



# SNOWDAYS

OFFICIAL

## COACHES TEACHING MANUAL

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*By working through challenges on the mountain, students gain self-confidence, strengthen friendships, and also have an opportunity to become more aware of their natural surroundings. The organizers of Snowdays have all reaped vast benefits from snow sports, learning to respect and care for the mountain environment, understanding the benefits of healthy lifestyle choices, and appreciating the joy that snow sports can bring. It is our hope to pass on this knowledge, excitement, and passion to the students.”*

## INTRODUCTION

Snowdays Foundation is all about having fun, being safe, and enjoying one another as we enjoy nature on a stick. While there are many ways to teach, we have found success in the methods taught by the American Association of Snowboard Instructors (AASI\*). Much of the following information is derived from their publications.

AASI uses a wine goblet as an illustration of the skills, ability, maneuvers, and style of riding a snowboarder goes through during their life. The kids we teach are typically at the base of the model; new never-been-to-the-hill riders. Our goal is to get them to that basic turn and unlock the rest of the mountain. Where they go from there is up to them.

We realize this is a lot of information to ingest. While we would like you to read it all, we realize you only have so much time. Please ensure you are familiar with the sections from the table of contents that are in *bold italics* or headers that feature an \* at the beginning. Enjoy and feel free to ask any of the coaches for their personal tips, tricks, and stories.

## THE ENDURING LEGACY & RELEVANCE OF THE Y MODEL

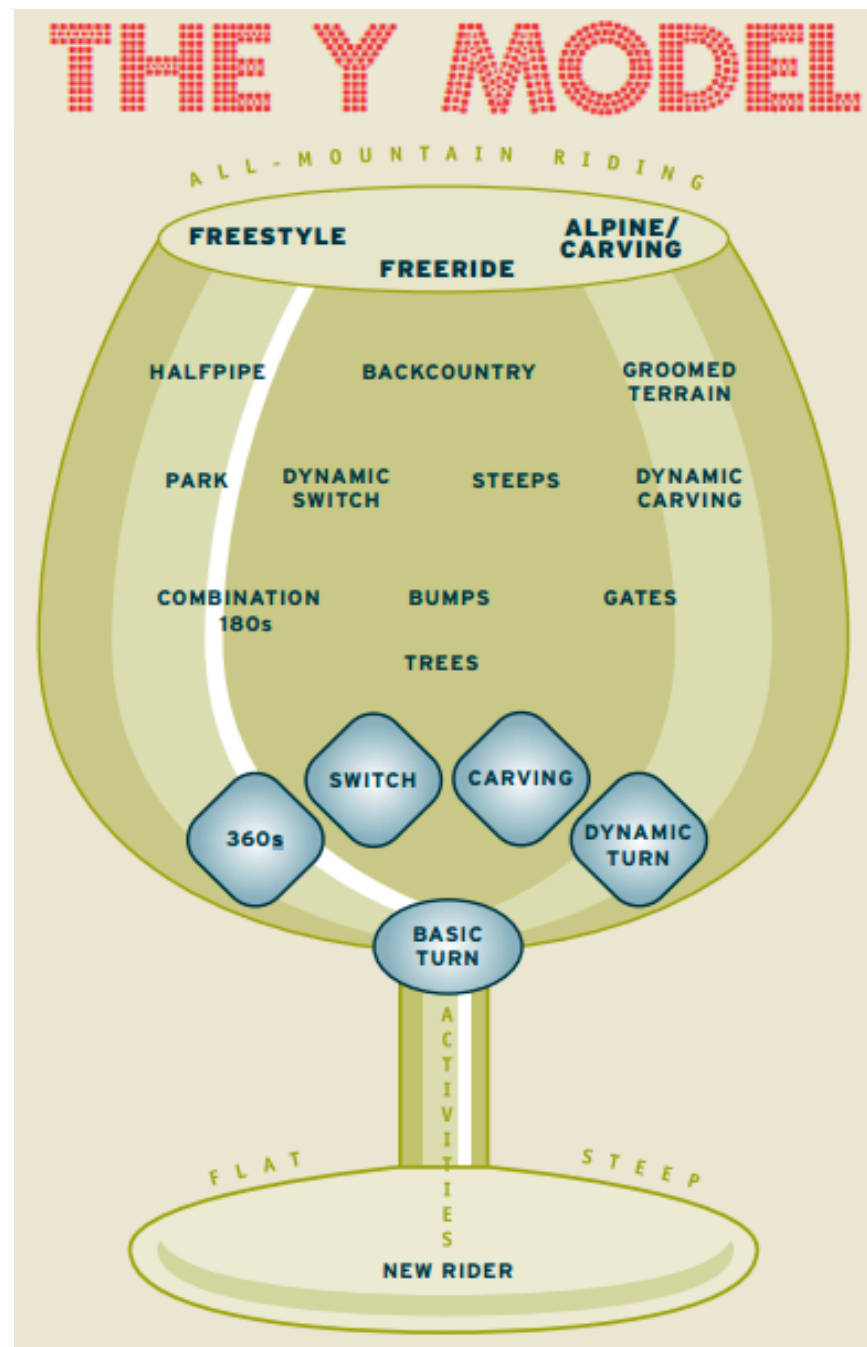
From PSIA-AASI's Magazine "32 Degrees", Winter 2013

