

## Inside Stevens

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### Basic Principles of Slope Safety: Your Responsibility Code

The day we are born to the day we die we are given tips on how to have a safe lifestyle. Whether it is “*don’t run with scissors*” or “*wear your seatbelt*” the advice is constantly coming at us. Skiing and Snowboarding is no different. You don’t have to look far, at Stevens Pass, till you start seeing advice on how to act, just check out your trail map or our website <http://www.stevenspass.com/Stevens/ski-board/safety.aspx>, and the advice starts coming. The basic principles are summed up in your responsibility code. The Code is made up of 7 topics;

1. Stay in control.
2. People ahead of you have the right of way.
3. Stop in a safe place for you and others.
4. When starting downhill or merging, look uphill and yield.
5. Use devices to help prevent runaway equipment.
6. Observe signs and warnings, and keep off closed runs.
7. Know how to use the lifts safely.

Experienced riders and skiers might find these to be common sense, but to better help our new riders and skiers I am going to elaborate a little on each of these topics.

Stay in control. Sounds simple, but this is probably the most common cause of all ski/snowboard accidents. Besides who is to say if you are in control or not? Well you are. The question you should ask yourself is simple. Can I stop and avoid all objects at all times? This includes the person who suddenly turned in to your path unknowing that you were right behind him/her. You need to have the proper speed and space to avoid such occurrences.

People ahead of you have the right of way, very self explanatory. If you are skiing/riding and anyone darts out in front of you, you need to be able to avoid them and any other objects around. Remember if you are involved in a collision it is your responsibility to exchange contact information with the other skier/rider involved in the collision.

Stop in a safe place for you and others. Be aware of your surroundings, and don’t stop below steep pitches or after blind corners. If you can’t see the people coming at you, then they can’t see you.

When starting downhill or merging, look uphill and yield. If you find yourself in a situation where you have to merge into the flow of traffic, be aware of your speed and space, have the ability to look uphill or over your shoulder and make sure you are not cutting people off.

Use devices to help prevent runaway equipment. A run away ski or snowboard can become a missile looking for a target and not only cause you to lose your ski or board but also hurt a friend or fellow

guest. This is also a requirement to load a lift. Ski brakes or runaway straps are the type of devices lift operators and patrollers are looking for.

Observe signs and warnings, and keep off closed runs. Observing signs may be the best way to gather information about how you should act at Stevens Pass. Slow signs dictate our slow areas and should always be respected. Disregarding closed signs and skiing/riding in closed areas will result in loss of skiing/riding privileges.

Know how to use the lifts safely. If new to skiing/riding the chairlift can be an exciting and joyful experience, many veteran skiers/riders find this a peaceful time to gather their thoughts and prepare for their next run. It is however very important that you educate yourself on how to load and unload lifts safely. If unsure you can always ask one of our ticket validators or lift operators for assistance.

Abiding by these seven rules will only enhance your experience at Stevens Pass. If you are new to Stevens Pass be sure to introduce yourself to any mountain host and they will assist you with any questions. Taking one of our first-class Ski/Boarding lessons is another great way to enhance your knowledge and experience at Stevens Pass.

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