

# LEVEL 3

## CERTIFICATION & STUDY GUIDE



*Western Region*

**Dedicated to Teaching Everyone how to Ski and Snowboard**

**Requirements - Candidates must:**

- **FOLLOW ALL COVID PROTOCOL FROM PSIA/AASI** – Please check [www.psia-w.org](http://www.psia-w.org) for most current protocol.
- Be a Registered Member of PSIA-AASI/W
- Have their Level 2 Certification
- Recommend passing the L3 e-Learning exam prior to the first day of the L3 Ski Assessment.
- Must pass the L3 Ski Assessment and the L3 e-Learning exam before taking the L3 Teach Assessment.
- Sign up for the event 2 weeks before the event.

# PSIA-AASI Western Division Level 3 Alpine Certification & Study Guide

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## Resources and Certification Standards

### Resources:

The exam content is based from these PSIA-AASI publications:

- 2014 PSIA Alpine Technical Manual
- 2018 Teaching Snowsports Manual
- 2021 Teaching Children Snowsports

Recommended reading/resources:

- 2015 PSIA Adult Alpine Teaching Handbook
- Children's Alpine Teaching Handbook

Additional supporting resources:

- PSIA-AASI Internet Learning Center (<https://www.thesnowpros.org/education>)
- Visual Cues to Effective/Ineffective Skiing 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition
- Visual Cues to Effective/Ineffective Teaching
- The Skier's Edge & Ultimate Skiing, by Ron LeMaster available on amazon.com

Please refer to the Recommended Certification Resources on "thesnowpros.org" website for a list of resources to help you succeed.

<https://www.thesnowpros.org/education/education-products-downloads/>

### Certification Standards:

The National Standards provide the assessment criteria for creating the skiing, teaching, and professional knowledge outcomes necessary for an instructor to successfully complete a certification. The exam Assessment Form is based off these certification standards.

National Standards

([https://www.thesnowpros.org/download/psia\\_alpine\\_standards-9\\_30\\_21\\_final.pdf](https://www.thesnowpros.org/download/psia_alpine_standards-9_30_21_final.pdf))\*

The newly developed Performance Guide provides the details for successful and unsuccessful performance contributors, as they relate to the assessment criteria of the national standards.

Performance Guide

([https://thesnowpros.org/download/Alpine\\_PG\\_10\\_21.pdf](https://thesnowpros.org/download/Alpine_PG_10_21.pdf)).

The Assessment Form used to assess your performance directly refers to the National Standards and Performance Guide. Competence is determined by how well an instructor accomplishes the Learning Outcomes as described by the Assessment Criteria (ACs).

There are three L2 Assessment Forms

- Alpine Level II Skiing
- Alpine Level II Teaching
- Alpine Level II Movement Analysis/Technical Understanding

Note that the Movement Analysis/Technical Understanding assessment form will be used for both the ski and teach assessment. Technical Understanding will be assessed during the ski assessment and

Movement Analysis will be assessed during the teaching assessment. The link below will take you to the Certification Standards and click on the Assessment form link once the page opens.

Assessment Forms

- <https://www.thesnowpros.org/certification/national-certification-standards/>)

The link below contains the fundamentals for People Skills, Teaching Skills, and discipline specific Technical Skills.

Fundamentals

[https://www.thesnowpros.org/download/LearningConnection\\_Fundamentals\\_2021.pdf](https://www.thesnowpros.org/download/LearningConnection_Fundamentals_2021.pdf)

The e-Learning Alpine Level II Knowledge Assessment is to be taken before registering for the L3 Teach Assessment. Passing this assessment is a prerequisite to taking the L3 Teach assessment. The link below will take you to the assessment.

E-Learning Prerequisites

(<https://lms.thesnowpros.org/written-exams/western-professional-knowledge-exams/>)

Although it is not a requirement for the Level 2 Alpine Certification, the Children's Specialist Standards contain useful information on how to teach children.

Children's Specialist Standards

[https://www.thesnowpros.org/download/PSIA\\_Childrens\\_Specialist\\_Standards\\_Final.pdf](https://www.thesnowpros.org/download/PSIA_Childrens_Specialist_Standards_Final.pdf)

## Examiner Role in Exams and Prep Courses

Throughout both the **Ski and Teach Exams** your examiner will provide feedback on where your performance stands in comparison to the Certification Standard. If you have a concern that your level of skillfulness will not meet the Certification Standard, then an Exam is not the appropriate place to learn how to improve. Although exam feedback can highlight specific skillset shortfalls, it will not provide the comprehensive coaching needed to gain a Certification Standard level of skillfulness.