*The Riding Model, or Y Model as it's sometimes called, remains one of AASI's earliest and most lasting contributions to snowboard instruction. Simple, yet effective, it identified a basic skill set that would benefit all new riders, whether they eventually wanted to ride the halfpipe, carve the groomed, or go freeriding.*

*"The idea was that there are some steps until you learn to turn, but once you can make that turn the world is open to you," PSIA-AASI Chairman Eric Sheckleton.*

*As stated in AASI's Snowboard Instructor's Guide, "To better understand the mechanics of what happens while riding, we can look at two different aspects of any rider: movement concepts (or what the rider is doing) and performance concepts (or what the board is doing as a result of the rider's actions and/ or terrain). Snowboard teachers need to be well versed in both movements and performance. Each action has a reaction in the board. Understanding how the two are integrated is the key to snowboard teaching."*

*\*AASI is the snowboard sector of the organization Professional Ski Instructors of America (PSIA). PSIA was around before AASI, but is now known as PSIA-AASI. More information can be found at their website: [thesnowpros.org](http://thesnowpros.org).*



## \*THE TEACHING MODEL:

The model we use to teach is meant to address the three primary learning styles; auditory, visual, and kinesthetic. The three could also be labeled as “Hearers”, “Seers”, and “Feelers”. It is important to understand each of the four parts of the model and how they are interrelated.

Teaching Model	Addresses	Learning Styles(V.A.K.)
Explain		Auditory
Demonstrate		Visual
Practice		Kinesthetic
Feedback		Check for Understanding

The first time something is introduced something

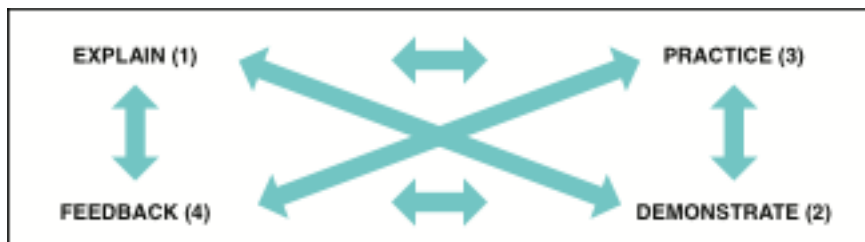


Once a skill has been introduced and the students are developing it

— OR —

A coach is able to distinguish the learning style(s) of their student(s)

The teaching model serves as a framework that we can operate fluidly in:



## MOVEMENT BASED TEACHING:

Movement based teaching focuses in on specific movements the body makes and the reactionary performance of the snowboard. This teaching style removes ambiguity commonly heard throughout action sports.

**Choosing words that are specific to a body part and how it moves will convey a clearer picture of how the student should snowboard.**

It is the art of the technical teaching of small movements in such a way that the student can effectively isolate each movement, learn it, and then blend it with other movements. These movements cause certain responses or performance from the snowboard. When specific movements are executed and blended in the correct sequence, a student can begin to get the “feeling” of snowboarding.

