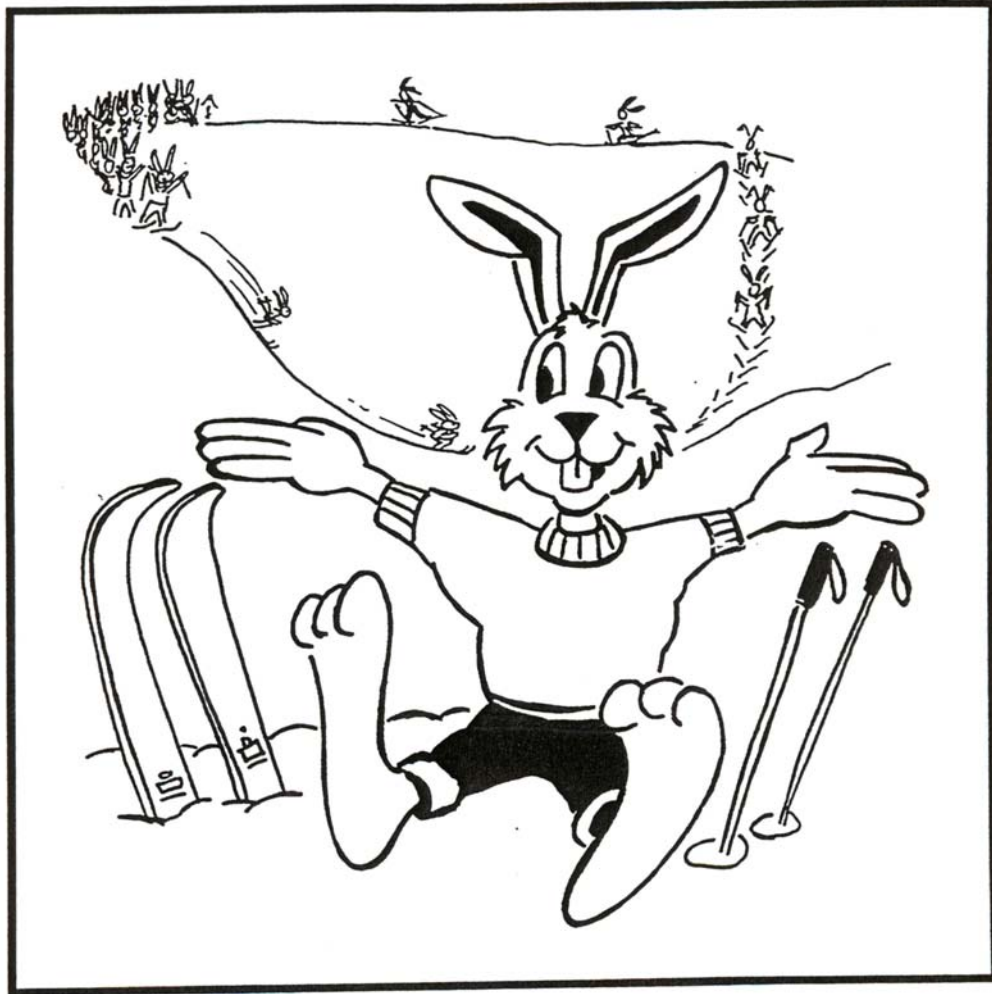


# Jackrabbit Parent Guide



**2008 Season  
Ptarmigan Nordic Ski Club**

## Objective of the Program

From the child's perspective, Jackrabbits is a **fun activity** which provides an opportunity to learn to ski, earn badges, play with other children, and be involved in outdoor activity. As well, children who are interested in racing have an opportunity to learn and participate in ski races, on a low key or more intense level.

From the Parent's perspective, Jackrabbits is a fun activity for their children to enjoy in the winter which provides an introduction to a life-long sport that can be enjoyed by the whole family or by the children as individuals.

