

Jackrabbit Level Three Skills

Master fundamental movement skills, develop overall motor skills. Acquire basic cross-country ski skills; equal use of techniques; develop downhill abilities. Focus on balance, agility and rhythm.

Diagonal Stride

In the progression of the diagonal stride, this is called the "long step". This technique should be practised on flat terrain with set tracks.

- The skier shows a clear weight transfer from ski to ski resulting in a longer gliding action
- The ski lifts off the snow when the skier kicks
- The recovery foot usually lands beside or in front of (not behind) the gliding foot when viewed from the side
- The hands are close to shoulder height and elbows are slightly bent at pole plant
- The skier demonstrates some ankle and knee bend, and maintains a slightly forward body lean
- The poles are angled backwards and help provide propulsion; the skier is clearly pushing off of them
- Each pole is planted beside the opposite side ski boot



Double Poling

This technique should be practised on flat terrain with set tracks.

- The skier reaches the hands forward to plant the poles
- When the poles are planted, the skier is leaning forward slightly, hands are forward at shoulder level, elbows are slightly bent
- Poles are held at a small angle to the snow, pointing backwards. Pole tips are behind the pole handles when they are planted
- The upper body flexes at the waist just after poles are planted to provide additional propulsion
- As the upper body bends to a horizontal position, the arms start to extend, and follow through with a strong extension to the back
- Immediately following the pole plant, the skier is obviously pushing on the poles with his/her upper body weight
- The upper body movement is completed by extending the arms to the rear. The progression is upper body, then shoulders, then elbows. The elbows should not collapse in the initial phase of the pole motion
- Legs remain relatively straight, but not rigid, through all phases of the movement
- After completing the push, the arms and upper body are recovered forward at the same time to initiate another poling action. The skier is able to execute fairly effective poling action and push down the track using the Double Poling technique.



One-step Double Poling

This technique should be practised on a slight downhill with set tracks.

- The skier stands in the Ready Position with body weight on the left ski
 - The skier pushes off the left ski, and transfers all of the weight to the right ski, while reaching forward with the arms to Double Pole
 - The skier then initiates Double Poling action while recovering the push foot forward
 - The skier glides on both skis, and then begins the cycle again, alternating the pushing leg (this time using the right ski)
 - The skier is able to ski 50 metres using this technique
- For evaluation purposes the skier needs to demonstrate weight transfer between the pushing and gliding skis.



Free Skate

This technique should be practised on a packed, gentle downhill slope.

- The skier is in the Ready Position demonstrating an obvious “V” shape with the skis
- The skier bends the left knee and ankle, pushing off with the left leg and transferring his/her weight onto the right ski
- The right hip and shoulder are aligned over the right ski. As the glide ski slows, the skier flexes the right knee and ankle and pushes off the right ski so his/her weight is transferred to the left ski
- The skier’s left shoulder and hip then align over the left ski. The glide on the left and right skis is consistent
- During each glide, the feet come close to each other
- The skier swings the arms in front of the body (rotation movement)
- Poles are held with the tips pointing backwards, not touching the snow



Downhill Tuck

This technique should be first practised on flat terrain and then on a medium slope where the skier has a 10 metre run to demonstrate the technique.

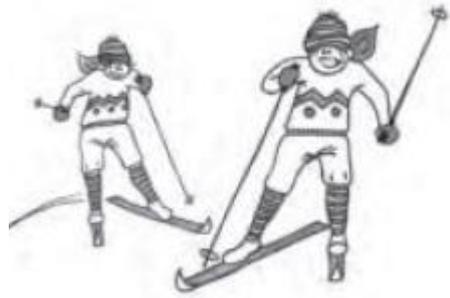
- In a “low tuck” the upper body is bent to a horizontal position, and knees and ankles are bent so the thighs are parallel to the snow
- In a “high tuck” the knees and ankles are bent so the thighs are only slightly bent
- Poles are held under the arms and tightly against the body
- The skier can safely descend a medium hill in a low or high tuck



Diagonal Skate

This technique should be practised on a moderate uphill slope.

- The action is similar to that used in Herringbone, but in this case the skier glides on each ski
- Alternating pushes with the arms and legs, the skier glides up the hill shifting the weight from ski to ski
- A pole and the opposite ski touch the snow at the same time.
- The gliding skis should be kept fairly flat on the snow, and not edged until the actual push off
- The arm action is similar to that used in the Diagonal Stride
- Arms are kept close to the body during the initial phase of the arm push



Kick Turn

This technique should be practised on flat terrain, in loose snow.

- The skier stands in the Ready Position
- The skier then reaches back with the right arm outstretched and plants the right pole on the outside of the left ski near the tail
- Both poles are now planted on the same side of the left ski
- The skier faces to the right
- The skier now lifts the right ski, bending at the knee and hip so the tail of the ski drags on the snow and the ski is perpendicular to the ground
- The skier now moves the right leg so the skis are parallel, but the tip of the one ski is beside the tail of the other
- The left leg and pole are now brought around so the ski tips are together and the skier resumes the Ready Position, having completed a 180 degree turn
- The skier performs this technique in both directions
- At this level the skier should be able to do the exercise without assistance



Skate Turn

This technique should be practised on a packed, gentle downhill slope.