The role of the **Prep Course** is to illuminate the Certification Standard requirements, provide constructive feedback on your performance, and help you build a training plan for skill development where there are shortfalls. The Prep Course is a low stress, educational environment. Current national pass-rate statistics confirm the value a Prep Course can offer prior to an Exam. Most PSIA-AASI divisions require Prep Courses. However, in PSIA-AASI W, taking a Prep Course prior to the exam is strongly recommended.

Both exams are two-day events. On the first day, each candidate will receive feedback based on his or her performance as it compares to the Certification Standard. On the second day, each candidate may receive reminders based on their performance from the prior day as to what is needed/expected in relation to the Certification Standards. At the end of the second day, the examiner will call each candidate individually and review his or her performance in a pass/fail scale.

## The Level 3 Assessment Process:

The Level 3 Process consists of 3 activities, completed in the following order:

1. An On-Line Exam (recommend taking and pass prior to the ski exam, required to pass prior to the teach exam)
2. An On-Snow Exam testing the Candidate's ability to ski at the Level 3 Alpine Certification Standard
3. An On-Snow Exam testing the Candidate's ability to teach at the Level 3 Certification Standard

Each on-snow exam is a two-day event. Throughout both exams, everybody will be expected to be engaging in conversations, discussions and the activities. As you go through each day the examiner will be guiding the activities, discussions and providing feedback. The expectation of you is that you are actively participating and asking questions as needed to further your understanding.

## Instructor Decisions and Behavior

Learning Outcome

- **Professionalism & Self-Management:** Promotes a professional environment by adapting behaviors to positively affect others.

Candidates will be assessed on their ongoing decisions and behaviors under the Professionalism and Self-Management section of the Certification Standards. This assessment of your decisions and behaviors will be during all aspects of both assessments, skiing, and teaching. You are expected to conduct yourself in a professional manner by being aware of how your decisions and behaviors affect the overall learning environment. Be respectful of the people around you and participate positively in the group.

## Skiing Standards:

The skiing is assessed through the following assessment activities:

- **Advanced Applied Fundamentals:**
  - Dynamic Medium Radius Turns
  - Dynamic Short Radius Turns
  - Bumps and Steeps
  - Off-Piste
- **Basic Applied Fundamentals:**
  - Basic Parallel
  - Wedge Turn
- **Highlighted Fundamentals:**
  - Extension/Retraction Turns
  - One Ski Turns
  - Hop Turns
  - Pivot Slips

## Technical Understanding

Successful L3 candidates Describe specific performances using Technical Fundamentals and considering tactics and equipment choices using current PSIA-AASI resources.

## Teaching Standards:

The teaching is assessed through the following assessment activities:

### Teaching

- Plan: Successful L3 candidates plan learning outcomes and creates individualized experiences around a common theme for advanced students.
- Implement: Successful L3 candidates individualize learning experiences to guide students toward agreed-upon outcomes and optimizes student engagement in the process.
- Review: Successful L3 candidates foster the ability to recognize, reflect upon, and assess experiences to enhance understanding and apply what was learned

### People Skills

- Communication: Engages in and adapts verbal and non-verbal, two-way communication with all individuals.
- Relationships with Others: Manages the unique motivations and emotions of each individual and the interpersonal dynamics of a group to develop trust.

### Movement Analysis:

Successful L3 candidates describes cause-and-effect relationships of all the Technical Fundamentals through all turn phases, resulting in an effective prescription for change for skiers through the advanced zone.

## Level 3 Ski Assessment Daily Outline:

### Day 1:

Meet at the designated meeting location (will be in the confirmation e-mail) at 8:30, booted up and ready to go. After meeting your examiner, you will spend the day focusing on the following:

#### **Advanced Applied Fundamentals:**

- Dynamic Medium Radius Turns
- Dynamic Short Radius Turns
- Bumps and Steeps
- Off-Piste

#### **Basic Applied Fundamentals:**

- Basic Parallel
- Wedge Turn

#### **Highlighted Fundamentals:**

- Extension/Retraction Turns
- One Ski Turns
- Hop Turns
- Pivot Slips

**Technical Understanding:** Accurately compare information from multiple resources (PSIA alpine and other relevant content) relative to the desired outcome.

Throughout the day you will receive feedback on your ski and body performance as it relates to the Level 3 Alpine Certification Standards.