Teaching movement specific skills involves “bio mechanics”, or in other words, how the human body moves.

**\*Flexion and Extension** are the main movements our bodies use to create the blending of all other movements. “Bending” and “leaning” are the products of flexing and extending.

*EX. To “lean” over the toe edge to initiate a toe side turn, we can: Flex only our ankles.*

Flex our ankles and knees.

Flex only our hips.

Swing our arms forward by rotating our shoulders.

Swing our head forward by flexing our neck back then forward.

Have someone push us from behind.

These all produce the weight transfer we are looking for, but not all are the best option. As instructors, we should use “flex and extend”, not “lean, move or bend”.

The **main joints** we flex and extend to snowboard are:

Ankles

Knees

Hips

Spine

For most snowboarding maneuvers (beginner to expert), we engage in this order: ankles, knees, hips, and then spine. The slower the speed/maneuver, the more pronounced the order is.

The blending of flexion/extension of the four main joints moves our “center of mass” (CM) around and produces performance from the snowboard.

“center of mass” (as defined by Dictionary.com): noun. *The point at which the entire mass of a body may be considered concentrated for some purposes; formally, the point such that the first moment of a physical or geometric object about every line through the point is zero.*

The average human body’s center of mass is slightly below and behind the belly button. Watching to location of a student’s CM in relation to the snowboard will reveal why the student is or is not exceling at a task.

#### **Four movement concepts:**

Flex/extend

Fore/aft (Foot to foot)

Toe/heel (Edge to edge)

Rotation

The utilization of these movements, in isolation or combination, moves our CM and causes the snowboard to react between our weight and the snow.

### **\*BOARD PERFORMANCE CONCEPTS:**

Snowboards have the ability to be manipulated in four different ways. These four different articulations help us to control how we descend a mountain. Basic movements employ only one while more complex maneuvers can require all four. Knowing these concepts will not only help hone our focus while teaching, but elevate our own riding abilities.

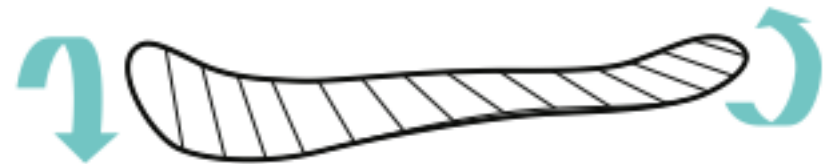
Employing the correct movement(s), to use the correct snowboard performance concept(s) that is appropriate to the specific terrain and intended path of travel, is what polarizes beginners from accomplished riders.

The four snowboard performance concepts are:

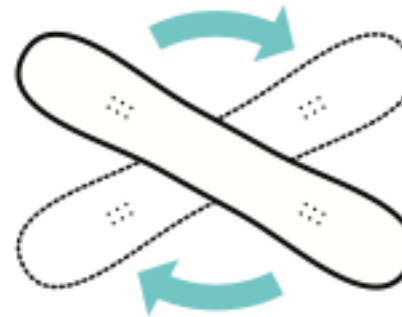
**PRESSURE**



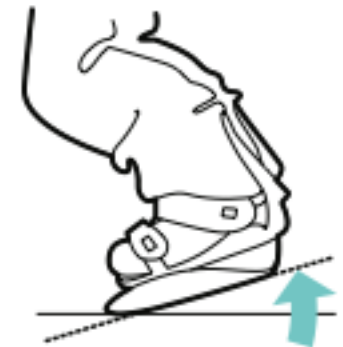
**TWIST**



**PIVOT**



**TILT**



## \*MOVEMENT ANALYSIS (MA):

MA is the unbiased, non-critical, objective manner of describing exactly how someone is moving. We use MA throughout the teaching model, but most heavily in the feedback stage.

The components of teaching are identified in the example below according to the following:

1. **MA (bold text)**
2. *Movement specific (italic text)*
3. Snowboard performance (underlined text)

“Your **hips are rotated** so that your **shoulders are not aligned** with the snowboard. This is happening because your **front ankle and knee are extended more than your rear leg**. This is causing the snowboard to twist underneath you and to turn instead of go straight. Try to *flex your ankle and knees equally without rotating your hips*. This will keep your snowboard flat and then you will slide in a straight line. Watch me...”

