

Recreational Course Guidelines

Prepared by the AAA Education Committee

Table 1: Level 1 Avalanche Training

Program	Audience	Learning Outcomes	Core Curriculum Content	Pre-requisites	Format	Performance measures	Instructor Qualifications & Student:Instructor ratio
Level 1 Avalanche Training	*Current and aspiring backcountry travelers	<p>-Access local avalanche bulletin and learn to understand & apply.</p> <p>-Describe where and why avalanches occur. Key components for formation.</p> <p>-Human Factors. Identify & apply simple decision tools to prepare for traveling in avalanche terrain.</p> <p>-Apply risk management tools: safety equipment, trailhead checks, and communication.</p> <p>-Learn procedures for Basic Companion Rescue: Skills Practical</p> <p>-Make key observations for snowpack and weather.</p> <p>-Practice snowpack tests appropriate for the current avalanche problems.</p> <p>-Identify avalanche terrain in the field.</p> <p>-Choose terrain appropriate for the current avalanche forecast & safe travel. Link participant objectives, to terrain and avoiding Avalanche Problem.</p>	<p>Pre-Course</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider pre-course materials and study for student. <p>Avalanche Basics & Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avalanche types; Unstable snowpack conditions. Size classification of avalanches. Incident statistics. Terms common to: avalanches, terrain & snow. Avalanche motion: glide, turbulence, speed- dry vs. wet Identify Avalanche Problems (conditions, formation, characteristics). <p>Terrain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical slope angles. Terrain features, shape, size. Role of slope aspect and elevation to sun and wind. Identify avalanche start zones, tracks, and run-outs Critical terrain: traps, convexities, triggering. <p>Snowpack and Weather</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mountain snowpack development: storms, intervals. Weather events leading to formation of strong and weak layers. Basic snowpack development/change. Snow Climates; by region and within range-mountain location. <p>Information Gathering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access and understand information from the Avalanche Advisory. North American Avalanche Danger Scale. Use of terrain/danger rose. <p>Planning, Communication & Decision-making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Terrain, Snowpack, Weather discussion for trip planning Use information to plan & prepare for field. Use of Maps/technology. Human Factors. Managing Risk. Use of decision tools, check lists, contingencies, emergency plans. Communication. Application of Plan to Field. Tour group decision making prior to travel; safe travel for conditions. Relevant observations & objectives. End of day review. Observations and reflections with group. <p>Making Relevant Observations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field observations: Critical Red Flag Obs.; Recognizing & prioritizing Pairing appropriate observations with current avalanche problems and conditions Use of avalanche & snow pit tools: inclinometer, compass, probe, saw, shovel, and thermometer. Snowpack tests: snow pits: ID layers (hand hardness), basic grain types (strong & weak layers). Field identifying the Avalanche Problem. Informal snowpack tests while traveling. 	<p>-No formal Pre requisites</p> <p>-Strongly Recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Winter Travel and First Aid Skills Avalanche Awareness or Similar Course provider's recommended reading. Pre-course work. <p>-Participants should have some experience in backcountry travel as required by Course Provider.</p>	24 hours Minimum: 60% field	<p>Attendance & participation</p> <p>Course Close:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations for further skill development. Limits of training Value of Mentors Preparation for Level 2 Avalanche Training 	<p>-Primary or lead instructor: AAA Pro Member</p> <p>-Assistants: AAA Member Affiliates</p> <p>-Continuing education within previous 4 years</p> <p>-Instructors must be excellent role models for the skills they teach.</p> <p>-Maximum 6:1</p>

			<p>Terrain and Travel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trailhead Check (beacons/equipment)• Observant Travel/ snow, weather, terrain.• Route selection. Managing group in terrain: travel protocols & group communication.• Terrain identification. Recognize slope scale features. ID Avalanche terrain. Safe terrain choices. <p>Basic Avalanche Companion Rescue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Beacon use, probing, shoveling.• Simple one and two person burial techniques.• Incident Response-Leadership, safety, checklists. Developing a plan based upon terrain, avalanche size, and resources.• Response as an avalanche victim; As a rescuer.• Special Problems/ Common mistakes.• Role of first aid and emergency response in real avalanche rescues.				
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