### Day 2:

Meet the group at 8:30. This day remains focused on evaluating the candidates' skiing in relation to the Level 3 Alpine Certification Standards. All areas of Advanced, Basic Applied, Highlighted Applied Fundamentals, and Technical Understanding will be evaluated. At the end of the day the examiner will call each candidate and review their performance as it relates to the Certification Standards. Successfully completing the Level 3 Ski Module is determined by a pass or fail criteria.



## **Turn Mechanics:** All page numbers and photos reference the Alpine Technical Manual,

### **Advanced Applied Fundamentals:**

#### **Medium Radius Carved Parallel Turns [Advanced]**

**Page: 124 photo: 7.30**

Terrain: Blue, black, or double black, groomed or un-groomed terrain.

A carved parallel turn, that is 2-3 cat tracks wide. The body weight (pressure) bends a ski into an arc, scribing a curved path, and the tail of the ski follows in the path cut by the tip.

- To engage the skis at turn initiation, direct pressure toward the tips as the body moves toward the turn's apex.
- Tip the skis on edge while directing weight to the outside ski, bending the ski into an arc.
- A deliberate weight transfer to the outside ski early in the initiation phase begins establishing the turn's arc.
- Active inside ski actions correspond with actions of the outside ski.
- The edge angle of the outside ski continues to dictate the arc of the turn through the shaping phase.
- Angulation allows the skier to adjust edge angle and maintain balance toward the outside ski.
- Pole swing begins during the finish of the turn and the touch occurs with or slightly after the edge change. The skier should direct the pole's tip toward the apex of the upcoming turn.

#### **Dynamic Short Radius Carved Turns**

**Page: 127 photo: 7.31**

Terrain: Black or double black, groomed or un-groomed terrain.

A carved parallel turn that is 1 cat track wide.

- Short turns that stay close to the fall line (i.e., deviate slightly) require quick, accurate edge engagement – primarily using knee angulation.
- Rounder short turns require more hip angulation than fall line turns.
- Pole swing assists the movement of the body relatively straight down the hill.
- Edge engagement and a shift in pressure to the outside ski occur very quickly at initiation.
- Edges are released quickly at turn finish.
- Making a carved turn tighter than the ski's side cut is designed for requires precise steering (with relatively high edge angles and just the right amount of rotation), usually though the top of the turn.

#### **Bumps**

**Page: 129 photo: 7.33**

Terrain: Black and double black terrain, un-groomed with bumps

Dynamic short turns that remain in the fall line through bumps. Turns are linked with good rhythm and speed control showing strong leg turning skills, extension/retraction pressure control management, and a stable upper body with a blocking pole plant. May be asked to make varying turn sizes, versatility of line and speed.

- To reduce resistance from the snow, pivot the skis simultaneously on top of the bump. The pivot point is directly under the feet.
- The pole plant helps stabilize and keep the upper body facing downhill – enabling leg rotation. Emphasize keeping the hands in front of the body.
- Pivot to a higher edge angle for a skidded turn finish.
- The upper body moves on a relatively level plane as the legs and spine flex to absorb terrain and extend to maintain ski-to-snow contact.
- Changing the line through the bumps will affect the skill blend as the pivoting action is replaced with steering to round out the turn and line.

### **Steps and Un-Groomed:**

#### **Pages 129, 130 & 131 photo: 7.34**

Terrain: Black and double black terrain with variable snow conditions

Linking dynamic short or medium turns in steep terrain and un-groomed snow conditions. Variable terrain may include moguls, powder, crud, wind impacted snow, and snow that has experienced freeze/thaw cycles.

#### **Steps:**

- Commit to moving down the hill to release the edges at turn initiation.
- Direct the pole swing diagonally down the hill (in medium-radius turns) and directly down the hill (in short-radius turns) to assist body movements.
- Remain strong in the upper body, with a deliberate pole plant to support strong rotational movement of the lower body and ski tipping.
- Extend the legs and guide the skis onto their edges to shape the top of the turn.
- Maintain pressure predominantly on the outside ski through the shaping phase.
- Flex the legs to absorb pressure and soften the turn's finish.
- Maintain a rhythm that supports commitment from one turn to the next.

### **Basic Applied Fundamentals:**

#### **Parallel Turns [Basic Parallel], Medium Radius:**

##### **Page 117; photo: 7.22**

Terrain: Blue or black, groomed or un-groomed terrain.

Linked, round turns on blue or black terrain (groomed or un-groomed), which uses a skill blend that leaves brushed tracks in the snow while the skis remain in a parallel relationship. Speed is controlled through turn shape.

