



Staying Slope Ready

Contributed by Gene Fulkerson

Training

Either use the machines in the gym or do sit-ups and press-ups at home. For boarders who take a lot of hits strong shoulders are important. Here are some simple exercises to do at home.

Stretching

Increased flexibility helps prevent injuries allowing your body to cope more easily with the strange twists which happen from time to time on skis. It also helps to prevent soreness and stiffness during and after skiing. Calf stretching is very important, particularly for beginners. Hamstrings stretches and quad stretches are also vital.

A little stretch every time you do some exercise will increase your flexibility, and you will be glad of it if you have a spectacular wipeout.

Ski technique needs to be learnt but you'll improve much quicker if you have good balance and coordination.

These assets can also help better skiers stay on their feet and recover from a potential wipeout at speed.

Spending a full day on the slopes can be tiring even for the fittest individual. Can't imagine how bad someone would feel if they weren't in shape.

To ensure total strength and fitness in your legs, a combination of **strength & endurance training** and **cardio exercises** is recommended.

The strength training should cover all the major muscles of the lower body, hamstrings (back of thighs), quads (front of thighs), glutes (butt muscles) and calves.

And for obvious reasons, any exercise that challenges your balance would be beneficial not only for strength but for keeping you on your feet on the slope!

Wall Squats

Start by standing 12"- 18" from a wall with feet shoulder-width apart, then lean back fully on to the wall, now slowly move your butt towards the floor until your knees are at right angles.

If your feet are closer to the wall than your knees, slowly move them so they are in-line. Maintain this position as long as you can. Time yourself, then add an extra 10 seconds each time you do it.



Lunges

Start with your feet together then take a large step forward with one leg and bend down so the front leg forms a right angle and the back knee almost touches the floor. Keep your back straight the whole time.

Then go back up and switch legs. Lunges can be done for 20 repetitions followed by a rest. Repeat four times.

Core strength- stomach, back and sides- is also a key area, especially for beginners or snowboarders who fall over a lot and use this muscle group to get back up.

Cardiovascular

Any way you can improve your cardiovascular system will help to improve your skiing stamina.

- Going for a fast walk will give you a fair cardiovascular work out.
- Walk upstairs instead of catching elevators. Walk up escalators instead of standing still.
- Try whenever possible to get yourself a little out of breath.
- Little and often is better than a long run once a week.
- Cycling, running, rowing three times a week will provide a solid base.
- Hitting the treadmill pays huge benefits on the slopes. ■