## Membership & Registration

Children participating in the Jackrabbit program are required to be members of the Ptarmigan Nordic Ski Club. Jackrabbit registration fees are in addition to club membership fees. **For the 2008 season, registration will be coordinated by Mitch Holte.** See website [www.ptarmigannordic.org](http://www.ptarmigannordic.org) for club membership fees and Jackrabbit registration fees. The fees are used to cover the cost of registration with Cross Country Alberta, badge costs, teaching materials, wiener roast, trail grooming, etc.

*Parents are encouraged to become Jackrabbit Instructors and will be eligible for a refund of up to 50% of their children's Jackrabbit fees at the end of the season. A Jackrabbit Instructors teaching skills development course will be offered free of charge by the Club before the season begins.*

## Lessons

**Lessons will start promptly at 2:00 PM on Saturday.** This means that you will have to arrive 15 – 20 minutes early to go through the routine of getting your equipment on, waxing, etc.

- **There will be a lesson regardless of the weather**
- **Bunnies (3 – 5 yrs old) lessons will be 1 hour**

During the first lesson Jackrabbits will be divided into groups by age categories and then by three or more groups based on initial observations of skill and speed. Skiers can change groups throughout the season based on how well they stay together in lessons, that is, if there is a group member that is continually ahead or behind they can be moved to the next higher or lower group.

### Schedule

Date	Plan
Jan 5	• First Session
Jan 12	• Regular Session
Jan 19	• Regular Session & ICC Course
Jan 26	• Regular Session
Feb 2	• Regular Session
Feb 9	• Regular Session
Feb 16	• Regular Session
Feb 23	• Regular Session
Mar 1	• Regular Session
Mar 8	• Last Session, Chili Lunch & Badge Awards

### JACKRABBIT ORGANIZER

Al Acosta, Email: [aljoacosta@hotmail.com](mailto:aljoacosta@hotmail.com), Tel. 743-2123

# Parent Involvement

Instructors are faced with the challenge of balancing the needs of the entire Jackrabbit group. Although the children are grouped by skill and fitness, there will be occasions when one child will lack motivation, fall frequently, require more bathroom breaks, or get cold before the rest of the group. For this reason, all parents are encouraged to ski with the Jackrabbit skiers regardless of the parent's ability (you can learn with your child). If you are unable to ski with your child, please discuss with / make arrangements with the instructor.

Volunteers are also required for organizing snacks/hot chocolate, helping set up ski courses, running stop watches for time trials, taking photos, organizing moonlight skis, the season end wiener roast, etc.

# Equipment

Sportswise in town rents equipment out at great value. Having top of the line equipment is not a requirement of the Jackrabbit Program, however, spending some effort on ensuring that your child's equipment is properly sized, adjusted, and maintained will enhance the ski experience.

## Classic Equipment

Classic equipment comes in two basic types, waxable and waxless. Waxless skis are convenient because kick wax does not have to be applied; however, the penalty of waxless skis is reduced glide. For the younger children (4 to 6 years) waxless skis or soft waxable skis are a good choice because learning balance is the primary focus with this age group.

Waxable skis have the advantage of better glide and work well for skate skiing if glide wax is applied to the entire length of the ski. Some maintenance effort (5 to 10 minutes) is required prior to and sometimes during each lesson in order to maintain optimum kick. Lessons for the children 7 years and older include the skate skiing technique so waxable skis are a good choice for this age group.

## Skate Ski Equipment

Skate ski equipment is not required for the Jackrabbit Program. Although the skating technique is taught to the older children, classic ski equipment will suffice. Classic equipment can be waxed for skate ski lessons. The stiffness of the skate ski boot hinders proper and comfortable classic skiing.

