

How to make skiing fun for beginners

By New York Times

For first-time skiers, expectations and reality can often diverge on the slopes. They imagine gracefully swishing down an Alpine mountain, but then spend their first day falling. After that, most give up.

Indeed, according to the National Ski Areas Association, 83 percent of first-time skiers and snowboarders never return to the slopes for a second visit.

To combat this high attrition rate, Joe Hession, president and chief executive of Snow Operating, has worked with dozens of resorts, from Jiminy Peak in Massachusetts to Snowbasin in Utah, to redesign their ski areas and programs for beginners, making the learning process smoother and much less frustrating.

In lieu of bunny slopes, what you find at these resorts are hills with turns and banks shaped to let beginners really ski, even if they haven't mastered turning or stopping. With the terrain guiding you, Hession explained, "you can make turns without a lot of skill, so it's fun."

Fun is the objective here, he added. "The perfect first day is someone has fun and learns something. The second best is they have fun and learn nothing."

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