## THE “TYPICAL” BEGINNER LESSON

### IN THE LODGE/ON THE WAY TO THE SNOW

Equipment fit - Head to toe to snowboard

Equipment should be tight, fit correctly, be comfortable...think Maslow here.

Action sports are best executed with efficiency. If equipment is dialed in and fitted correctly (snug, not loose, not too tight), the magnitude of movement is reduced, more control can be experienced, and the rider's strength is prolonged.

### CIRCLE UP

Group stretching, ice breaker, names, etc...

Snowboard anatomy (why each of these are important)

- Nose and tail
- Bindings (how to use)
- Stomp pad
- Edges

Stance and alignment

- Athletic neutral stance – Jump to it.

*AS A COACH, LOOK FOR:*

Parallel lines between snowboard, knees, hips, shoulders

Isosceles Triangle (equally flexed joints), not right triangles (Unequal flexion in joints)

Falling - fists not wrists – Punch the ground.

- Fall forward from knees/feet
- Roll backwards from crouch

### STRAP IN ONE FOOT

Turning around with snowboard attached.

Nose leads the way and goes around your free foot



Skating - maintain stance, small steps (free foot shouldn't go beyond back binding), eyes on the prize

- Circle or line
- Short straight glides

### START GOING UP HILL (BUT NOT TOO MUCH)

Straight glide downhill – stance. Equally flexed joints, no rotation, eyes up.

Once the riders are comfortable, have them explore their range of motion by flexing down as low as possible then standing as tall as possible. We want them relaxed and absorbing the terrain, not rigid and being rattled by the terrain.

Fade turns (Toe or heel side until they are comfortable, then switch...then both.)

Flex your front ankle and knee by moving your knee over your toes. You should feel the weight move from the center of your foot to the ball of your foot. Slowly move into this position and hold it once you begin to change direction.

Return to neutral straight glide after the turn.

Movement based language (no “bend” or “lean”):

Flex your lead ankle while flexing your front knee.

Your weight (CM) moves from the center of your foot to the ball of your foot.

Moving your knee over your toes by flexing your ankles & knees.

Last – extend (toe side)/flex (heel side) hips.

*A common question that is asked about this time is “How do I stop?” Snow sports are transitioning from teaching the abrupt multi-skill-coordinating “hockey” stop to using the terrain to turn to a stop. Up to this point, stopping should not be an issue as we are using the gentle slope to flat to stop. As we teach them to turn, we are giving them the skill to stop.*

### LIFT RIDING

This is daunting for a number of reasons, however, we have taught them everything they need to skate through the line, out to the “load here”

signs, straight glide off the chair to a stop. (Extra points for fade turns off the lift!) Same skill, new hill.

Explain what the top unloading ramp looks like and what to expect.

Get to a spot where they can watch a few people get on. Pair riders with other riders of the same stance (Goofy w/Goofy)

Explain the process, where to stop (signs), which way to stand and look, what to grab, keep the board straight until in the air.

“Chase the chair, don't let the chair chase you.”

Explain how to get off once the top lift shack is visible. Slow the lift down if necessary.

Explain the need to get out of the way once at the top

Instructors should be in the front of the line to help at the top.

### STRAP BOTH FEET IN

Fade turn to J turn to stop (T&H)

Use the appropriate terrain to continue working on the fade turns.

Turn fade turns into J turns

J turns to traverses

**Garlands** (one directional falling leaf...think a string of Christmas lights draped around a tree)

If the terrain gets too steep for the J turns, teaching the side slip, then garland.

Every movement we've taught is utilized to ride in a garland pattern. We are making the movements to start a toe side turn, return to neutral, then make a heel side turn. Hip flexion and extension are key.

### "C" turns



Same flexion/extension movements

Straight glide down fall line

Linked turns

The C turn without the straight glide between the turns.

## MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS:

If you've been in any type of psychology class, you've undoubtedly heard of Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Below is a picture of it. It is imperative that we keep in mind the basic needs of our students. A successful coach is able to teach in a manner that addresses the whole student and in turn fosters learning. Some common things to be aware of are:



Clothing fit:

Are boots snug? Jackets and pants comfortable? Are gloves dry?