## Sizing

Boots – boots that are too tight reduce blood circulation to the foot and result in cold feet quickly. The boots should be sized to accommodate a thick pair of socks. Boots that are too large hinder proper ski control, increase the risk of injury, and impair skill development

Poles – the top of the pole should come to approximately the middle of the skiers shoulder

Skis – the ski tip should come up to the palm of the skier's hand when the hand is raised above the head

## Waxing and Adjustments

The intent of this section is to provide some guidelines for those who already have some experience with ski equipment and care. If you are new to skiing, ask a more experienced person for help the first time you wax or take a lesson on waxing/adjustment (provided with Adult lessons). The fundamentals of waxing and adjustments may be covered in Jackrabbits on one of those "too cold to ski" days.

**Base Preparation**

With an iron, melt a cross-country glider wax onto the ski - the entire ski for *skating*; just the glide zones for *classic*. Make sure the iron is at a low temperature. Move the iron up and down the ski to ensure that you have liquid wax on the ski base. Let the skis cool.

**TIP** – the wax should melt but not smoke if the iron is set at the correct temperature

**TIP** – the iron is being moved at the correct speed if 2 – 5 cm of wax remains “wet” behind the iron – the thicker areas of the ski will require slower iron movements

With a plastic scraper, scrape the excess wax off the ski leaving a thin film that is virtually invisible to the eye. Be sure to clean out the grooves.

**Classic Skiing**

Start with a clean base. Select the wax of the day. The skier should read the wax chart (example shown in Appendix C), or information on the can and select the wax that is suggested for the condition. Wax in thin layers, 4 or 5. Wax lasts longer if it is layered. Lightly crayon wax onto the ski base. Wax the kick area (the 45 to 60 centimeter zone under the foot), but no further back than the heel.

Use a light, steady stroke to buff the wax with a cork.

**TIP** - If the ski is warmed (on the heat register, with a lamp, or using a hair dryer – warm NOT HOT) the wax will be easier to apply and cork in.

**TIP** – the kick area can be determined exactly by having the skier stand on both skis on a flat level surface, a piece of paper can be slid beneath the skis for the extent of the kick area. Mark the extent of the kick area on the side of the ski with a permanent marker for future reference.

If waxing indoors (warm skis are easier to wax), allow the waxed ski to adjust to the temperature outside prior to setting the ski on the snow.

Ski a short distance to check the wax. If snow builds up under the ski during the checking of the wax, either add a harder (colder) wax to the softer wax or lightly scrape off some of the softer wax. If back slip occurs, apply more of the same (or softer/warmer) wax.

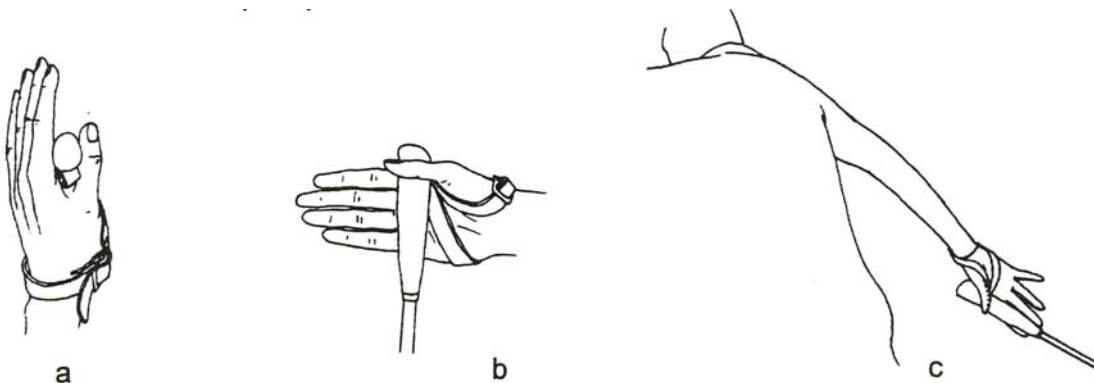
**Skate skiing**

Glide wax only.

**Pole Strap Adjustments**

Pole straps are commonly not adjusted properly. This is worth some effort, as proper poling technique cannot be learned without proper adjustment.

