

# Teaching Different Age Groups

The following pages show the physical and mental challenges for each age group, as well as the teaching methods designed to handle each challenge.

# Ages 0-5 Physical Development

Challenge	Teaching Methods
Tires easily/low stamina, but recover quickly.	Preserve their energy for skiing –assist them with climbing, carrying skis, standing up, etc. Teach in short sequences.
Top heavy, especially with a helmet	Use a wide track stance or wedge.
Large muscle groups are more developed than small muscle group; still learning to master basic body movements off skis.	

# Ages 0-5 Cognitive Development

Challenge	Teaching Methods
Egocentric – unable to perceive situations as others would.	Work one-on-one as much as possible, do not encourage competition amongst students.
May be quite dependent on parents.	Use a warm cheerful and gentle approach. Create bond with instructor.
Short attention span.	Gauge attention, provide quick change of pace and activities. One task at a time.
They can be excited to use words, yet may not always be able to express their feelings. Intuitive, little understanding of cause and effect.	Use imagination and games.
Learn by observation and “copy cat”, but cannot do mirror image interpretations of movements.	Show and help them do, play copy cat. Do not teach by talking and telling! Stand beside student for demos , not in front.

# Ages 6-8 Physical Development

Challenge	Teaching Methods
Moving towards adult proportions, with the centre of mass a little lower than pre-schoolers.	Increase challenge and precision of tasks.
Improving in strength and endurance.	Use longer sequences, but monitor energy levels for safety. Rest periods may still be necessary.
Gaining coordination, and generally able to perform simultaneous movements (both legs into a wedge at the same time rather than sequential).	Increase complexity of tasks.
They can begin to unlock their stance on easier terrain.	Focus on mobility of all the joints, especially the ankles.

# Ages 6-8 Cognitive Development

Challenge	Teaching Methods
Understand how to be in a group, and can typically work well in pairs. They still attach to adults quickly.	Will bond well with instructor and others in the group.
They understand rules and like to win, but hate to lose.	A cooperative group approach with no “losing” is recommended.
Visual learning is still important.	Provide demos so they can watch and do.
Some understanding of cause and effect; are capable of some deductive reasoning.	Combine concrete examples with some trial and error experimentation.
A sense of independence and daring may be emerging. They are accident prone as their skills are improving, but still lack experience and judgement.	Controlled environments to keep it safe. Develop awareness of risks.

# Ages 9-12 Physical Development

Challenge	Teaching Methods
Growth spurts can create awkward periods.	Consider individual coordination and strength when establishing tasks.
Refined motor skills, particularly when they are comfortable with terrain and speed.	Set precise objectives.
Good strength and endurance.	Longer sequences and varied mileage can be used.

# Ages 9-12 Cognitive Development

Challenge	Teaching Methods
Energy is unlimited.	Set clear expectations and boundaries for safety and learning. Teach to their 'watch and do' learning style.
A strong sense of curiosity and ready for many challenges.	Experimentation (within the bounds of safety). Encourage to try things for themselves. Act as a mentor to help them learn when they need direction.
'Group' and 'Team' have real meaning.	Pairs and teams – working as a group/team – taking turns choosing, leading.
Capable of deductive reasoning.	Involve them in some of the decision-making and problem solving. Impose consequences, and reinforce good decisions.

# Ages 13-18 Physical Development

Challenge	Teaching Methods
Generally capable of refined motor skills – can execute small and more precise movements.	Precise definition of tasks. Increase challenge and complexity.
Most teens are still growing, sometimes in rapid spurts, can mean some temporary periods of clumsiness as they adjust.	Adjust tasks to individual coordination.
Approaching adult strength and endurance.	Can largely be approached as adults in terms of skiing goals.



# Ages 13-18 Cognitive Development

Challenge	Teaching Methods
Experienced in learning situations.	Emphasize strengths, accept mistakes and failures matter-of-factly. Ask their feedback in how they learn best.
Capable of critical thinking and understanding progressions.	Teach using “whole-part-whole” approach. Precise feedback as much as possible. Can use questioning.
Want to have input in the program and be respected.	Be respectful and inclusive – encourage input, give them responsibilities when possible.
Social aspect is important.	Let them be with their friends whenever possible. Encourage team work.