- At the start of a turn, flatten both skis simultaneously, bringing balance over both feet (skis). (The elements of an athletic stance should be visible when the skis are flat on the snow at edge change.)
- Slightly extending the new outside leg helps move the CM to the inside of the new turn throughout the transition.
- Slightly flexing the new inside leg allows the steering action of the inside ski to complement the action of the outside ski.
- Movement of the CM to the inside of the turn through the shaping phase increases edge angles through the fall line.

- The upper body travels down the hill as the skis are turned across the hill, realigning the body over the feet and reducing edge angle.
- Shifting weight from the outside ski in the finish of a turn to more even distribution helps to prepare for the transition to the new outside ski in the upcoming turn.
- Pole swing continues from the finish of the previous turn to promote the flow of movement down the hill. The pole touch signals the timing of the edge change.

### **Linked Wedge Turns**

**Page 111; photo 7.15**

Terrain: Green or blue groomed terrain.

Linked, round turns on green or blue groomed terrain, which uses a skill blend that leaves brushed tracks in the snow while the skis remain in a wedge. Speed is controlled through turn shape.

- Introduce the steering action (combined turning and tipping) of both skis.
- Focus on transferring weight to the inside edge of the outside ski when starting each turn.
- Increase edge angles after the fall line to assist the skis' turning action.
- As the skis turn further across the hill, flatten them to start the next turn.
- Maintain a narrow wedge and control speed through turn shape.

### **Highlighted Fundamentals:**

#### **Hop Turns**

Terrain: Blue or black, groomed or un-groomed terrain.

Linked turns where the skis are hopped off the snow from one set of edges and rotated across the fall line landing on the other corresponding edges.

- Simultaneous leg extension movements.
- Ankle and knee joint flex to absorb landing, with minimal slipping down hill.
- Legs turn enough that there is no turn shape.
- Legs turn under a stable upper body with help from functional pole plant.

#### **Extension/Retraction Turns**

Terrain: Blue or black, groomed or un-groomed

Extension / Retraction turns are made by keeping the upper body at the same height while the legs extend and retract. The candidate may be asked to perform short or medium radius turns on groomed or un-groomed terrain.

- Edge release happens through a retraction/flexion movement at the turn initiation.
- Skis progressively tip on edge.
- Legs are longest through the shaping phase of turn.

#### **Pivot Slips in a Corridor:**

**Page 119 photo: 7.24**

Terrain: Blue or Black, groomed

The skier pivots their skis 180 degrees from a sideslip to a sideslip facing the other direction. Skier maintains a consistent path of travel down the fall line.

- Starting from a straight run on a shallow slope, use quick ankle and leg extension to reduce pressure on the skis while pivoting both skis perpendicular to the fall line.

- Slip sideways, flexing slightly to control edge angle.
- From a sideslip, pivot the skis 180 degrees to sideslip in the other direction. Turn the legs while keeping the upper body facing downhill.
- Link pivot slips, turning 180 degrees for each directional change of the skis.
- Keep the skis the same distance apart (hip width) throughout the pivot slip.

### **One Ski**

Terrain: Green or blue, groomed

A medium or short radius turn on one ski blending progressive leg turning and edging to achieve a round turn shape. The candidate may be asked to perform skidded or carved turns.

- From a balanced stance slightly extending this leg helps move the center of mass to the inside of the new turn throughout the transition.
- Movement of the center of mass to the inside of the turn through the shaping phase increases edge angles through the fall line.
- The ski is steered through the turn.
- Pole use promotes movement into the new turn.

Click [here](#) to see tasks with an explanation in terms of ski and body performance.

## Teaching Assessment Daily Outline:

### Note:

During all teaching presentations the group will be acting as the students. It is expected that as each candidate acts as a student, they remain attentive and engaged through all teaching segments.

**Prerequisites:** Candidates must pass the ski portion and the online exam before they are eligible to sign up for the teach exam.

**General Outline:** Please note all times are approximate and will be adjusted as needed.

### Day One:

Adult MA and teaching presentations

8:30-9:00 – Check in and assignment of groups

9:00-9:30 – Warm up, finding terrain, introductions etc.

9:30-4:00– Each candidate watches the group perform a task assigned by the examiner. (See Possible tasks listed below). Candidate discusses MA, explaining what they would work on with the group and why.

Candidate is given 5 minutes to organize their thoughts (or a chairlift ride) before giving a 25–30-minute teaching presentation based off their MA. After each teaching presentation the examiner will ask follow-up questions with the candidate.

3:30-4:00 – End of day wrap up and preview of next day.

