



Avalanche Level 1 Course Syllabus

Course Summary

Over the course of three days, participants will be exposed to techniques and skills required to become a competent backcountry partner. This will include a combination of lectures and field sessions, where students will get hands-on experience in learning about the snowpack layering, terrain management, weather elements, decision making, and rescue skills. 60% of this course will be spent in the field and 40% in the classroom.

Friday:

Morning

- Meet at 8:30am Location TBD
- Intro to course topics and weekend itinerary
- Avalanche concepts, types, anatomy and key terms (sets the foundation for the course)
- Avalanche problems, review and interpret the current avalanche bulletin and local season summary
- Gear check & pack up and head into field or to hut

Afternoon

- Beacon wear/care, functionality and use exercises
- Rescue Demo & Clinic- companion rescue (small scale)
- Rescue Scenario (large scale)
- Mountain weather and snow climates

Saturday:

Morning

- Review of previous day topics
- Slab avalanches & weak layer formation
- Field observations
- Tour – Snowpack observations, tests and terrain identification (Lunch in field)

Afternoon

- Tour – Snowpack observations, tests and terrain identification/management in relation to the avalanche problems
- Debrief tour and share observations –how do they relate to avalanche bulletin – interpret
- Snow profile documentation

Sunday:

Morning

- Review of previous day topics
- Human factors & decision making- rational vs. emotional and utilizing tools
- Tour – Tour plan, snowpack observations, terrain management and decision making based on avalanche problems and hazard (lunch in field)

Afternoon

- Tour – Finish obs/tour
- Debrief tour
- Debrief course and back to town, no later than 4:00 pm

Gear Lists

[Town-Based Gear List](#)

[Hut-Based Gear List](#)

Suggested Reading

Staying Alive in Avalanche Terrain (2nd Edition), Bruce Tremper
Snow Sense, Doug Fesler, Jill Fredston (2nd Edition)

Online Tutorials

Avalanche Awareness from USFS - <https://avalanche.org/avalanche-tutorial/>

Avalanche Canada Training Tutorial - <https://www.avalanche.ca/training#tutorial>

Reference for Terms

<https://avalanche.org/avalanche-encyclopedia/>

**This course is based on guidelines established by the [AAA](#) and is 24 hours in length*

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