- The skier performs Double Poling just in front of the place he/she wishes to turn
- As the skier recovers the arms and upper body forward, the inside ski (the ski that is on the side to which the skier is turning) is unweighted and pointed in the new direction
- The skier edges and pushes off the outside ski transferring the body weight to the inside ski
- The skier then glides with the skis parallel and equally weighted in the new direction.
- Another Double Poling action completes the turn.



<p>Agility: Jump turns. Keep skis parallel. Turn your head in the direction you want to jump. Rotate and hop as high you can, twisting lower body to 90°, 120°, 180° or even 360°</p>	<p>Skill Videos - Agility Hopping and Spinning.mp4 (coachseye.com)</p> <p>rollerski drills - 8. Spin and Stick.mp4 (coachseye.com)</p>
<p>Balance: One leg with outriggers. Using poles for balance as needed, try to glide down a mild descent on one leg as far as possible. Then repeat on alternate leg</p>	<p>rollerski drills - 5. Outrigger Drill.mp4 (coachseye.com)</p>
<p>Balance: Glide on one ski as long as possible on a mild downslope; then ski back up and alternate the leg</p>	<p>Skill Videos - Balance One Foot Glide.mp4 (coachseye.com)</p>
<p>Balance Glide on one ski down a mild downslope and intermittently hop up and land on the same ski. Repeat with the alternate leg.</p>	<p>Skill Videos - Balance One Foot Hop.mp4 (coachseye.com)</p> <p>rollerski drills - 7. Single Leg Stability Drill.mp4 (coachseye.com)</p>
<p>Ski Ballet (no poles): Try gliding on one leg but raise the other behind with arms wide to mimic an airplane down the hill as far as possible.</p>	<p>rollerski drills - 6. Airplane Drill.mp4 (coachseye.com)</p>

Ski Exercises

These activities are designed to improve the balance, agility, coordination, rhythm and confidence on skis that will establish the foundation on which ski technique skills can be developed. The exercises are generally listed in order of difficulty. Some are appropriate for children under six while others are more suitable for older novice skiers.

Flea Leaps. The skiers jump into the air (on their skis) and land softly in a balanced position.

Stork Stance. The skiers practice standing on one leg while remaining balanced. They are allowed to extend their hands sideways to steady themselves. Alternate legs. Definitely no poles.

Rubber Leg. The skiers first stand tall on one leg/ski, and then relax it, letting it slump into a flexed position at the ankle and knee. Alternate legs.

One-Legged Pops. The skiers pop/spring off one leg, which is bent, and then land on the same ski. Alternate legs

Back Leg Lifts. The skiers extend one leg/ski rearward and off the snow while bending forward at the waist. They then move the same leg/ski forward, without weighting it, and return their upper body to an upright position. Repeat with the opposite leg.

Poison Peanut Butter. The skiers lift one ski and then the other off the snow so that the “poison peanut butter” (i.e. the snow), doesn’t stick to their skis. The coach encourages the skiers to keep moving by saying “quick, don’t let the peanut butter stick!”

Stepping Movements. These movements are the basis of the Side Step and Star Turn. They follow on from the “Poison Peanut Butter” exercise above. This exercise should be introduced on packed snow, but it can also be practised in deeper snow when the skiers are ready for the challenge.

To begin with, have the ski poles lying on each side of the skier, parallel to their skis. The skiers step over the poles going first in one direction, and then the other. As the skiers gain competence, several poles can be lined up for them to step over, or they can be placed farther apart to require a longer step. The skiers can also try to jump over the poles with both feet.

Pushaways. Two skiers (partners) face each other, standing on their skis with their feet wide apart for solid balance. One ski is placed between the partner’s skis, with the tips reaching behind the partners’ heels. The skiers can improve their balance and agility skills by trying to push their partner off balance.

Snakes. Skiers form a line, one after the other, with about two metres between each. The skier at the end of the line weaves between the other skiers until he/she comes to the front of the line and then becomes the new leader. For advanced skiers, this exercise can be practised with all the skiers moving slowly forward while the skier from the end of the line is trying to weave forward to the front of the group. Variations can be done on the flat, on a slight downhill, or by skiing around other skiers or other objects.

Rubber Knees. The skiers descend a slight incline using rubber knees and ankles to help absorb bumps.

Tip and Tail Touch. While skiing down a gentle slope, the skiers alternate between touching the tips and tails of their skis with their hands.

Slide Tall and Slide Small. The skiers descend a slight slope, exerting pressure on the tongues of their boots by bending their legs slightly. *Easy* - they alternate between putting a lot of pressure on the tongues (slide small) and a little pressure (slide tall). *Novice* - Challenge the skiers to touch the ground and lift their arms in the air while coming down the hill. *Medium* - Ask them to throw their mitts in the air and catch them while coming down the hill. *Harder* - ask them to catch a glove and throw it back to you (the coach) when they get to the bottom of the hill.

Hinge Hop. While skiing down a gentle slope, the skiers hop, lifting their ski tails and leaving their tips on the snow. [rollerski drills - 11. Basic Vaulting.mp4 \(coachseye.com\)](#)

Luge. While skiing down a gentle slope, the skiers first lie back on their skis. Next they practise squatting on their skis until they almost touch the snow with the seat of their pants.

Terrain Leap. Using their poles, the skiers practise a small upward and forward jump, tucking their knees up towards their chest. Can try a soft obstacle like a pool noodle for a bigger challenge [rollerski drills - 12. Advanced Vaulting.mp4 \(coachseye.com\)](#)