




## Bunny Rabbit Skills!

**Age 3 to 5 years old.** The focus on snow is balance, gliding, diagonal stride **without poles**. Spend time on skis in addition to activity sessions (as many ski playground experiences as possible)

<p><b>Falling and Rising</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fall to the side and back in a sitting motion</li><li>• Bring skis together, side by side and under the body</li><li>• Move onto hands and knees</li><li>• Stand up (young children might need help)</li></ul> <p><i>Success is standing without assistance</i></p>	 A black and white line drawing of a child wearing a winter hat and goggles, falling backwards on skis. The child's arms are outstretched, and their legs are bent. The skis are positioned under their body.
<p><b>Side Stepping</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arms and hands forward and out to side for balance</li><li>• Place weight on one ski, lift other ski placing it down 20-30 cm away from the original position</li><li>• Shift weight to second ski, and bring the first leg to it to keep the skis parallel</li><li>• Repeat in opposite direction</li></ul> <p><i>Success is Can they go up the hill at 6c? This is an important tool for later on for steeper hills.</i></p>	 A black and white line drawing of a child on skis, side-stepping. The child is wearing a winter hat and goggles. The skis are positioned parallel to each other, and the child's arms are outstretched for balance. The background shows stylized evergreen trees.
<p><b>Star Turn</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Skis parallel, and arms away from body for balance</li><li>• Place weight on the left ski, lift the right knee and move tips of skis apart 20-30 cm</li><li>• Keep tails together, place right ski back down (forms a "pizza slice")</li><li>• Place weight on right ski, bring left ski parallel to it</li><li>• Continue until full circle is completed</li><li>• Repeat in opposite direction</li></ul> <p><i>Success is being able to go 360 in either direction without crossing their ski tails.</i></p>	 A black and white line drawing of a child on skis, performing a star turn. The child is wearing a winter hat and goggles. The skis are positioned in a star shape, with the tips of the skis pointing away from each other. The background shows stylized evergreen trees.

### Movement on Skis – Diagonal Stride

- Walk in place on the snow, alternately lifting skis off the ground
  - Move forward in small steps keeping skis parallel
  - Try this skill both in and out of the tracks
- This “walking step” is the first progression of the Diagonal Stride. Success is lifting skis alternately off the snow, keeping skis parallel both in tracks and out of them.*



### Movement on Skis – Herringbone

- This technique should be practised on a gradual uphill slope
- On a packed area without tracks, move forward lifting first one ski and then the other
  - Keep tails of skis close together and the tips apart
  - This “duck walk” is the first progression of the Herringbone technique



**How to Hold a Ski Pole** (*we typically wait until end of JR1 (age 6-7 or their 3<sup>rd</sup> season) to introduce this – novice skiers use poles for balance instead of propulsion, which slows improvement of diagonal stride – plus giving kids spears leads to trouble...*)

- Each ski pole has a strap as shown in the illustration on the right. The thumb rests on the lower side of the strap, which should be adjusted until it is somewhat snug, while still allowing freedom of movement. The crook between the thumb and forefinger should be approximately a centimetre away from the pole. If the poles are adjusted correctly, the poles can easily be held with the thumb and forefinger.
- Holding a ski pole the right way can be a challenge for young children. To explain the process you may wish to use an analogy. For example: the bunnyrabbit (the hand) comes up out of the rabbit hole (the straps) and hugs the tree (the pole). As children grow and develop their ski skills they will be encouraged to hold their poles in a technically correct position as it will allow them to use their arm action effectively and improve their balance.