To adjust straps, don the mitts/gloves that are most commonly worn while skiing. Adjust the strap so that the pole can be released, pole force can then be applied by the crotch of the hand (between thumb and forefinger), and upon raising the pole, the pole handle can be grasped without fumbling or difficulty.



**TIP** – It is a common misconception that poling is accomplished by pushing on the pole handle. The force is supposed to be applied to the pole strap through the crotch of the hand (as shown in C).

## Clothing

### Principles

Skiers can preserve body heat by dressing in layers to insulate the body. Each layer acts as a protective barrier from the cold and air is warmed between each layer. If overheating occurs, skiers simply remove a layer of clothing, to release the trapped, warmed air. If skiers become cool or cannot keep the extremities warm (especially the hands and feet), they simply add a layer.

Skiers can protect their body from the cooling effect of wind by wearing a windproof shell that allows perspiration to evaporate. A toque should be worn since 80% of body heat is lost through the head. A neck warmer is also recommended. Mitts are generally warmer than gloves and can also be layered

For freedom of movement, stretchy or baggy clothing should be worn.

### Typical Clothing

- Polypropylene/polyester underwear
- Outerwear such as sweat pants and a turtleneck (synthetic fiber or wool is best)
- Windbreaker shell
- A neck tube (can be pulled up over face)
- A toque, with earflaps
- Two pair of mitts (a thick inner and an outer shell)

## Practise Practise Practise

In order to progress and ultimately enjoy the skiing experience a reasonable level of fitness and competence must be attained. In most parents' experience, the more frequent the child skis, the more quickly fitness, skill, and enthusiasm for the sport develop.

**TIP** – Judicious use of bribes work very well in encouraging children to ski between lessons, Smarties along the way, hot chocolate, a movie, or some other treat at the end.

**TIP** – A child's own headlight for night skiing tends to increase the novelty and enthusiasm for night skiing

## Badges

One of the keys to the success of the Jackrabbit program is the enthusiasm of Jackrabbits for badges! By working with a badge system, we encourage Jackrabbits to attain the skills necessary to progress as cross country skiers. Badges are awarded for participation, technique, speed, and distance.

### Participation

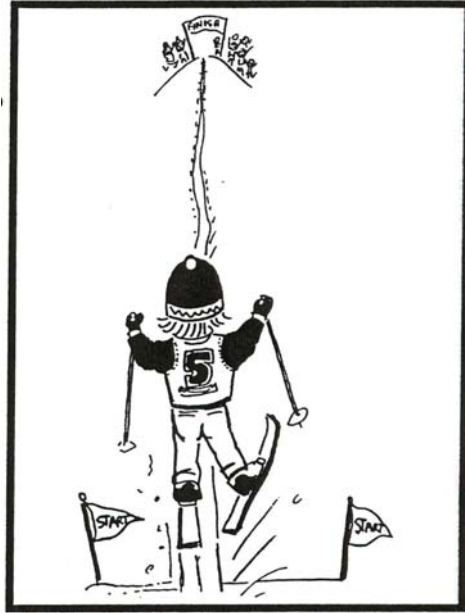
Awarded upon registration.

### Technique

Technique badges are based upon skill progression. Normally, children obtain one technique badge per year.

