

## **Skier Responsibility Code, Ethics and Etiquette**

*By Jill Evans Kryston, Etiquette Consultant*

**Q: I've been a ski patroller for a lot of years and every season we get our fair share of hot shots that are more interested in impressing their friends than using their heads. They are dangerous when they cut people off and rude when they cut in line. Besides following the basic Skier Responsibility Code, could you comment on other ways to be polite on the slopes?**

A: Unlike most sports, acting rude and breaking the rules on the slopes is not only dangerous, it can be a matter of life and death. Whether a newbie or seasoned skier, everyone should be familiar with the Skier Responsibility Code:

- Always stay in control, and be able to stop or avoid other people or objects.
- People ahead of you have the right of way. It is your responsibility to avoid them.
- You must not stop where you obstruct a trail, or are not visible from above.
- Whenever starting down hill or merging into a trail, look uphill and yield to others.
- Always use devices to help prevent runaway equipment.
- Observe all posted signs and warnings. Keep off closed trails and out of closed areas.
- Prior to using any lift, you must have the knowledge and ability to load, ride and unload safely.

A skier must be aware of their surroundings at all times. Show respect for other skiers by not congregating in the lift line to wait for friends or adjust equipment. Wait your turn and when it is time to load the lift, move forward and do not let an empty chair go by. Warn others before bringing down the safety bar on the chairlift. If you fall while loading, quickly move yourself and equipment away from the landing area.

Always know where others are and ski defensively. Skiers move at different speeds. Regard those moving slower by giving a wide berth when passing and do not take up the entire width of a path by zigzagging. If you want to ski fast, make sure you remain in control and use common sense on crowded slopes because no one is comfortable with a speed demon whizzing by.

Everyone was once a beginner. Be patient and courteous with those who are just learning. When accidents happen, assess the situation and help if you can to retrieve scattered gear to spare the person from hiking up the mountain. Ski on trails that match your ability. Do not try to impress your friends by taking on the black diamonds if you have not yet mastered the blues.

A crowded lodge on weekends and holidays can test your good humor. Do your best to act pleasant when squeezed into a tight space to put your boots on. If you have room at your table, be friendly and share it. Skiing is a family sport. No matter how cool you think you are, keep your speech in check. Believe it or not, it is still considered rude to use fowl language in public.

Showing off is not impressive no matter what your motive. You can get seriously injured, hurt others, or you can have your expensive ticket or season pass pulled for misbehavior. Play it safe on the slopes by using good judgment and exercise common courtesy to make it an enjoyable experience for everyone.

*Email your etiquette questions to Jill at: [information@DefiningManners.com](mailto:information@DefiningManners.com) or mail to: P.O. Box 1703, Shavertown, PA 18708.*

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