Comfort of student:

Are they too cold? Too warm? Too wet? Hungry?

Need to use the restroom?

Safety:

Is the hill and consequent speed appropriate for their skill set? Is the snow surface too hard to fall on safely? Is there enough space between riders? Are there dangerous obstacles?

Social interactions:

Are they grouped appropriately? Is a romantic crush in the mix? Are they being singled out in front of everyone? Are they being allowed the space to process and practice?

*Sometimes the most basic and seemingly unimportant thing can make or break a lesson. Tuning into your students is huge!*

## CAP THEORY:

In the 1950's, Dr. Benjamin Bloom introduced his Taxonomy of Learning. This taxonomy breaks down people's development into three main categories.



COGNITIVE



AFFECTIVE



PSYCHOMOTOR

Cognitive refers to how the student thinks. Affective is how the student relates and feels. And Psychomotor, or physical, distinguishes where the student is at in terms of physical development and ability.

Seeing our students through this lens can help us to tailor how we teach. From the organization of the group to how we address the students to how we may need to alter the physical movements is informed by Bloom's Taxonomy.

The following are a few profiles of groups Snowdays teaches based on the CAP model.

### 7 TO 12 YEAR-OLD RIDERS

**COGNITIVE:** These riders are developing as individuals who are becoming more aware of and respectful of others around them. Peers are important to the individual. Rules and consequences are beginning to be understood and the ability to think in reverse is developed. While they have the ability to separate real from imaginary, they think and observe in a concrete manner.

**AFFECTIVE:** These riders are developing from an egocentric world to a world where friends and people, older and younger, are more important to them. Other's feelings are beginning to be considered while gender differences are noticed. Competition is beginning to become greater amongst them.

**PHYSICAL:** These kids' center of mass is starting to lower (their body size is catching up with their head size). Fine motor skills are being developed and movement across the body is able to be made independently. Control over their bodies is beginning to be mastered.

## \*TEENAGE RIDERS

Snowdays students are often teenagers. We mob around the hill as a unit and group of units. We teach broadly to the group and use other instructors as examples. We give praise to everyone and approach the individual casually and quietly so as not to bring attention to them. We understand the physical way we ride as adults may need to be tweaked to get other body types to make the snowboard perform. There is the “ideal” and then there is the “real”.

**COGNITIVE:** Abstract thinking and reasoning is starting to be developed. The ability to think like an adult is starting to take place.

**AFFECTIVE:** These young adults are typically self-conscious and place a great deal of value on what their peers think of them. They tend towards operating with and as a group. Singling people out can be crushing to the singled out, or to the rest of the group.

**PHYSICAL:** Some may have completed all their growing and are moving like adults. Others may be experiencing the effects of puberty and going to rapid growth spurts that can result in awkward and clumsy movements. Strength may or may not match size as muscles are also being developed.

## MALE RIDERS

**COGNITIVE:** Learning style trend toward Doers and Thinkers. Men may try to use force and muscle to get through tasks. Focusing on one thing at a time is common.

**AFFECTIVE:** Fear is something that is often time not talked about openly, but may express itself in men’s bodies (stiff joints, leaning away from the direction of travel). Men also tend to focus on their own performance instead of the group. Emotions are not generally expressed or talked about.

**PHYSICAL:** Center of Mass is just behind the navel. Most of their strength is in the upper body. Flexibility may be lacking.

## FEMALE RIDERS

**COGNITIVE:** Learning styles tend to be Watchers and Feelers. Listening intently and trying to follow directions closely is common. Multi-tasking is likely more common.

**AFFECTIVE:** Women may have more fear about getting hurt, looking bad in front of the group, or not being perfect. Open expression of these feelings is more common than men. Women tend to take part in supportive participation with the other group members. Perfectionism and doing things “right” may be observed.

**PHYSICAL:** Center of mass is about an inch below the navel and slightly to the back. Their greatest strength tends to be in the lower body. Flexibility of joints and ligaments is better than men.

Knowing these differences as an instructor will help you tailor your teaching to each individual student. Mixed groups offer great opportunities to see the diversity of people.