Possible Task List (Basic and Advanced fundamentals for L3)

- Wedge turns
- Basic parallel turns
- Medium radius parallel turns
- Short radius turns
- Short radius turns in variable terrain/snow conditions such as bumps, steeps, or off piste
- Racing
- Dynamic short radius turns
- Dynamic medium radius turns
- Bumps
- Off piste
- Extension/retraction turns
- Mixture of short and medium radius turns

### Day Two:

Children's MA and teaching presentations

9:00-9:30 – Warm-up and answer any questions from prior day.

9:30-3:00 – Candidates will do a full MA on a child at the resort and perform teaching presentations based off their prescription. Each topic or segment of the teaching presentation will be assigned by the examiner. For example, the examiner could ask, take 5 min and teach the group how you would

introduce the idea of leg rotation to a 12-year-old. After each teaching presentation the examiner will ask follow-up questions with the candidate.

- If there are not enough children available to do an MA, the MA may be done on an adult
- The teach based off the prescription on an adult will be taught to a specific children's age group (4-13)

3:00-4:00 – At the end of the day the examiner will call each candidate and review their performance as it relates to the Certification Standards.

#### **Children Teaching Hints:**

- Make sure your presentation is age appropriate.
- Use the CAP model as it applies to all ages of kids.
- Take into consideration real and ideal movement patterns

#### **Teach Exam Hints:**

- Develop one fundamental and/or one movement pattern—add the why-to stay organized in your mind, clear communication with student etc.
- Read and understand the Assessment Form prior to the exam.
- Remember you are dealing with accomplished intermediate and advanced skiers, who are comfortable skiing at faster speeds and longer distances than novice skiers. Be sure to adjust the speed and distance you ski in your demonstrations and in guided practice to fit the performance levels of the skiers.
- Use the Teaching /Learning Cycle and follow the cycle, as if you had your students in a real lesson.
- Converse with your students about their goals, sensations, and achievements.

## Movement Analysis Outline:

Technical Manual Chapter 6, Pages 81-96

Candidates must describe three key criteria components during a movement analysis session: Observation, Evaluation, and Prescription. There is NO set sequence or order the candidate must follow. Immediately following the movement analysis, candidates may be asked about alternative scenarios.

**OBSERVE-** (What): Look at the skier's movements, physical traits, and what the skis are doing in the snow. Describe concrete and objective observations.

Observation Tactics- There is no "right" way. What are you looking at first?

- Big picture, whole body, specific parts, skis, feet – up, head – down.

**DESCRIBE:** (present in ANY order)

- The skier profile as it relates to their skiing (for example: physical traits that affect ski performance).
  - The turn shape (for example: the path/track of the skis, location of skidding/carving, and the phase of the turn).
- Ski performance and related body movements in the phases of the turn.
- The duration, intensity, rate, timing, and direction of movements of the skier.

**EVALUATE-** (Why): describe body movements (cause) and how they impact the skis' performance (effect). Compare your observations to optimal performance and develop a performance goal, which addresses the skiers' strengths or weaknesses.

**DESCRIBE** (present in ANY order):

- Where in the body the movement originates and how that affects the turn (This will determine the movement or action to prioritize for the Prescription)
- The desired changes in body movements and the effect they will have on ski performance.

**PRESCRIPTION-** (How): Clearly define and show an understanding of what the student needs to do with their body movements to achieve the stated performance goal. Decide where to start; prioritize what element or fundamental most needs correction/development.

**DESCRIBE / PRIORITIZE** (present in ANY order):

- A technical and/or a tactical approach
- Optimal terrain to use
- Any Equipment issues/problems.
- Lesson plan consisting of logical and appropriate exercises and/or tasks leading to the stated outcome.

## Change Summary Log

Refer to this log to follow changes to the Study Guide Document and when a new version has been made effective.

The PSIA-AASI-W Study Guide has been in circulation since 2004. Contributors to this Study Guide in the past have been

- Heidi Ettlinger, El Furtney, Bryan Schilling, Finlay Torrence, and Lynnea Anderson

Version	Change Description	Initiated by	Effective Date
A	Made minor changes to formatting	L. Sheldon	11/12/2020
B	Made the following process changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teaching scenarios based on peer to peer MA and children MA</li><li>• Added reference material to include new national standards</li></ul>	L. Sheldon	11/15/2021
C	Made signification format changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Updated the cover page</li><li>• Added more references to the reference section</li><li>• Added Learning outcomes for People skills and Professionalism and Self-Management</li><li>• Added a link to ski and body performances for various tasks under turn mechanics</li><li>• Added Summary Change Log</li></ul>	L. Sheldon	11/01/2022