

A to Z Cross Country Skill Refresher Notes

STRIDE AND GLIDE

Body Position

- Lower your center of gravity slightly. Keep your ankles and knees slightly bent.
- Do not stand up straight.
- Do not lock any joints.
- Keep your head up, looking ahead 100 feet.

Use of Your Poles

- Do not overwork your arms when poling.
- Snap your arms up, keeping your elbows bent.
- Don't extend arms or raise them too high; raise them up to normal elbow height.
- Do not grip your hands around the shafts of poles. Use your wrist straps. Gripping your poles will kill your hands.
- Drop the tips of your poles behind the heels of your boots – not too far back or forward.
- Try to use your abdominal muscles (body core) to push, not your upper arms.

The Glide

- Transfer weight from side to side to your gliding ski. You will glide much farther. Do not keep weight centered between your skis.
- Feel your heel as you step off.
- Throw your hips into the glide, not just your leg.
 - *Try kick and glide without your poles to get the hang of weight transfer, when to step off, the length of glide, etc.*
 - *Practice gliding on one ski (putting all your weight on it). See how far you can glide raising the other ski.*

DOWNHILL

Body Position

- Flexibility is key: keep ankles and knees bent. Lower your center of gravity. Keep your torso forward of your feet and keep your head up. Don't bend forward at the waist.
- Do not lock any joints or you will ski more rigidly and less able to maintain your balance if your legs are locked.
- Place one ski a little ahead of the other to promote flexibility. If your legs are side-by-side you will be more inclined to lock your joints.

Steering

- Position your hands and poles down and forward.
- Move hands (and torso) to right or left to steer, transferring your weight to the "inside" ski for more steering action, not your downhill, "outside" ski as you may have been taught for downhill (Alpine) skiing.
- Drop your left or right shoulder into the turn.

The Wedge

- Plow with one or both feet, depending on steepness of the hill and desired speed.
- Sit down for more braking action.
- Edge your skis (push inside edges down into the snow).

Step Turns

- Take many fast, little steps left or right to work your way through a turn

UPHILL

- Do as much work as possible with your skis and feet.
- Keep your head up (look over the top of the hill).
- Throw your weight into the hill – lean - especially when herring-boning. Edge your skis.
- Place poles farther behind you.
 - *Try going up hills without using your poles.*

DOUBLE-POLING

- Snap arms up together – to normal height, not higher.
- Bend at your waist to push with your abdomen.
- Try to rise up on your feet slightly (lift) to increase the length of your glide.

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