



Get Fit for Skiing

Why do you need to prepare to go skiing?

Skiing is a very dynamic sport that places huge demands on the body. Skiing in poor physical condition will not only reduce your enjoyment of the slopes but increase your risk of injury. Most injuries occur in the afternoons early on in the week primarily due to poor conditioning. Much of this pain and discomfort can be avoided by proper preparation.

What type of exercise should you do?

Aerobic Training

For cardiovascular work, running, cycling and swimming are very beneficial. Cycling is an excellent method of getting your stamina levels up and also offers many other benefits required when skiing. Specifically it improves your core and works the major muscles in the legs, which you do when you ski. Cycling off road will also develop your timing of flexion and extension movements, which helps you anticipate bumps and terrain, especially at speed. You will need to do a minimum of 20 minutes CV work at each session, with 3-4 sessions per week. This should rise to 45 minutes to one hour per session as training progresses.

Muscular Strength & Endurance

Resistance training should make use of weights or medicine balls and be total body training covering all of the major muscle groups working in a variety of planes of movement, including rotational work.

There are also some excellent exercises that can be done at home and only require body weight. Single leg balancing and single-leg squats are ideal strengthening exercises for the leg muscles and for knee stabilization. Partial squat holds is another demanding exercise which you can increase the intensity by introducing one-leg hops on the spot. Be careful and progress this one gradually.

For the upper body press ups are still one of the best all round strengthening exercises.

Resistance work should be done 2 to 3 times a week starting off with 1-2 sets of 10-12 reps building up to 4-5 sets of 15-20 reps in order to build endurance levels which will be required on the slopes.

Balance, Co-ordination and Core Stability

This can be combined with the strength and endurance work by performing the exercises on equipment such as BOSU's stability discs and Swiss Balls. By training on an unstable surface you will mimic the terrain and the body will acclimatise to moving in different directions. Core stability will also be improved.

Flexibility

Stretching is vital both before and after skiing. Good flexibility in the Soleus (lower calf) is important as the positioning of the leg in a ski boot requires this muscle to be in a constant stretched position. The outer hip should also be thoroughly stretched as a great deal of stress is placed here with regard to shock absorption both vertically and laterally. Don't forget that all round flexibility will also help prevent soreness after a day on the slopes.

Further Information www.netfit.co.uk/training/sportspecific/skiing-holiday-fitness.htm