### Snow Goal Badges

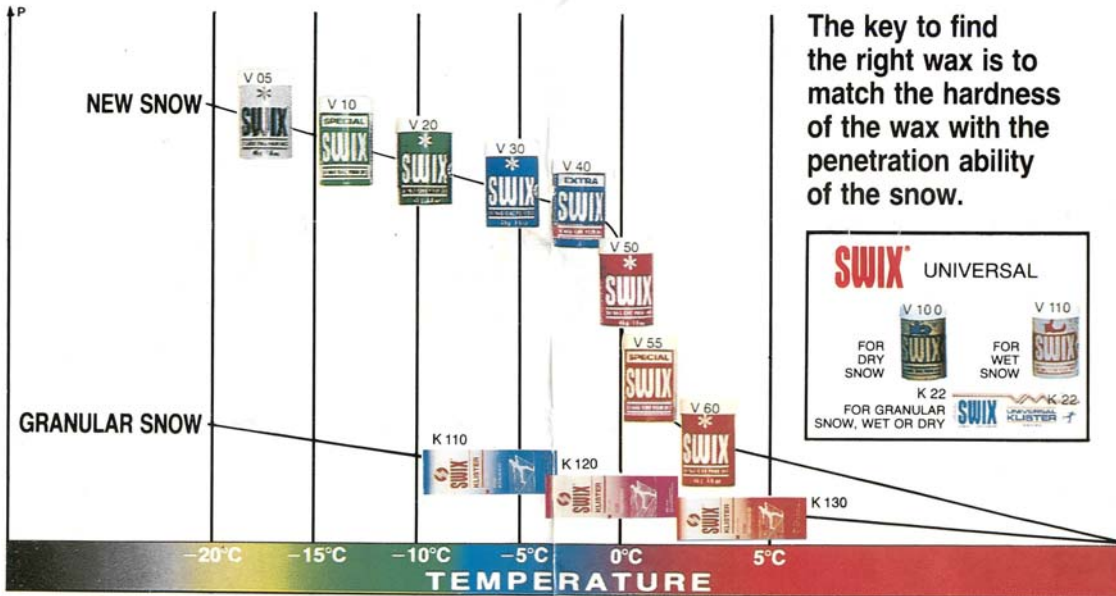
These are awarded for skiing on your own time for 5, 10, and 15-hour milestones. Parents please log and confirm times prior to award.



## Ptarmigan Nordic Ski Club Web Page

The ski club has its own web page where items of interest to members are posted. The path is as follows:  
[www.ptarmigannordic.org](http://www.ptarmigannordic.org)

# SWIX WAX/SNOW CHART



**Appendix A      Ski Wax Chart/Information**

**HOW DOES WAX WORK?**



**a) Uphills and flat areas**—You need grip. Wax allows snow crystals to penetrate the wax layer and give grip.



**b) Downhills and flat areas**—You need glide. The snow under your ski melts due to friction as you glide. Wax lets your skis glide over this water layer.

**APPLYING WAX**



1. Tear tin



2. Apply wax



3. Cork out

**APPLICATION OF KLISTER**

**GRANULAR SNOW**



Apply



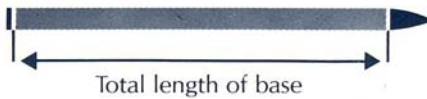
Spread



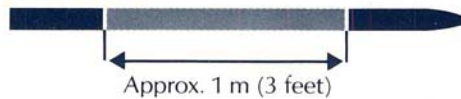
Let skis cool outside

**HOW MUCH OF THE SKI DO YOU WAX?**

**DRY SNOW**



**WET SNOW**



**GENERAL WAXING ADVICE**

1. Skis should be clean and dry before waxing.
2. Waxing is easier indoors.
3. Apply wax evenly.
4. A thicker layer gives better grip.
5. For better performance, apply a thin layer of orange basebinder spray before waxing for the day. The wax will stay on longer and give better kick.
6. When in doubt, apply the harder (colder) wax first. If it is slippery, add the softer wax.
7. The first waxing experience is most easily learned in dry powder snow.
8. Waxing is challenging in fresh wet falling snow around freezing.
9. Klister is used for wet granular or melted and refrozen snow and is applied thinly.
10. For general touring, 4 waxes will cover most conditions:
  - Green wax for cold powder
  - Blue wax for normal dry powder
  - Red wax for new wet snow
  - Universal klister for wet, granular or melted and refrozen snow.

After getting to know these thoroughly, you can then experiment with some of the complimentary waxes.
11. Don't be too influenced by how top racers wax. Their skis and techniques are different. When you become involved in citizen racing, then you can benefit from racers' methods of waxing.
12. Above all, have fun.

**ENJOY SKIING MORE • TAKE A LESSON**

