

Beginner Ski Safety

How we fit helmets, how we teach stopping, what happens on the chairlift, and the safety habits we build from day one. No jargon, just the practical stuff.

Helmet fit, in three checks

- Level: the helmet sits flat on the head, about one finger-width above the eyebrows — not tipped back.
- Snug: it shouldn't rock side to side or front to back when you shake your head gently.
- Buckled: the chin strap is snug enough that only one or two fingers fit underneath.

How we teach stopping and control first

- Before anyone points downhill, we practice standing, balancing, and getting up after a fall — falling is normal and expected, not a failure.
- “Pizza” / wedge stops are usually taught before turning, so every child has a way to slow down and stop on command.
- We start on the flattest terrain available and only move to gentle slopes once stopping feels reliable.
- Instructors stay within arm's reach during early runs and use short, consistent verbal or visual cues.

Chairlift basics

- New riders are paired with an instructor and briefed on loading and unloading before the first ride.
- Ski poles and any loose items are secured; the safety bar comes down as soon as everyone is seated.
- If a child isn't ready for the chairlift yet, that's completely fine — there is no rush, and rope tows or walking the hill are used instead.

General hill safety we build in from lesson one

- Look uphill before starting to move, and yield to skiers already below you.
- Stop where you can be seen — not in the middle of a trail or just over a rise.
- Stay within the boundaries and terrain your instructor sets for that day.

- Layer up and take breaks before your child is fully cold or fully tired — both raise the risk of falls.

These are the general safety habits our CSIA-certified instructors build into every lesson. Specific pacing and rules are always adjusted to the child, the hill, and the day's conditions.

Sunnypath — free adaptive ski lessons for autistic and neurodivergent children. Questions? sunnypathca@gmail.com · sunnypath.ca