exercise – stepping the tail out into the snowplow position
- ◆ Try some speed and step the tail out into the snowplow position – point hands over the snowplow knee to put weight onto the snowplow side

Changing Lanes

Transitions