

# METHODS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ALPINE SKIING SCHOOL

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NAČINI PROVOĐENJA ŠKOLE ALPSKOGA SKIJANJA

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**ABSTRACT**

*Nowadays, various programs are used in ski schools to teach beginners. All programs have the same goal, and that is to teach beginners specific body movements with which they will be able to manage their skis. Three programs are most commonly used in alpine skiing schools. According to one program, ski beginners are taught the basics of alpine skiing exclusively with elements of parallel skiing techniques. In the second program, ski beginners acquire knowledge using elements of snowplough and parallel ski technique. The third alpine skiing learning program combines these two methods. In addition to the program, in practice there are two approaches to learning alpine skiing. The first method involves a daily trip to a ski slope or a nearby winter tourist centre, where the skiing technique is adopted and beginners return to the place of residence the same day. The second way consists of an organized, usually seven-day, winter trip, during which the basics of alpine skiing are learned every day during the stay in the ski-resort. Regardless of the learning programs used, the safety of skiers is a priority in every alpine skiing school. Therefore, it is advisable for all beginner skiers to get involved in an alpine skiing school, as this is the best way to prevent injuries.*

**Key words:** *programs, skiing school, direct learning, traditional learning, combined learning.*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

For many years alpine ski schools in winter tourist centers were the only content organized and offered in the mountains during the winter. Alpine skiing schools are still organized and implemented in all ski centers, but the offer of various physical and entertainment activities has expanded significantly. Alpine ski schools have adjusted their programs, and today they organize and implement ski kindergartens for the youngest beginners, individual and group programs for

different levels of ski knowledge, morning or all-day ski schools, one-hour or multi-hour lessons, snowboard schools, ski school and teacher's snowboard school. on and off groomed ski-slopes (freeriding, free skiing, ski safari, freestyle) and learning different types of jumps in snow parks. Snow parks are extremely popular today among young skiers who want to engage in attractive acrobatic ski jumping and are therefore an integral part of most ski resorts.

### **Application of alpine skiing school in practice**

There are two most common ways to learn alpine skiing. The first way involves going daily to the ski slope or the nearby winter tourist center, where the skiing technique is learned, and then returning to the place of residence in the afternoon or evening. The ski polygon is usually described as a natural or artificial ski terrain that exists independently and is not part of the winter tourist center. In addition to the terrain, every ski slope has a machine for its arrangement and maintenance, safety nets and signs that serve for protection and safety. Additionally, the ski slope has a ski

lift, snowmaking devices and very often lighting, which allows the use of the terrain in the late afternoon and evening. Ski halls are also counted as ski slopes, and are often built near settlements and cities. Although they do not yet exist in Croatia, in many European countries alpine skiing schools exist in such places. The advantage of the ski hall is the possibility of its use throughout the year, and not only during winter. Additionally, an advantage of the ski hall is the possibility for beginners to learn to adapt to the skis and move on them in the immediate vicinity of the place of

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residence. Once they learn the basics, they can decide to travel to a winter tourist center, where the overall experience of the idyllic mountain environment during the winter will be greater, because they will be able to use the ski terrains to a greater extent.

Another way is to organize the departure of children and young people for the winter holiday with school or winter sport camp with the club. In the selected winter tourist center, winter holiday is usually organized for seven days, while sport camps could last for longer period of time. In this way, in addition to the acquisition and improvement of ski knowledge, it is possible to carry out sports training and other physical activities during the day, and social and entertainment activities in the afternoon and evening. (Cigrovski, Matković et al., 2019).

The main goal of the first method is to learn alpine skiing, while the goals of

winter holidays and sports camps, in addition to the acquisition of ski knowledge, are also focused on other sports and on the socialization of children. Thus, during the implementation of winter holiday in children's curriculum, the following are affected: motor, functional, cognitive, emotional and social abilities and characteristics (Rausavljević et al., 2012). By spending time together during the winter, the children are constantly socializing and solving tasks during the day. The role of the kinesiologist between all activities is to encourage children to be independent, to motivate them and to be a role model for them with own behavior. Alpine skiing school is just one of the contents of winter holiday or sports camp to which many other values are attached, which ultimately positively affect the growth and overall development of children (Pišot & Vidamšek, 2004; Cigrovski, Matković et al., 2019).

### Alpine ski school programs

There are numerous programs for ski beginners in alpine ski schools. However, the goal of each program is to teach beginners the specific body movements (ski movements) that are necessary for ski management and that participate in

different proportions in performing all types of turns (LeMaster, 2010). The efficiency of the learning process will be higher if the program of the ski school is modified to the conditions in which the ski knowledge is transferred and the age and

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abilities of the students. Additionally, in order for ski beginners to improve their knowledge of skiing, they need adequate ski equipment, appropriate ski terrain and a teacher who will modify a certain program to match their abilities and motivation. The programs are designed in a way that ski knowledge is gradually acquired, and each learned element of ski technique is a logical upgrade of already acquired knowledge with the ultimate goal of learning different types of parallel turns (Cigrovski & Matković, 2015).

