



will need your own gear: Snowboard set up, boots, helmet, life jacket, wet suit and gloves (depending on time of summer and weather).

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## SKI SAFETY AND THE SAVVY INSTRUCTOR

*Stan Gale, PSIA Instructor*

**S**kier safety; we've all heard that phrase a million times, and most of us probably know what it means. As a part-time professional ski patroller who last season switched over to being part-time PSIA instructor, I'd like to offer some observations and suggestions for the Savvy Ski or Snowboard Instructor.

The Savvy Instructor knows that it is part of their responsibility as a teacher and a mentor to create safe skiers and snowboarders to the best of their ability. Because many of our students are entry level, we have a unique opportunity to educate our students/guests right from the beginning!

The Savvy Instructor incorporates at least one aspect of the Skier Responsibility Code on every run with their students, no matter what the student's level is. With children games are natural, and with adults there is never a shortage of light-hearted observations while observing other skier's actions. As we admire the stunning mountain vistas with our guests, the simple act of consciously observing others on the slopes can be a real eye-opener.

And don't forget to point out the correct techniques and courtesies that we see experienced skiers and snowboarders doing much of the time seemingly by second nature. Looking uphill before they start or giving a wide berth to those who are obviously inexperienced are habits we can imprint on our students from their very first ski descent.

The Savvy Instructor sets an example for their students by stopping at appropriate places on the ski trail. Reasonable locations for stopping and regrouping may be away from merging trails, on the sides (not usually in the middle), and never below a place where they are even partially obscured from above. Stopping with a few students immediately downhill of a large "slow" banner offers protection and security when the slopes are crowded, especially later in the day.

The Savvy Instructor always shows their students by example how to use the "rules of the road" Skier Responsibility Code. This might be as simple as yielding sooner rather than later to others who are in front of or downhill of them. When your students see others out of their peripheral vision who might be headed into their path, encouraging your guests to slow down or come to a complete stop and letting the other skiers pass by them is a courteous and safe alternative to continuing. The Savvy Instructor can always use a few minutes of "break time" in innumerable ways!

The Savvy Instructor realizes that there are times that it may be appropriate to ski defensively in order to avoid a potential collision. As experienced skiers, we realize that it's smarter to yield the right of way while skiing in control than to hope that the other person will gain control and see you before it's too late. Our students need to know that just because they see another skier or snowboarder, it doesn't always mean that they are being seen!

Over the crowded holiday season many of our guests who are Level 1-4 skiers are from lower elevations. They may not be particularly in shape for skiing, and no matter how good their instructor is, they will probably have struggled a certain amount throughout the day. Often times by 2:30 in the afternoon they are naturally quite tired. It is within our realm to recognize and appreciate that if our guests are not tired right then, they may be very shortly or halfway down!

Rather than ski to the bottom at this time, the Savvy Instructor may want to think about a quitting the slopes, having a hot drink if they're near a lodge, and enjoying a chairlift or gondola ride to the base area together. This is a great opportunity to review the day and to plan for tomorrow. It has been my experience that, rather than try to negotiate the often times slick and crowded egress runs off of the mountain, this is often a better choice for all.

Above all our guests want to feel safe, have a great time, and return home with wonderful memories. The Savvy Instructor has the opportunity to make this all happen by imbedding The Skier Responsibility Code and slope safety into their lessons. The reward for all can be a great safe day on the slopes and return customers to the sport we love.

# INSTRUCTOR TO INSTRUCTOR

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**PSIA-ROCKY MOUNTAIN-AASI**  
Rocky Mountain Ski Instructors

Educational Foundation

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## NEW FEATURES and NEW LOOK for psia-rm.org

By Jeremy Brooks

We're proud to launch an all-new website for the Rocky Mountain Division. This new site features enhanced event registration, online membership accounts, online dues pay, online new member registration, online newsletter articles, and a forum for member discussion.

Members will be able to take advantage of live clinic availability information and event registration, both just a click away. Paying dues has never been easier than with your new online membership account. We plan to make newsletter articles more accessible by creating a database of all current and past articles. Keep an eye out for web-exclusive content in the future. We're hoping our new member discussion forum will create a vibrant community for sharing ideas among instructors all across the Rocky Mountain Division.

We're still working to add additional features to psia-rm.org over the next few months, and we would appreciate any feedback to assist in future improvement.

PSIA Rocky Mountain Division

Welcome to the Rocky Mountain Division

Welcome to the home page of the Rocky Mountain Division of the Professional Ski Instructors of America (PSIA), the American Association of Snowboard Instructors (AASI) and the Rocky Mountain Ski Instructors Educational Foundation.

PSIA-Rocky Mountain-AASI Launches New Website

We're proud to launch an all-new website for the Rocky Mountain Division. This new site features enhanced event registration, online membership account, online dues pay, online new member registration, online newsletter articles, and a forum for member discussion.

Members will be able to take advantage of live clinic availability information and event registration just a click away. Paying dues has never been easier than with your online membership account. We plan to make newsletter articles more accessible by creating a database of all current and past articles. Keep an eye out for more.

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PSIA Rocky Mountain Division  
PO Box 176143 Steamboat Springs CO 80477  
970-879-8335 Fax: 970-879-6750