



## Level 2 Avalanche Course Syllabus

### Location

The Course will be held in Cooke City, MT

### Course Summary

Over the course of four days, participants will be exposed to techniques and skills to become an advanced backcountry traveler and partner. The course will include a combination of lectures and field sessions where students will further their knowledge; including comprehensive evaluation of snowpack layering, terrain management, decision making, reading and understanding avalanche and weather forecasts, along with a full 8 hours of advanced companion rescue training which completes the AAA Avalanche Rescue prerequisites.

### Thursday

- Meet at Beartooth Powder Guides Office at 830AM
- Intro to course topics and course itinerary
- Avalanche concepts, types, key terms
- Review the different types of avalanche problems
- Review and interpret the current avalanche bulletin and local season to date snowpack summary and tracking the problems.
- Introduce various online resources
- Intro to documenting snowpack observations
- Snow Metamorphism-Faceting, surface conditions, wet snow
- Slab Mechanics and Spatial Variability
- Review BPG Communication checklist
- Gear check
- Companion rescue

### Friday:

- Avalanche Rescue Overview
- Survival rates, escape and survival techniques
- Avalanche gear and technique

- Review of companion rescue process
- Basic victim/patient care
- Recognizing needs and identifying additional resources
- Beacon, probe and shovel technique demo
- Beacon practice
- Companion rescue scenarios
- Full Profile discussion
- Pre trip planning
- Route Planning/Mapping exercise
- Travel to suitable snow pit location and demo
- Full Snowpit Profile practice
- Practice safe uphill and downhill travel protocol
- Human factor introduction/Case Study

### **Saturday:**

- Mountain weather and snow climate discussion
- Terrain and its relationship to avalanches
- Terrain management and trip planning
- Avalanche forecast exercise
- Comprehensive trip plan for the days tour
- **Full Day Ski Tour**- perform comprehensive snow pit observations to verify validity and safety of proposed ski objective
- Practice safe uphill and downhill travel protocol
- Return to office & debrief the days tour, snow pit documentation and analyze results of trip planning/days events
- Review accident case study

### **Sunday:**

- Review of avalanche problems
- Review of human factor and decision making
- Review of snowpack documentation and observations
- Create avalanche forecast
- Comprehensive trip plan for todays tour
- Ski tour with Full Snowpit Profile Exam
- Practice safe uphill and downhill travel protocol
- Companion rescue exercises for remainder of day
- Debrief course/remaining student questions answered
- Return back to town no later than 4pm

### **Gear Lists**

[Hut-Based Gear List](#)

[Town-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/>

Canadian Avalanche Center Awareness - <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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