The program of the ski school defines what will be done every day within the time estimated for the acquisition of ski knowledge. The program of an alpine ski school, according to which it is advised to teach beginner skiers, but also to improve the knowledge of more advanced skiers, has been defined and approved by the competent organizations. When compiling a six-day or seven-day ski school program, only one part of the entire official program needs to be selected. What part of the program will be used depends on: duration of the ski school within each day, number of teaching days, age of the students, their abilities, motivation and prior ski knowledge. The programs of the alpine skiing school change over time in a way that individual parts of the elements of

skiing technique are performed in a slightly different way. Likewise, changes in the program are manifested in the advancement of an important methodical exercises to the level of an element of technique or the degradation of a particular element of technique to the level of a methodical exercise. Therefore, the programs may differ in the name of individual elements of the technique or in the recommended methodological exercises.

By reviewing literature, it is possible to highlight several of the most common alpine skiing learning programs. First learning program contains exclusively elements of the parallel ski technique. With such an approach, skiers are immediately taught to perform parallel turns, so this method is called direct learning (Murovec, 2006). This approach is more dynamic, and beginner skiers are mastering a gentle ski slope through methodical exercises and tasks in which the skis are constantly in a parallel position. Second learning program involves the use of elements of snowplough and parallel skiing, and this method is called the traditional way of learning (Lešnik & Žvan, 2010). The snowplough turn is the first continuous turn that ski beginners must achieve when learning this program. There is also a third

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program of learning alpine skiing, which involves a combination of these two methods, so it is often called a combined approach to the transfer of ski knowledge (Lešnik & Žvan, 2010).

The second mentioned way of learning alpine skiing, whose programs contain elements and exercises of snowplough and the parallel ski technique, is mostly used in practice. The snowplough position of the skis in which the front ends of the skis (tops) are almost connected, and the rear ends of the skis (tails) are spread, ensures for the beginners a stable equilibrium position due to increased surface of the support on the snow surface. In addition to the stable position, the snowplough position allows the skier to control the movement speed. Controlled descent down the ski slope is provided to the skier when he pushes forward and inwards at the ankles, knees and hips in a snowplough position to bring the skis to their inner side edges (Matković et al., 2004).

Due to all mentioned advantages of the snowplough position of skis for beginners, today the elements of this ski technique are very often applied in alpine ski schools. However, this doesn't mean that it is necessary to insist on a long-term retention of skiers in the snowplough

position. On the contrary, after skiers have mastered their first turns using the snowplough ski technique, the execution of turns should be continued with elements and exercises which include parts when the skis are in a parallel position. The ski school program designed in this way is based on the ratio of the snowplough and the parallel part of the turn. The gradual transition from the snowplough to the parallel turn is learned from the end of the turn to its beginning. By reducing the part of the snowplough turn, skiers learn to perform an increasing part of the turn using a parallel ski technique.

This means that initially only the final part of the turn will be performed in a parallel position, then the most part of the turn in a parallel position, until finally the student does the whole turn with the skis in a parallel position. When the student is able to perform the whole turn with the skis in a parallel position, we can begin to learn how to use ski poles at the beginning of each turn (Tate, 2007). Which of the above methods to use primarily depends on the choice of the kinesiologist. Also, the selected method depends on the conditions in which skiing is being learned.

The conditions in the ski centers are different depending on the choice of ski terrains and the availability of ski

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equipment, and ski schools within each center have adopted to the elements

described above.

### **CONCLUSION**

Alpine ski school for beginners and recreational level skiers is the best injury prevention. The safety of recreational skiers and the protection of their health is a priority in every organization of an alpine ski school. Therefore, it is advisable for all beginners and skiers with little experience in alpine skiing to get involved in a ski school to learn how to properly manage their skis, and to protect their health. In

self-learning, wrong movements are often adopted and it afterwards requires a great effort of a recreational level skier to correct such movements. Skiing knowledge will be learned much easier and with less effort if the student from the start adopts proper body movements and if he practices those movements from the beginning while performing ski turns.

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## SAŽETAK

Danas se u skijaškim školama primjenjuju različiti programi po kojima se uče skijaški početnici. Svi programi imaju isti cilj, a to je naučiti početnike specifične pokrete tijela pomoću kojih će moći upravljati skijama. Tri se programa najčešće koriste u školama alpskoga skijanja. Po jednom programu skijaške početnike se uči osnovama alpskoga skijanja isključivo elementima paralelne skijaške tehnike. Drugim programom skijaški početnici usvajaju znanja pomoću elemenata pluzne i paralelne skijaške tehnike. Treći program učenja alpskoga skijanja kombinira navedena dva načina. Osim programa, u praksi postoje dva pristupa učenja alpskoga skijanja. Prvi način uključuje svakodnevni odlazak do skijaškog poligona ili obližnjeg zimskog turističkog centra, na kojemu se usvaja skijaška tehnika te se isti dan vraća u mjesto stanovanja. Drugi način sastoji se u organiziranom, najčešće sedmodnevnom, odlasku na zimovanje u sklopu čega se svaki dan uče osnove alpskoga skijanja. Neovisno o korištenim programima učenja, sigurnost skijaša prioritet je u svakoj školi alpskoga skijanja. Stoga je savjet svim skijašima početnicima uključiti se u školu alpskoga skijanja, jer na taj način čine najbolju prevenciju nastanka ozljeda.

**Ključne riječi:** *programi, škola skijanja, direktno učenje, tradicionalno učenje, kombinirano učenje*

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